

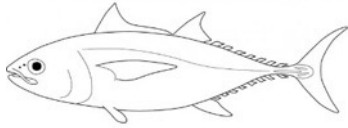


Identification guide for species caught in pelagic tropical fisheries

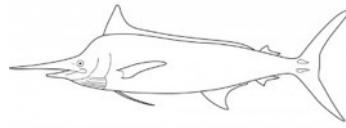
Version 2.1 (english) – August 2022

Philippe S. Sabarros, Flore Moussy, Esther Mollier
IRD – Ob7

Main families



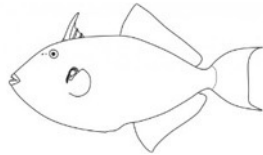
Scombridae (MAX)



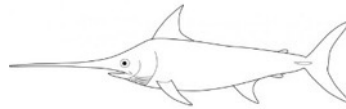
Istiophoridae (BIL)



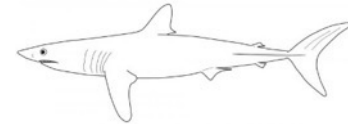
Carcharhinidae (RSK)



Balistidae (TRI)



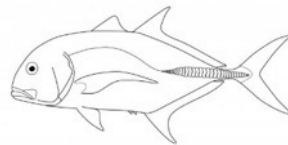
Xiphiidae (SWO)



Lamnidae (MSK)



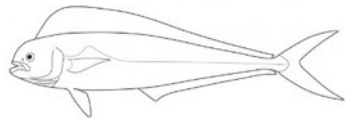
Monacanthidae (FFX)



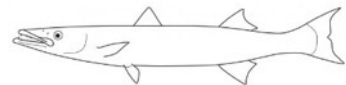
Carangidae (CGX)



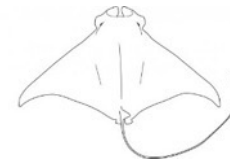
Alopiidae (THR)



Coryphaenidae (DOX)



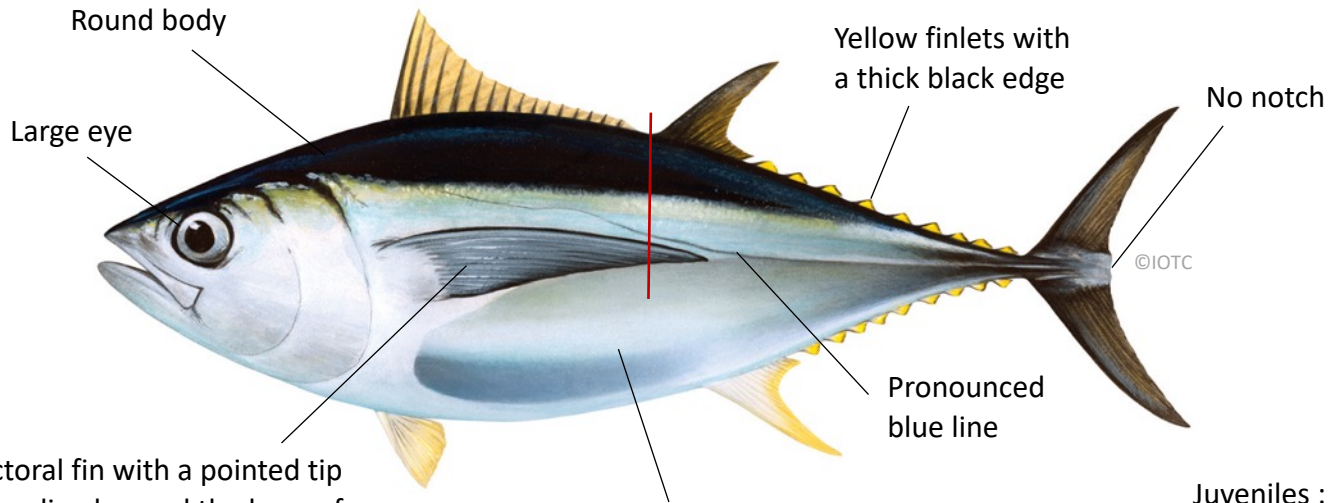
Sphyraenidae (BAZ)



Mobulidae (RMV)

Species presented in this guide

FAO code	Common name	Page	FAO code	Common name	Page	FAO code	Common name	Page	FAO code	Common name	Page
	Bony fishes		NGT	Island trevally	32	REZ	Marlin sucker	61	SPL	Scalloped hammerhead	88
BET	Bigeye tuna	4	NXU	Black jack	33	REY	Spearfish remora	62	SPK	Great hammerhead	89
YFT	Yellowfin tuna	5	NXI	Giant trevally	34	RRL	White suckerfish	63	BTH	Bigeye thresher	90
ALB	Albacore	6	UDD	Whitetongue jack	35		Billfishes		PTH	Pelagic thresher	91
SKJ	Skipjack tuna	7	URU	Whitemouth jack	36	BLM	Black marlin	64	ALV	Thresher shark	92
BLT	Bullet tuna	8	USE	Cottonmouth jack	37	BUM	Blue marlin	65	RHN	Whale shark	93
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KAW	Kawakawa	10	YTC	Yellowtail amberjack	39	WHM	Atlantic white marlin	67	RRY	Bowmouth guitarfish	94
LTA	Little tunny	11	KYP	Sea chub nei	40	SFA	Indo-Pacific sailfish	68	RMM	Devil fish	95
RRU	Rainbow runner	12	KYS	Bermuda sea chub	41	SAI	Atlantic sailfish	69	RMJ	Spinetail mobula	96
ALM	Unicorn leatherjacket filefish	13	KYV	Brassy chub	42	SPF	Longbill spearfish	70	RMO	Smoothtail mobula	97
ALN	Scribbled leatherjacket filefish	14	KYC	Blue sea chub	43	SSP	Shortbill spearfish	71	RMT	Chilean devil ray	98
CNT	Rough triggerfish	15	HDV	Imperial blackfish	44	SWO	Swordfish	72	RMB	Giant manta	99
NHR	Largescale triggerfish	16	IQV	Bigtooth pomfret	45		Sharks		PLS	Pelagic stingray	100
CZT	Ocean triggerfish	17	POA	Atlantic pomfret	46	FAL	Silky shark	73		Turtles	
TRG	Grey triggerfish	18	LGH	Oceanic puffer	47	OCS	Oceanic whitetip shark	74	LKV	Olive ridley turtle	101
JKY	American whitespotted filefish	19	3DEY	Pelagic porcupinefish	48	BSH	Blue shark	75	TTL	Loggerhead turtle	102
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CFW	Pompano dolphinfish	21	DIY	Spotted porcupinefish	50	LMA	Longfin mako	77	TTH	Hawksbill turtle	104
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WAH	Wahoo	23	BTS	Hound needlefish	52	CCB	Spinner shark	79		Cetaceans	
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BAO	Longfin batfish	27	MOP	Bumphead sunfish	56	ALS	Silvertip shark	83	SPW	Sperm whale	109
LXR	Orbicular batfish	28	MRW	Sharptail mola	57	CCE	Bull shark	84	BLW	Blue whale	110
MSD	Mackerel scad	29	RZV	Slender sunfish	58	CCF	Pigeye shark	85	FIW	Fin whale	111
RUB	Blue runner	30	EHN	Live sharksucker	59	TIG	Tiger shark	86	DRR	Risso's dolphin	112
CXS	Bigeye trevally	31	REO	Shark sucker	60	SPZ	Smooth hammerhead	87			



