

## Brown Stingaree, *Urolophus westraliensis*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Global Assessors	Kyne, P.M. & Johnson, G.J.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Fishing pressure low and significant spatial refuge across its range.		

### Summary

The Brown Stingaree is a small endemic continental shelf species with a restricted range across tropical waters in Western Australia and in the Northern Territory. It is possibly caught incidentally in the Commonwealth Northwest Slope Trawl Fishery although that fishery operates at the limit of the species depth range and interactions are likely minimal. Further, trawl effort is limited in this fishery and chondrichthyans have been assessed as at low risk.

It is an occasional incidental catch of the Northern Territory Timor Reef Fishery and Demersal Fishery, both of which have limited effort and release elasmobranchs, though post-release mortality for trawl caught stingarees is generally high and stingarees typically abort their embryos when captured. The Brown Stingaree would receive refuge in the Commonwealth North and North-west Marine Parks Networks and state and territory waters where considerable areas are closed to trawling. Overall, fisheries interactions are likely currently minimal, fishing effort is low across its range, and there is significant spatial refuge. Therefore, the Brown Stingaree is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Sustainable (SAFS).



### Distribution

The Brown Stingaree is endemic and occurs in tropical Western Australian and Northern Territory waters. In Western Australia, it has a restricted range, occurring from the Bonaparte Archipelago to Dampier and in the Northern Territory, it occurs in the Timor Sea (Last and Stevens 2009, Last et al. 2016, Kyne et al. 2021).

### Stock structure and status

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

### Fisheries

The Brown Stingaree may be caught incidentally by the Northwest Slope Trawl Fishery which targets prawns and scampi (*Metanephrops australiensis*) and operates at 200–600 m depth (Patterson et al. 2022). However, there is minimal depth overlap between the species and the fishery and interactions are likely to be minimal. Further, the fishery has limited effort with only 1–6 active vessels and chondrichthyans have been assessed as at low risk in this fishery (Zhou et al. 2009). The species is unlikely to be captured in four state-managed prawn fisheries: Kimberley, Broome, Nickol Bay, and Onslow as they operate in shallow, inshore waters and occasionally fish to a maximum depth of approximately 50 m (Gaughan and Santoro 2021). The Brown Stingaree is an occasional incidental catch of the Northern Territory Timor Reef Fishery and the Demersal Fishery both of which have low effort and release elasmobranchs (NTG 2019, Kyne and Johnson 2019, Kyne et al. 2021). However, post-release mortality for trawl caught stingarees is generally high and urolophids typically abort their embryos when caught which can reduce population viability (Rigby et al. 2016, Adams et al. 2018, Campbell et al. 2018). The species would receive refuge in the Commonwealth North-west and North Marine Parks Networks that came into effect in 2018 and also considerable refuge in state and territory waters; more than 90% of the area within the 200 m isobath of Western Australian northern waters may never have been trawled due to a combination of spatial trawl closures and marine parks, and considerable areas of Northern Territory are closed to trawling (Gaughan and Santoro 2021, Kyne et al. 2021, Park Australia 2023).

### Habitat and biology

The Brown Stingaree is demersal on the continental shelf at depths of 60–220 m, though mostly at 150–210 m (Last et al. 2016, Bray 2018). Maximum size is at least 36 cm total length (TL) and males mature at approximately 24 cm TL (Last et al. 2016). Little else is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 36 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: approximately 24 cm TL Females: unknown

**CAAB Code:** 37 038009

**Link to IUCN Page:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/60106/68650340>

**Link to page at Shark References:** <https://shark-references.com/species/view/Urolophus-westraliensis>

### References

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