

Sighting form

Please post to: PO Box 16217, Sandringham, Auckland 1351.

Date: **Time:** **No. of individuals:**

Type of sighting:
 fin
 partial animal
 whole animal
 group
 remains

Sighting:
 underwater
 from boat
 from aircraft
 from shore

Shark:
 whale shark
 basking shark
 white pointer
 other

Ray:
 devil ray
 manta ray
 unsure

Location:

Latitude: South **Longitude:** East

Observer name(s):

Email address:

Phone: **Mobile:**

Contact address:

Sex (number): Male Female Unknown

Size (m): [sharks – length; rays – width] Biggest Smallest Average

Distance offshore (km): **Sea depth (m):**

Direction of travel: **Sea conditions:**

Vessel name/number:

Any images or video taken: Yes No Digital Film Video

[Images can be posted along with this form, on suitable media, or digital images can be emailed to us. Submitted images will be stored in the bigfish image bank. bigfish recognises the photographers copyright, and no images will be reproduced without the photographers prior consent.]

Distance from observers: 0-20 m 20-50 m 50-100 m > 100 m

Associated species:

Location & description of any scars or markings:

Comments or behavioural notes (e.g. jumping, feeding, etc.):

CHECKED ENTERED D/B IMAGES RTND SIGHTING RECORD Z

Source: Office use only

The bigfish project

Very little information exists on these species in New Zealand, and researchers need public support to learn more about them. These ocean-going plankton feeders can be individually identified from their unique colour patterns and scars. Data from sightings and photo ID's will enable us to build a better picture of where they occur locally, and to identify individuals that visit New Zealand regularly.

If you're lucky enough to see one of these amazing creatures, it would be great if you could record the information listed in the form overleaf.

Alternatively, you can use the sighting form on the **bigfish** web site to send us your own observations. The web site also has information about each species, summaries of previous sightings, and images taken during encounters.

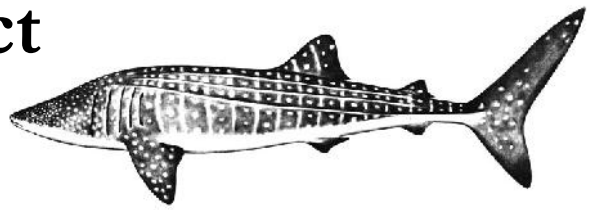
Images can be posted on suitable media, along with this form, or digital images can be emailed. Submitted images will be stored in the **bigfish** image bank. **bigfish** recognises the photographers copyright, and no images will be reproduced without their prior consent.

The objectives of the **bigfish** project:

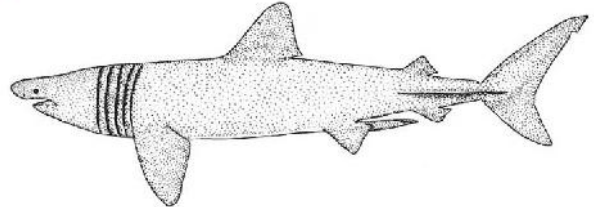
- To determine where whale sharks, basking sharks and mobulid rays found in New Zealand originate from,
- To record white pointer (great white shark) sightings in New Zealand,
- To determine their distribution and abundance in New Zealand,
- To investigate where they go when they leave New Zealand.

Code of Conduct:

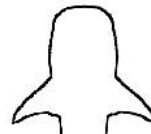
- Restrict your boat speed to 6 knots (10 kph) when approaching or near individuals.
- When your vessel is closer than 10 m, put your engine in neutral to avoid disturbance and injury to animals, e.g. prop contact.
- Avoid dividing groups of animals, i.e. driving through them.
- If diving, do not attempt to touch, ride or chase animals; avoid blocking their path, and maintain a distance of at least 5 m – they are big and powerful.



Whale shark: unique colour pattern, broad head, to 18 m long.



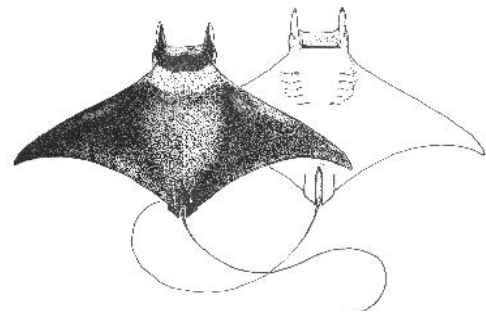
Basking shark: rounded dorsal fin, long gill slits, to 10 m long.



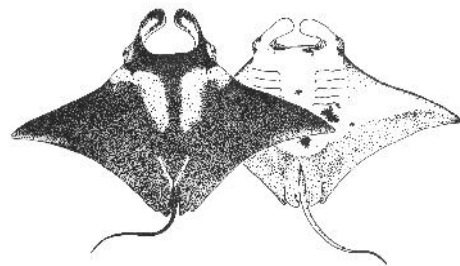
*Whale shark
head profile from
above*



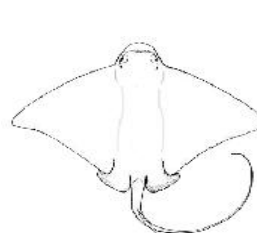
*Basking shark
head profile
from above*



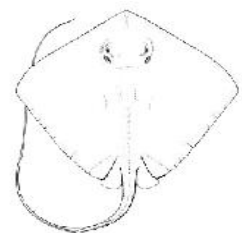
Spine-tailed devil ray: short head fins, long tail, to 3 m wide.



Manta ray: long head fins, short tail, to 8 m wide.



** Eagle ray: no head fins, and a raised head, to 1 m wide.*



** Stingray (3 species): no head fins, to 3 m wide.*

* We do not need sightings of these species.