Common species		
Max. length	180 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Pectoral fin with a pointed tip extending beyond the base of the second dorsal fin

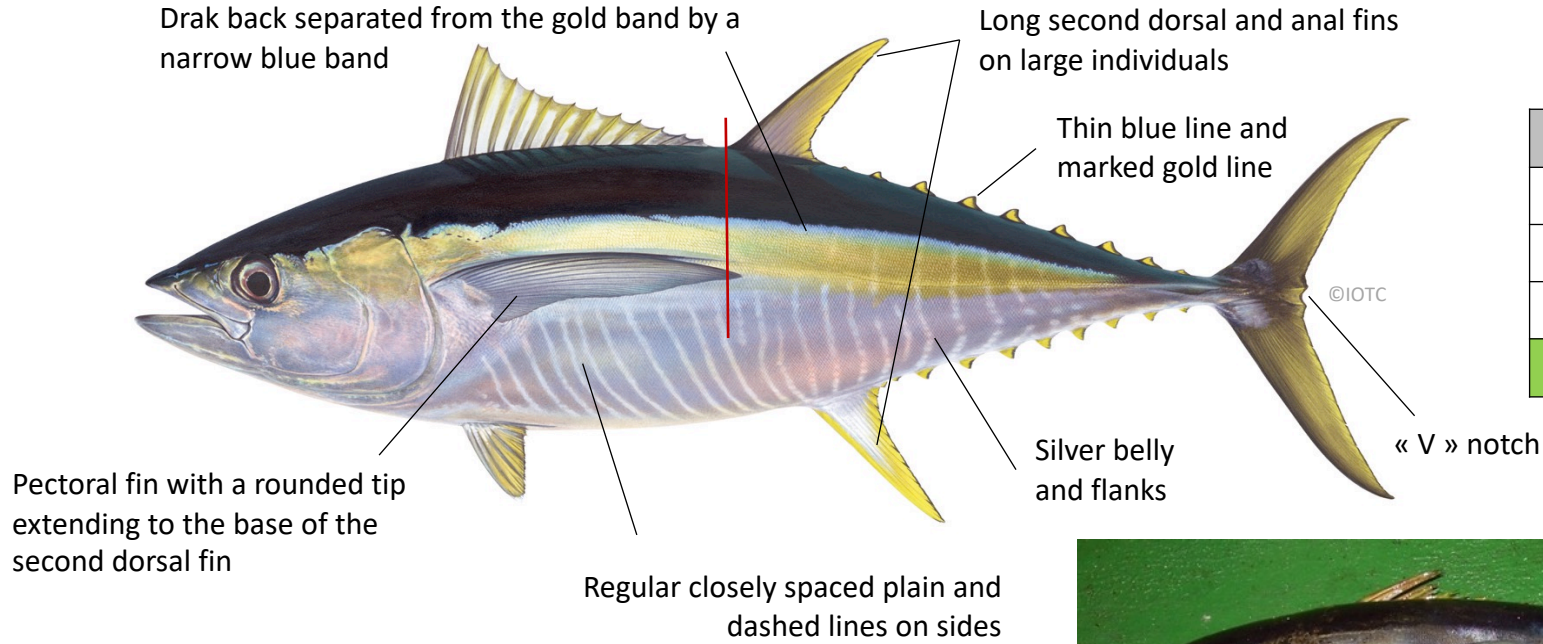
Irregular widely spaced vertical lines usually limited to the posterior part of the body

