

Common Name: Spinner Shark
Scientific Name: *Carcharhinus brevipinna*



Life History:

The spinner shark (*Carcharhinus brevipinna*) is slender in stature with grey coloration, growing up to 2.8 m in length. Males are estimated to live up to 19 years while females are estimated to live up to 17 years. Their coloration changes as they grow, with larger juveniles and adults having black tips on the second dorsal, pectorals, anal and caudal fins. Both sexes mature around 8 to 10 years. Spinner sharks are viviparous, can have 3 to 15 pups per litter with size at birth roughly 60 to 75 cm, and have a gestation period of 12 to 15 months. Although a large species, spinner sharks are not considered dangerous; however, they have on rare occasions bitten the feet and hands of swimmers in murky waters. This species is important to fisheries because its meat is used for human consumption, as well as the skin, fins, and liver oil.

Geographical Distribution:

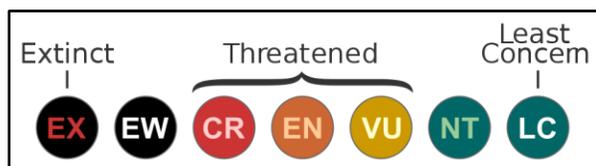
Spinner sharks are a common coastal-pelagic, warm-temperate and tropical species usually found in the Eastern and Western Atlantic oceans and in the Indo-West Pacific. *C. brevipinna* is found both inshore and offshore, but commonly lingers in shallow waters less than 30 m in depth. Spinner sharks actively school and display migratory behavior in the Gulf of Mexico.

Feeding:

Spinner sharks typically feed on small tunas, sea catfish, stingrays, squid, etc. However, the way they feed is what gives them their name. They start by swimming rapidly upward through schools of fish with an open mouth, spinning along their vertical axis and snapping in all directions.

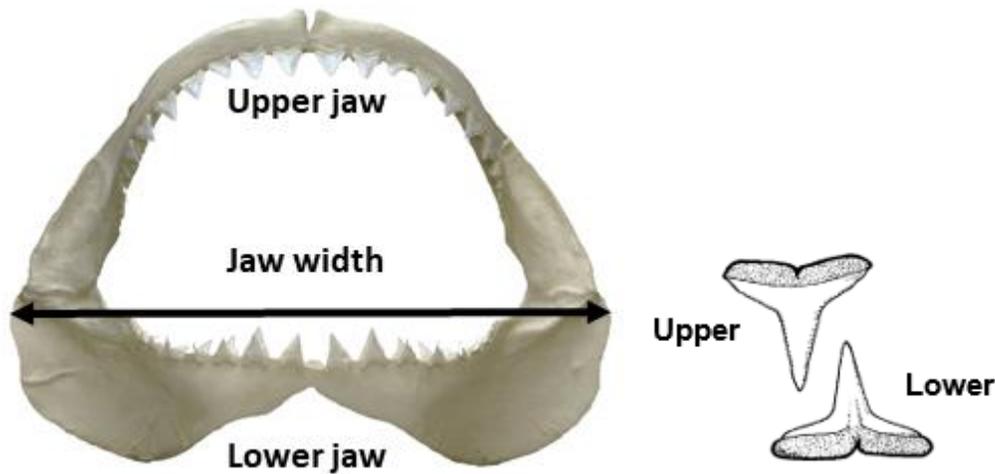
Conservation Status:

IUCN Red List: Vulnerable (VU)



Tooth and Jaw Information:

Spinner shark teeth are small and not adapted for feeding on large prey. There are 34-36 front row teeth in the upper jaw and 33-35 front row teeth in the lower jaw.



Where did these jaws come from?

Jaws were relinquished to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service from companies attempting to import species protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. These jaws were then entrusted to the CSULB Shark Lab to be used for educational purposes.

What does the Shark Lab do?

Dr. Chris Lowe and his students in the Shark Lab study the physiology, behavior and ecology of sharks and rays, often using and developing innovative technologies to enhance conservation and recovery of depleted populations. The Shark Lab also provides science-based education and outreach about sharks and rays.

References:

Compagno, L. J. (1984). FAO species catalogue. v. 4:(2) Sharks of the world. An annotated and illustrated catalogue of shark species known to date, pt. 2: Carcharhiniformes.

Ebert, Dave, and Matthias F. W. Stehmann. *Sharks, Batoids and Chimaeras of the North Atlantic*. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2013.

Ebert, D. A. (2015). *A pocket guide to sharks of the world* (Vol. 12). Princeton University Press.
Last, P. R., Stevens, J. D., & Compagno, L. J. V. (1995). Sharks and rays of Australia. *Reviews in Fish Biology and Fisheries*, 5(1), 136-138.

Picture Credit:

Carcharhinus brevipinna. Digital Image. Florida Museum.

<https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/discover-fish/species-profiles/carcharhinus-brevipinna/>