

## Common Sawshark, *Pristiophorus cirratus*

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|--|--|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Report Card assessment                 | Sustainable  |                                    |               |
| IUCN Red List<br>Australian Assessment | Endemic to Australia   | IUCN Red List<br>Global Assessment | Least Concern |
| Assessors                              | Walker, T.I.   |                                    |               |
| Report Card Remarks                    | Actively managed with Total Allowable Catch and Individual Transferable Quota. This species been assessed in the Status of Australian Fish Stocks as Sustainable ( <a href="http://www.fish.gov.au">http://www.fish.gov.au</a> ) |                                    |               |

### Summary

The Common Sawshark is a moderately abundant, widely distributed shark. It occurs in temperate and subtropical Australia on the shelf and upper slope. The species is harvested over its entire range and is a marketed byproduct. Most of the catch is taken from Bass Strait by gillnets, from southern New South Wales and eastern Victoria by demersal otter trawl and Danish seine; and the Great Australian Bight by demersal otter trawl. The



Common Sawshark is actively managed with catch rates assessed annually and considered sustainable. Therefore, the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) and has been assessed as Sustainable (SAFS) in the Status of Australian Fish Stocks.

### Distribution

The Common Sawshark is endemic to the waters of southern Australia's outer continental shelf, and occurs from Jurien Bay (Western Australia) to Coffs Harbour (New South Wales), including Tasmania (Last and Stevens 2009).

### Stock structure and status

The Common Sawshark is moderately abundant, with highest concentrations in Bass Strait. However, the biological stock structure is not known. The population abundance approximately halved off southern New South Wales and eastern Victoria from 2000 to 2006. However, the abundance varied greatly further westward and in Bass Strait over surveys from 1973 to 2008 (Walker and Gason 2007). The Common Sawshark is currently actively managed with a Total Allowable Catch and Individual Transferable Quota. Current exploitation rates are assessed annually and considered sustainable. Minor threats include capture in the shark gillnet fishery of Western Australia and fishing with longlines and other methods. Current stock assessments indicate that the stock is stable and sustainable (see link to SAFS webpage below)

## Fisheries

The primary threat to the Common Sawshark is fishing. It is taken as byproduct when targeting Gummy Shark (*Mustelus antarcticus*) with gillnets off Victoria and, to a lesser extent, Tasmania and South Australia (Walker 1999). Annual catches of sawshark (*P. cirratus* and *P. nudipinnis*) were variable (43 to 359 tonne) over the years 1970 to 2006 (Walker and Gason 2009). The Common Sawshark is also taken by trawlers and Danish seine in the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery and Great Australian Bight with estimated annual catches of 276 tonnes during 2000 to 2006, of which the majority was retained for market (93%) (Walker and Gason 2007).

## Habitat and biology

The Common Sawshark is found in depths ranging from 40 to 630 m (Last and Stevens 2009). The maximum size is 149 cm total length (TL) and maximum age is 15 years (Walker et al. 2005). Males mature at approximately 97 cm TL and females at 113 cm TL (Hudson et al. 2005, Last and Stevens 2009).

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Longevity and maximum size        | Longevity: estimated 15 years<br>Max size: 149 cm TL |
| Age and/or size at maturity (50%) | Males: ~97 cm TL<br>Females: 113 cm TL               |

**Link to State of Australian Fish Stocks Page:** <http://www.fish.gov.au>

**Link to IUCN Page:** <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/39327/0>

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

## References

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