Juveniles : irregular, widely spaced white lines or marks



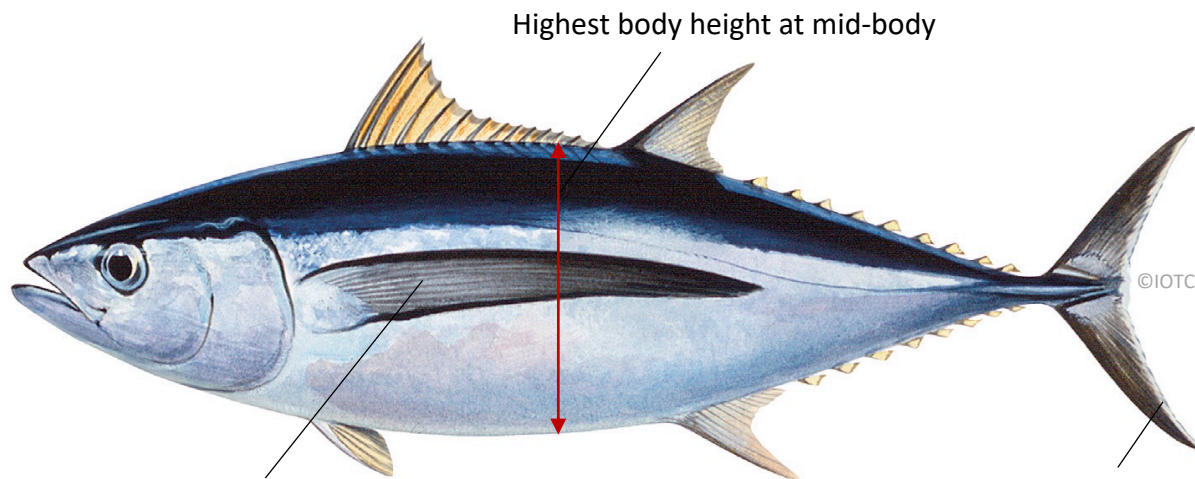
Yellowfin tuna ▶ Thon à nageoires jaunes, thon albacore ▶ Rabil

Thunnus albacares



Common species		
Max. length	239 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



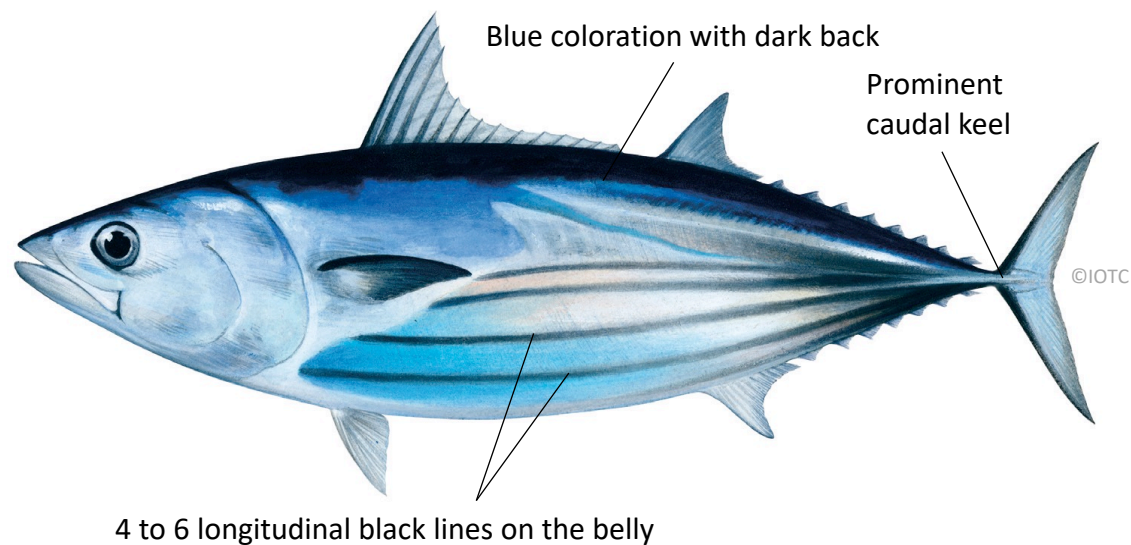


Very long pectoral fin reaching well beyond the second dorsal fin and the anal fin

Withe margin on the edge of the caudal fin

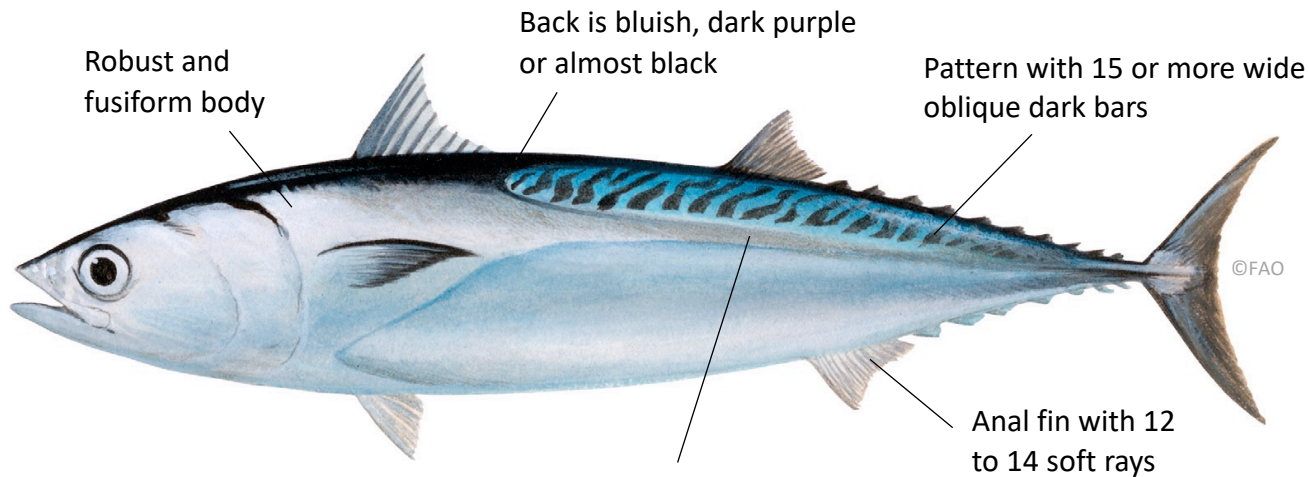
Common species		
Max. length	140 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





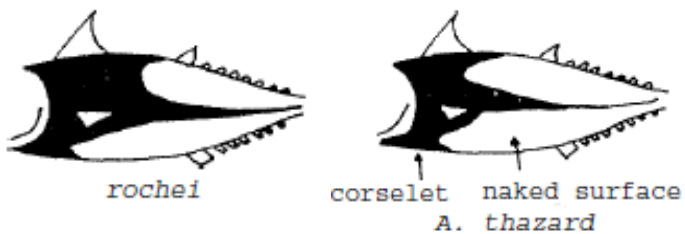
Common species		
Max. length	110 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

