

## Sphyrna

### Classification

Kingdom : Animalia  
Phylum : Chordatas  
Class : Chondrichthyes  
Order : Carcharhiniforms  
Family : Sphyrnidae  
Genus : Sphyrna



For further details, [Link](#)

### Characteristics :

- Sphyrna is a genus of hammerhead sharks recognized by their iconic hammer-shaped heads (cephalofoils), which enhance sensory perception and manoeuvrability.
- These sharks have a cosmopolitan distribution in tropical and warm-temperate coastal waters, continental shelves, and lagoons, although some migrate to deeper, more pelagic or offshore areas.
- **Cephalofoil:** The most distinctive feature is their broad, flattened head, known as a cephalofoil, which is equipped with numerous electroreceptors to detect prey.
- **Size:** Size varies significantly among the approximately nine species; the Great Hammerhead (*S. mokarran*) is the largest, while others like the small eye Hammerhead (*S. tudes*) are smaller.
- **Viviparous:** Sphyrna sharks are viviparous, meaning they give birth to live young.
- **High First Dorsal Fin:** The great hammerhead is known for its exceptionally tall first dorsal fin.

### Habitat & Distribution

- **Global Presence:** Sphyrna species are found in oceans worldwide.

- **Coastal and Pelagic:** They inhabit both coastal and pelagic (open ocean) regions.
- **Shelves and Reefs:** They are commonly found over continental and insular shelves, in reef environments, lagoons, and bays.
- **Warm Waters:** They prefer warmer waters, with the Great Hammerhead often seen in temperatures above 20°C.

### **Behaviour & Diet**

- **Dietary Range:** Their diet is diverse, encompassing fish, crustaceans, cephalopods, and sometimes other sharks and rays.
- **Benthic Feeding:** Some species are benthic (bottom-associated), feeding on small organisms hidden in the sand and sediment.
- **Social Behaviour:** Young sharks often form large aggregations, while adult males may enter schools mainly for mating.

### **Interesting Facts**

- **Shark Fin Soup:** The large fins of hammerheads are highly valued in the Oriental shark fin trade.
- **Human Attacks:** While potentially dangerous, only a few human attacks are attributed to hammerheads, partly due to the difficulty in distinguishing the species involved.
- **Omnivorous Exception:** One species, the Bonnethead shark (*S. tiburo*), is unique as it has been observed eating seagrass, making it partially omnivorous.
- **Conservation Concerns:** The great hammerhead, for example, is considered critically endangered due to a significant population decline over the past 70 years.