

Lateral view ♀

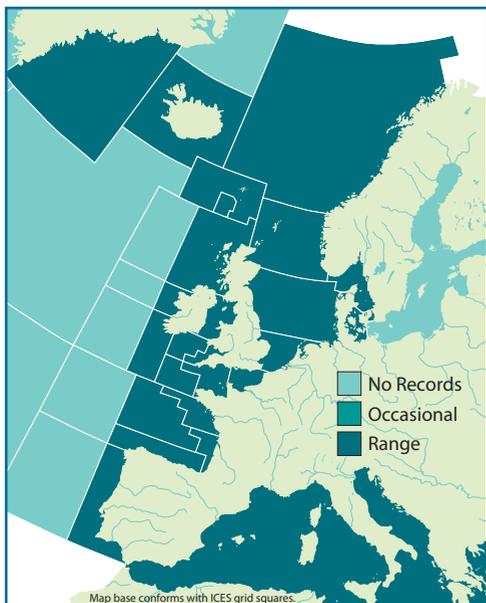
Ventral view ♀

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Squalus acanthias (Smith & Radcliffe, 1912).

DISTRIBUTION

Circumglobal in temperate waters. East Atlantic from Murmansk and Iceland south to west Sahara, including the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Cape Coast of South Africaⁱⁱⁱ.



COMMON NAME

SPINY DOGFISH, Spurdog, Piked Dogfish, Dogfish, Rock Salmon, Spring Dogfish, White-Spotted Dogfish, Aiguillat Commun [Fr], Cazón Espinoso Común [Es].

IDENTIFICATION

- 1 Large dorsal spines.
- 2 First dorsal fin originates behind pectoral free rear tips.
- 3 No anal finⁱⁱⁱ.

COLOUR

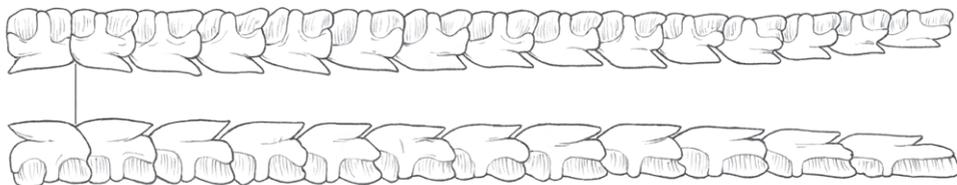
- Rows of white spots on flanks.
- Slate grey to brown dorsally.
- Pale grey to white ventrallyⁱⁱ.

BIOLOGY AND SIZE

- Birth: 18–30cm. Maturity: 83cm ♀ 60cm ♂. Max TL: 124cm ♀ 100cm ♂. Highly variable regionallyⁱ.
- Feed predominantly on bony fish in the Northeast Atlantic. Crustaceans and molluscs are also important, particularly when young^{iv}.
- Litters of 2–21 pups born after 18–22 month gestation period, one of the longest recorded for any vertebrateⁱ.



TEETH

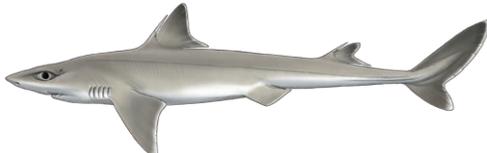


- Oblique-cusped cutting teeth in both jawsⁱⁱⁱ.
- 28 upper teeth, 22–24 lower teethⁱⁱ.

SIMILAR SPECIES



- Squalus acanthias*, **Spiny Dogfish**



- Squalus blainvillei*, **Longnose Spurdog**



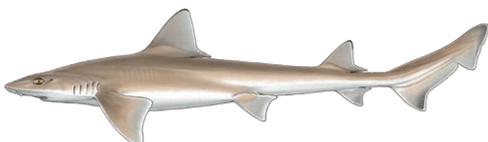
- Squalus megalops*, **Shortnose Spurdog**



- Galeorhinus galeus*, **Tope**



- Mustelus asterias*, **Starry Smoothhound**



- Mustelus mustelus*, **Common Smoothhound**

HABITAT

- From surface to 900m, most common 10–200mⁱⁱⁱ.
- Highly migratory, follows seasonal temperature gradients.
- Transatlantic migrations have occasionally been recorded.
- Segregate by size, and by sex when mature^{vii}.

CONSERVATION STATUS

- Historically the most abundant elasmobranch in the North Atlantic, but populations have fallen by 95% in some places due to overfishing^{vi}.
- Red List status:** Vulnerable (2006)
Critically Endangered in northeast Atlantic.

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- Previously a highly important species targeted across its range by bottom trawls, gillnets and longlines^{vi}.
- Biggest demand is in Western Europe, particularly the UK, France and Germany^{vi}.
- 2010 – Subject to a TAC of zero with a 10% bycatch allowance and a **maximum** landing size (100cm) in EU waters.

HANDLING

- Handle with care.
- Large, venomous dorsal spines.
- Powerful jaws and sharp teeth.
- Abrasive skin.

REFERENCES

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