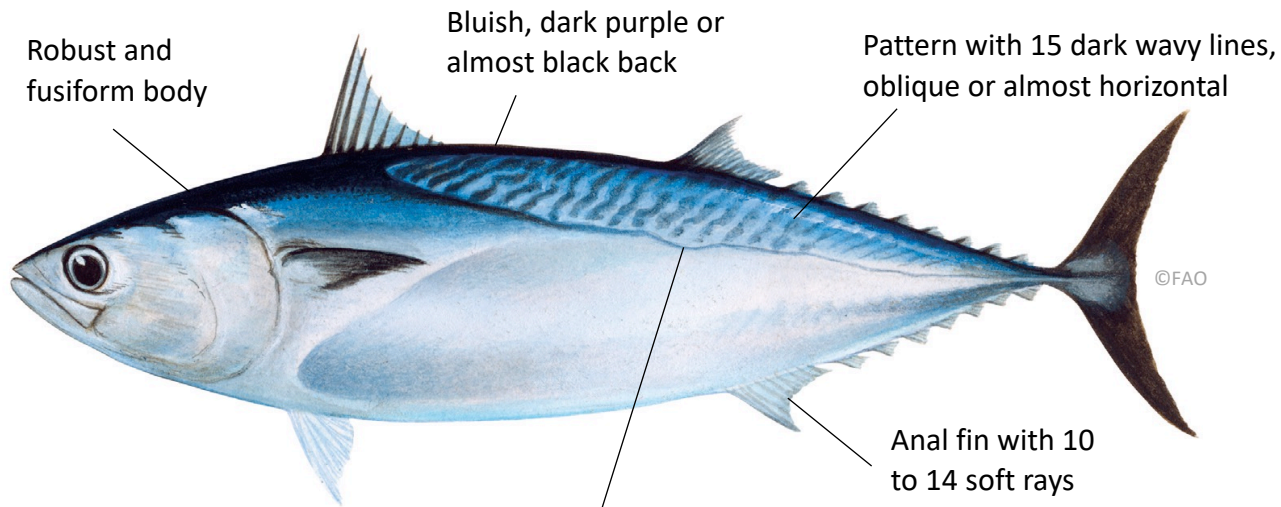




Common species		
Max. length	50 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

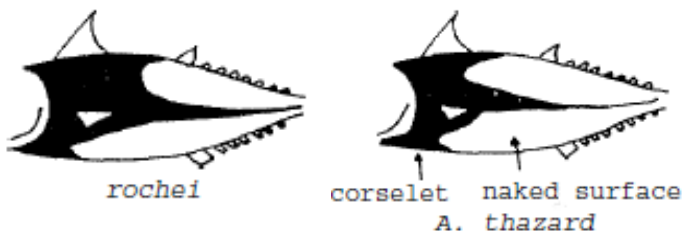
Bare body except for the corselet which is well developed in its posterior part (more than 6 scales wide under the origin of the second dorsal fin, generally 10 to 15)

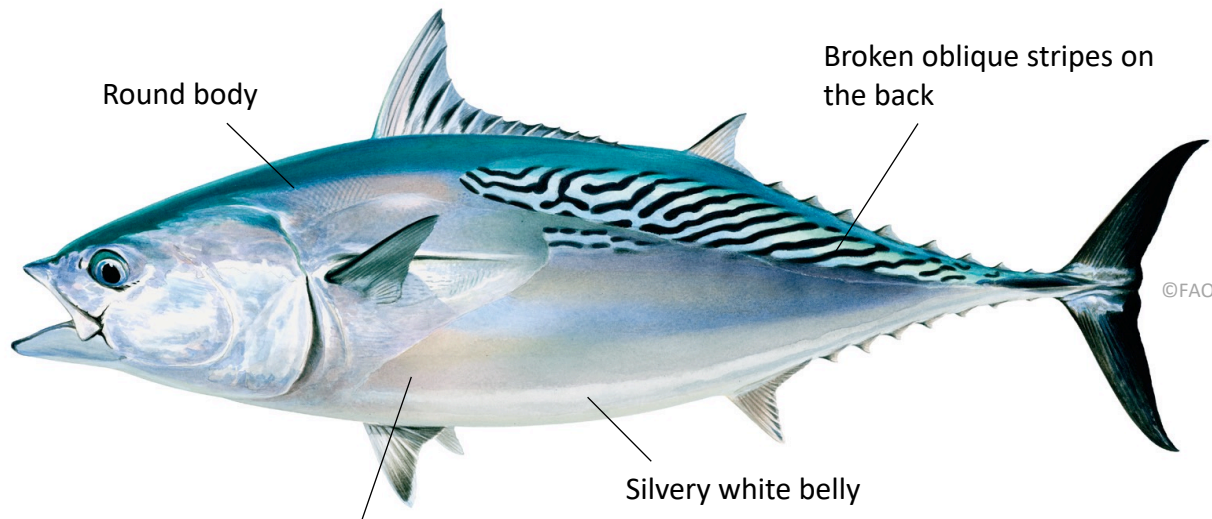




Common species		
Max. length	65 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Corselet narrower in its posterior part (not more than 5 scales wide under the origin of the second dorsal fin)

