

## Western Angelshark, *Squatina pseudocellata*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Assessors	Kyne, P.M. & Cavanagh, R.D.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Poorly known but likely only a minor bycatch with refuge areas.		

### Summary

The Western Angel Shark is a poorly-known shark, endemic to northwest Australia. Nothing is known of its biology, but all *Squatina* species for which biological data are available are known to be sensitive to fishing pressure because of their life history characteristics and demersal habitat. It is likely taken as bycatch of trawl fisheries operating at >200 m depth, but fishing effort at this depth within its range is currently low and not likely to be adversely affecting this species.

Its range also overlaps with some areas closed to trawling, thus providing it with some refuge. Therefore, the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Sustainable (SAFS).



### Distribution

The Western Angel Shark occurs from Cape Leveque south to waters off Shark Bay (Western Australia) (Last and Stevens 2009). A specimen from the Arafura Sea north of the Tiwi Islands held in the Northern Territory museum may be this species, suggesting it ranges further northeast than presently recognised.

### Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species.

### Fisheries

The threat from fishing is likely to be minimal as fishing effort in its range is low. The Western Deepwater Trawl Fishery and North West Slope Trawl Fishery that operate within the range of this species at depths >200 m have low current effort and catch (Marton and Mazur 2014a, b). Given the life history of other angelsharks (long lived, late maturing) together with documented declines of other angelsharks (for example, Holts 1988, Graham et al. 2001), any catches (including discards) of

the Western Angel Shark should be monitored in the future, particularly if trawling effort was to increase in the area.

### Habitat and biology

The Western Angel Shark is demersal on the continental shelf and upper slope at depths of 150–312 m. Maximum size is at least 114 cm total length (TL), with males mature at about 75 cm TL (Last and Stevens 2009). Little else is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 114 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: ~75 cm TL Females: unknown

**CAAB Code:** 37 024005

**Link to IUCN Page:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/42728/68645745>

**Link to page at Shark References:** <http://www.shark-references.com/species/view/Squatina-pseudocellata>

### References

- Graham, K.J., Andrew, N.L. and Hodgson, K.E. 2001. Changes in the relative abundances of sharks and rays on Australian South East Fishery trawl grounds after twenty years of fishing. *Marine and Freshwater Research* 52: 549–561.
- Holts, D.B. 1988. Review of US west coast commercial shark fisheries. *Marine Fisheries Review* 50: 1–8.
- Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. and Simpfendorfer, C.A. 2021. *The Action Plan for Australian Sharks and Rays 2021*. National Environmental Science Program, Marine Biodiversity Hub, Hobart.
- Last, P.R. and Stevens, J.D. 2009. *Sharks and Rays of Australia*. Second Edition. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood.
- Marton, N. and Mazur, K. 2014a. *North West Slope Trawl Fishery*. In: Georgeson, L., Stobutzki, I. and Curtotti, R. (eds), Fishery status reports 2013–14. Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra.
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