

Fun Fact Sheet: Hammerhead Shark

Region

North Coast, Gascoyne Coast, West Coast, South Coast, Indian Ocean Territories

Summary

Hammerhead sharks are easily identifiable by their distinctive hammer-like heads.

Their unique shaped head with an eye on the end of each wing, helps them to zone in on prey by detecting where it is located. They have a varied diet that includes a wide range of fish, squid, octopus, crustaceans (such as lobsters), stingrays and other sharks. They are particularly vulnerable to being caught in fishing nets because of the shape of their head.

Some species of hammerhead sharks can grow to almost five metres in length and weigh up to 250 kilograms! Born in litters of up to 40 pups, the 'wings' on their head are folded back when they are born. They like being in groups and often swim in packs of up to 20 sharks. Four species of hammerhead shark are found in Western Australia – the great hammerhead (*Sphyrna mokarran*), scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*), smooth hammerhead (*Sphyrna zygaena*)



Figure 1. Great hammerhead sharks are usually solitary.

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