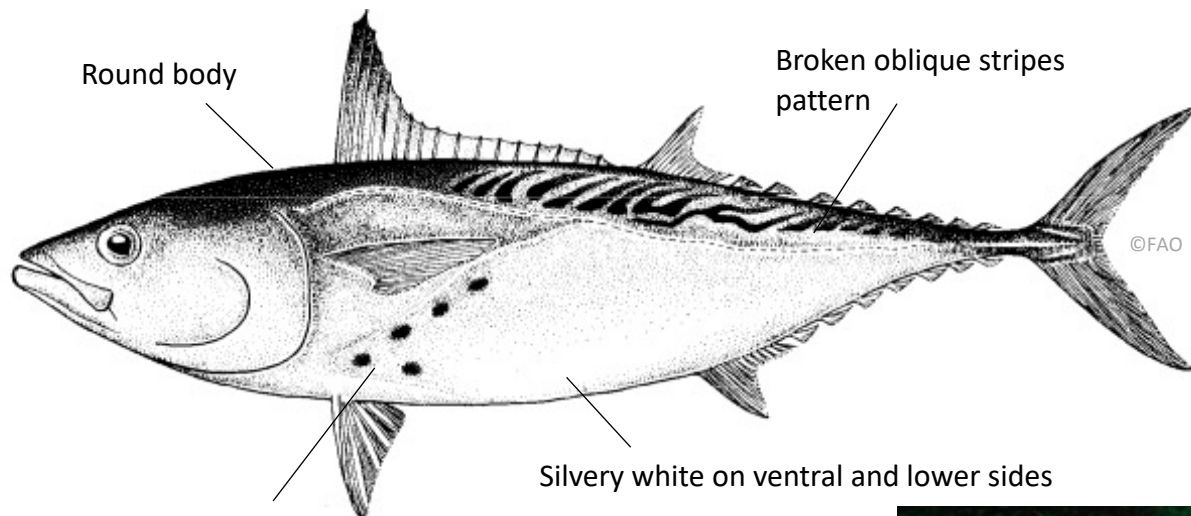




Common species		
Max. length	100 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

In general, several black spots between the pelvic and pectoral fins

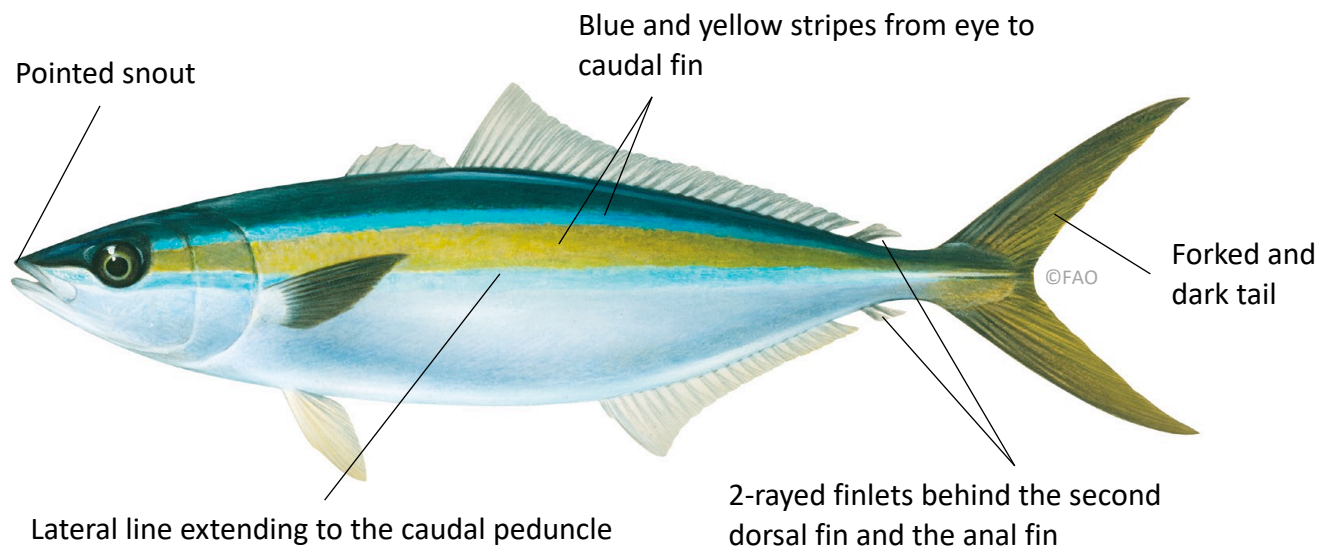




Common species		
Max. length	122 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	

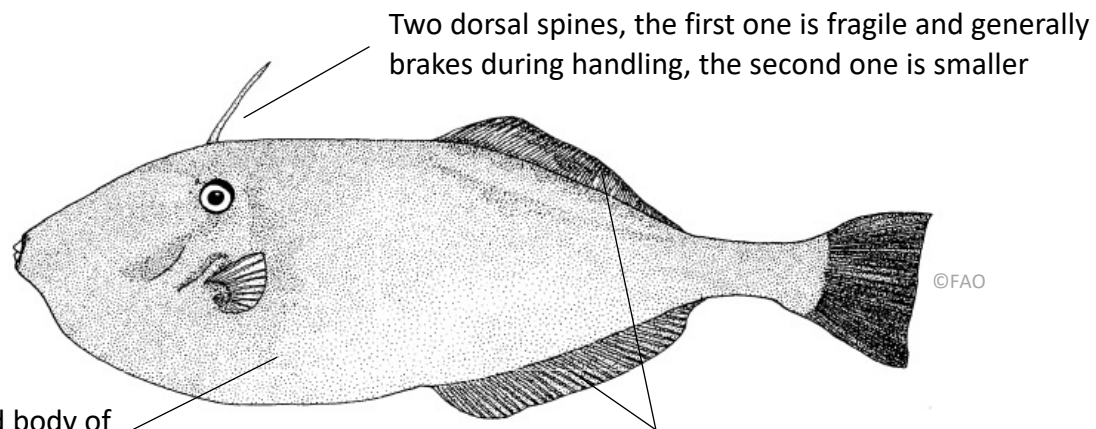
Several characteristic dark spots between the pelvic and pectoral fins





Common species		
Max. length	180 cm	FL
Obs. length	39-90 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Flat elongated body of sand to gray color

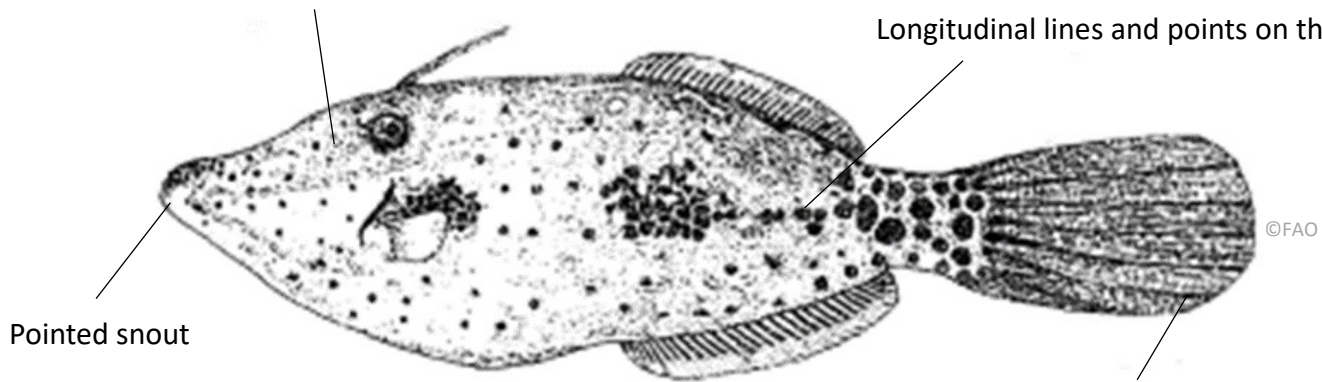
Dorsal and anal fins yellow to brown

Common species		
Max. length	76 cm	TL
Obs. length	26-51 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Coloration of the body varies according to the environment

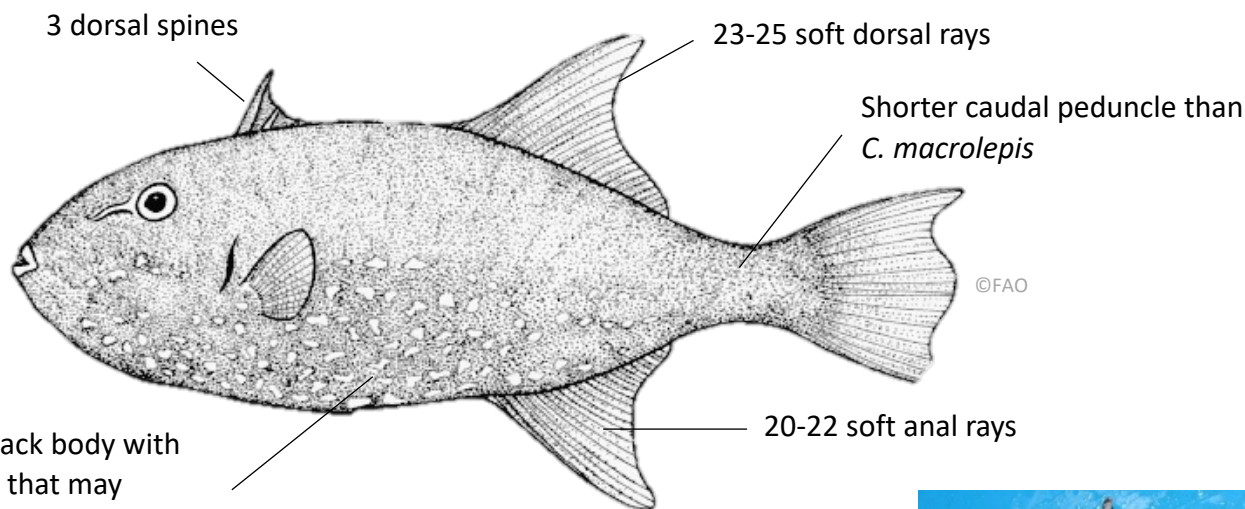
Longitudinal lines and points on the sides



Caudal fin is as long as the snout

Common species		
Max. length	110 cm	TL
Obs. length	22-53 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

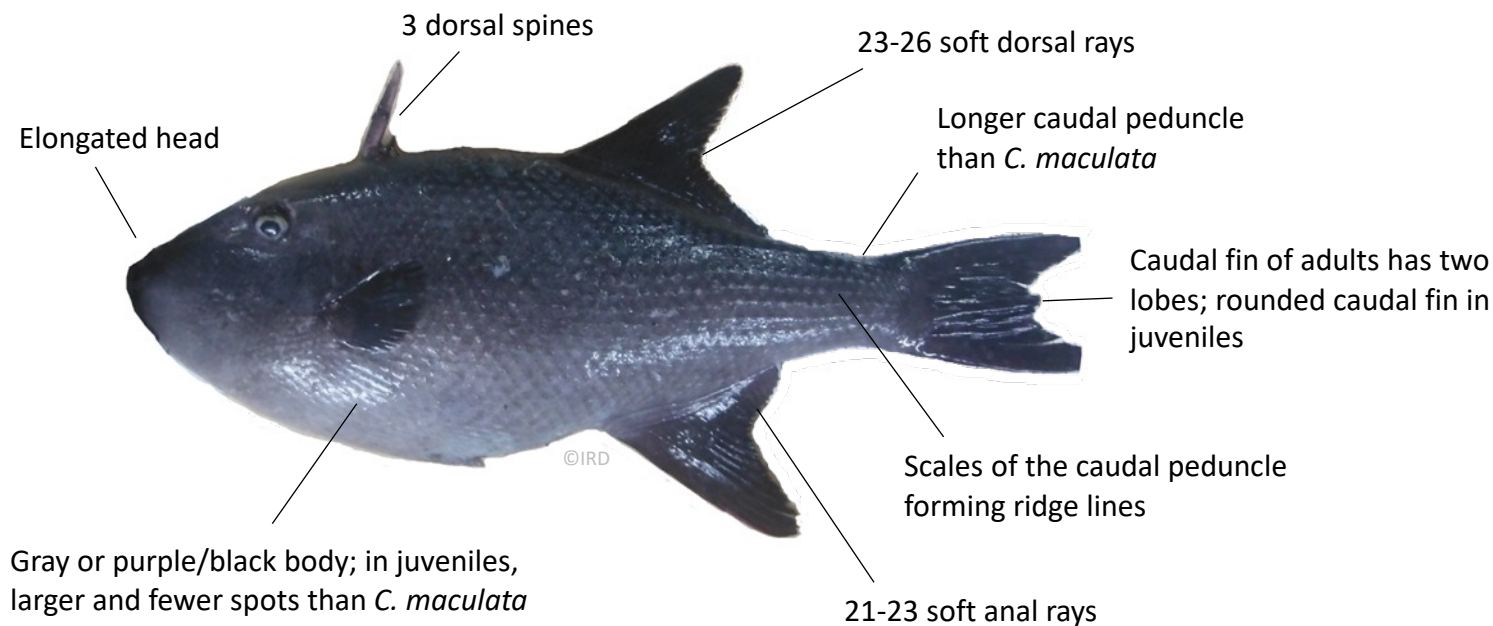




Purple to black body with white spots that may disappear in larger individuals

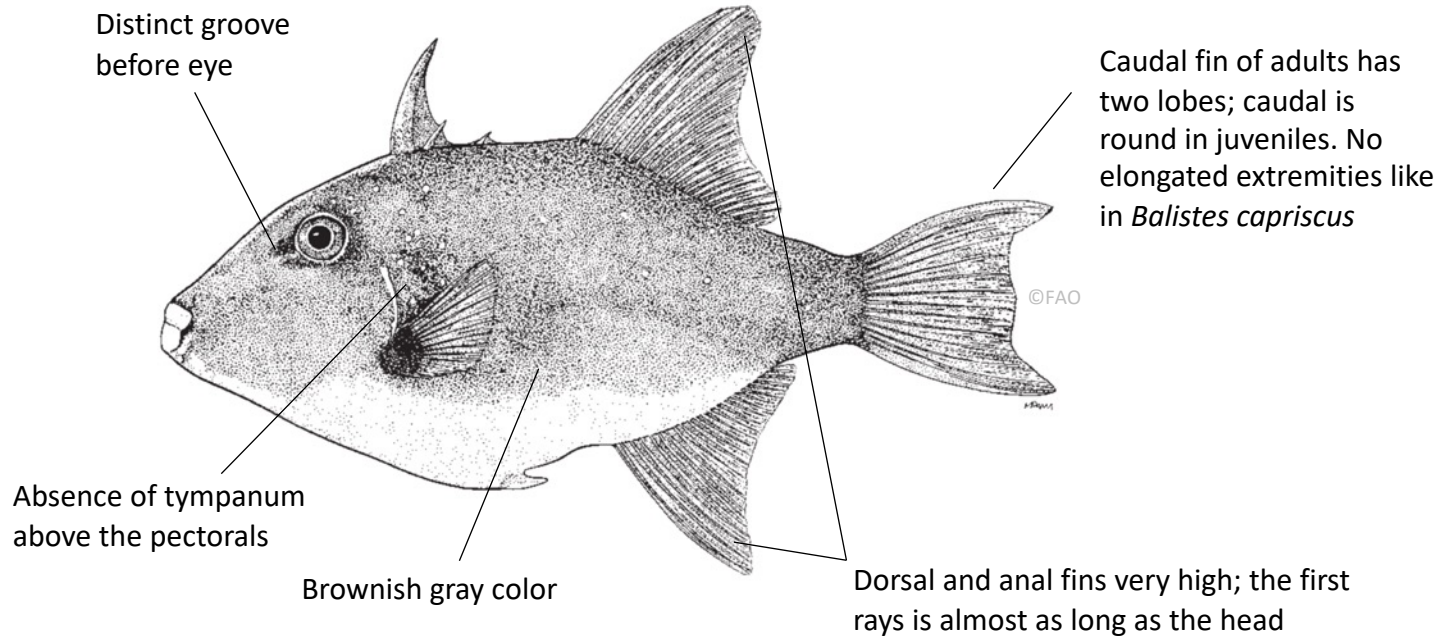
Common species		
Max. length	50 cm	TL
Obs. length	24-42 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





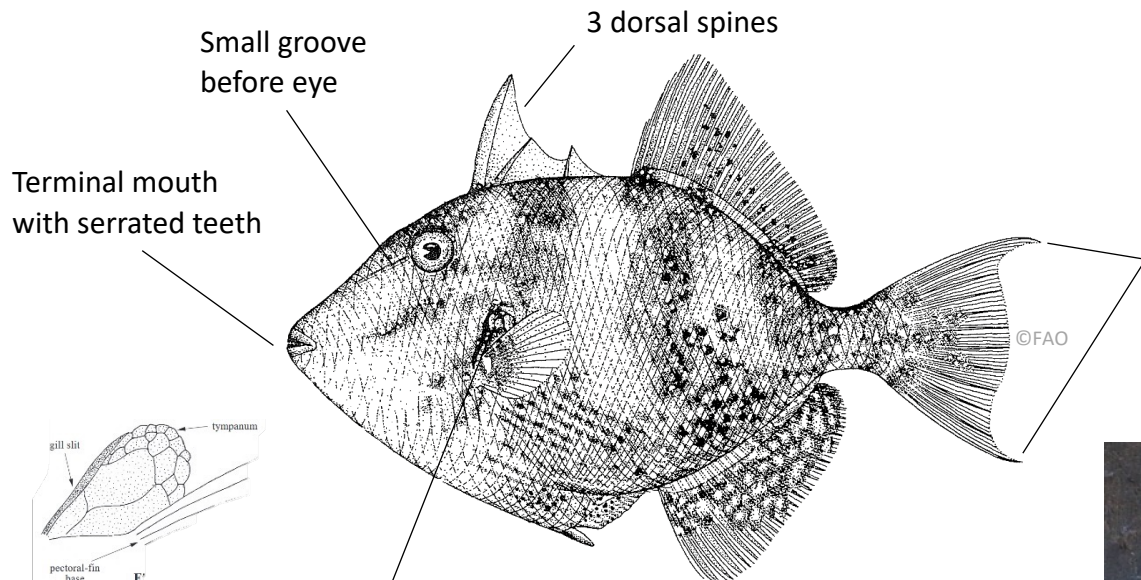
Uncommon species		
Max. length	60 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	





Uncommon species		
Max. length	65 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



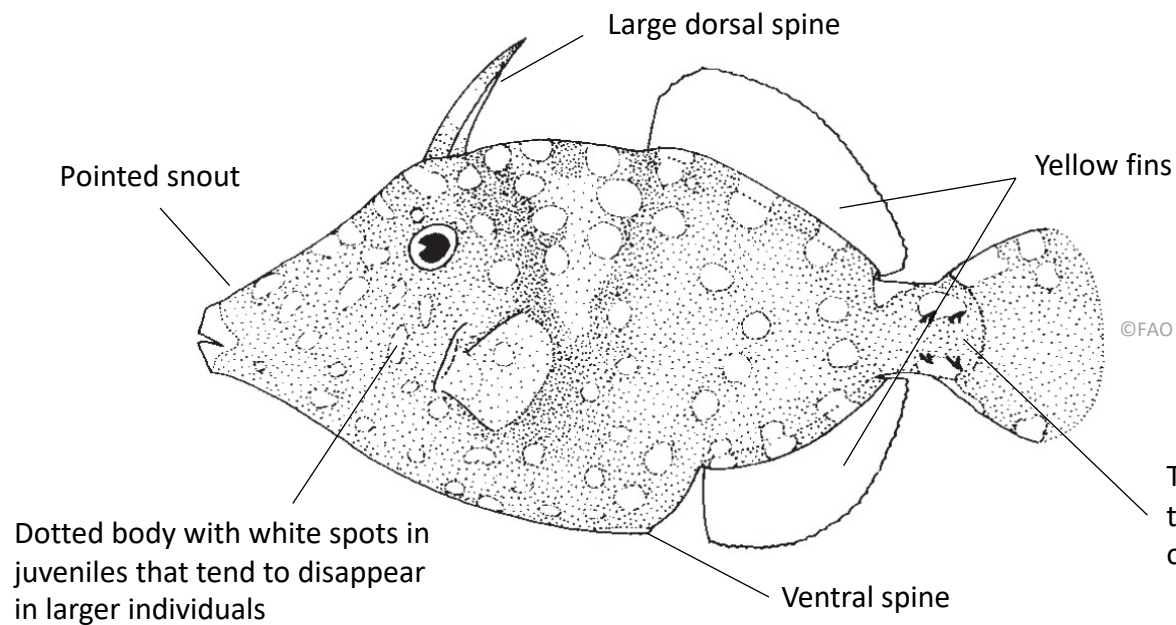


Caudal fin rays slightly extended above and below

Common species		
Max. length	60 cm	TL
Obs. length	19-36 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Flexible tympanum formed by scales above the base of the pectoral fin, just behind the gill slit, large and partially separated scales





Uncommon species		
Max. length	46 cm	TL
Obs. length	18-29 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	

Two pairs of spines on each side of the caudal peduncle (larger and orange in males)



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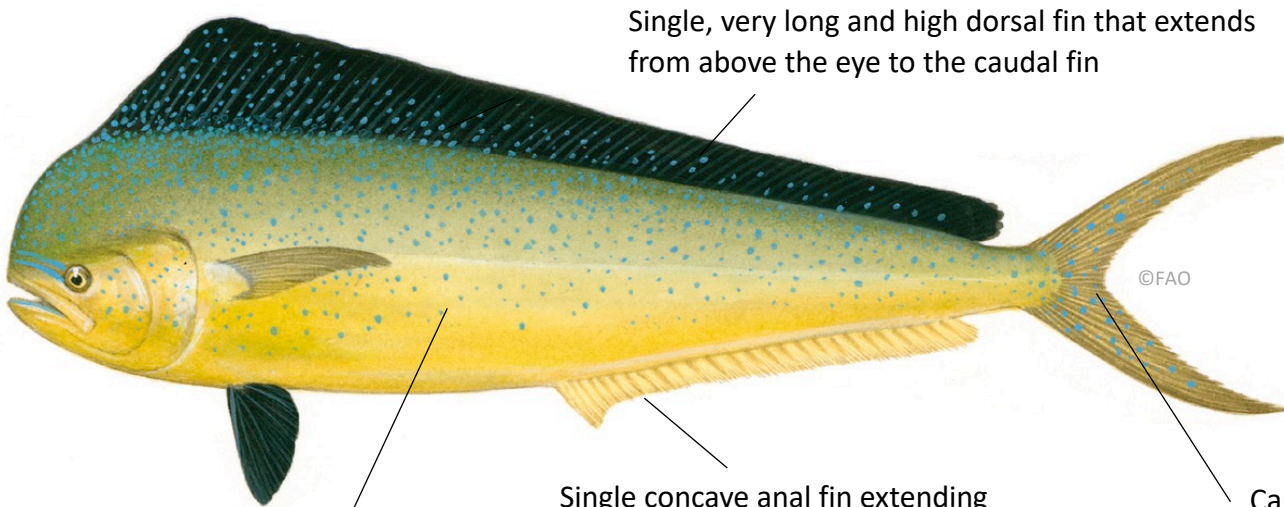
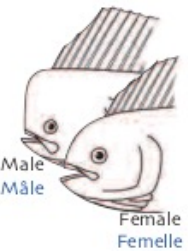
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Common dolphinfish ▶ Dorade coryphène ▶ Llampuga

Coryphaena hippurus



Single, very long and high dorsal fin that extends from above the eye to the caudal fin

Body highly compressed laterally

Single concave anal fin extending from the anus to the caudal fin

Caudal fin deeply forked

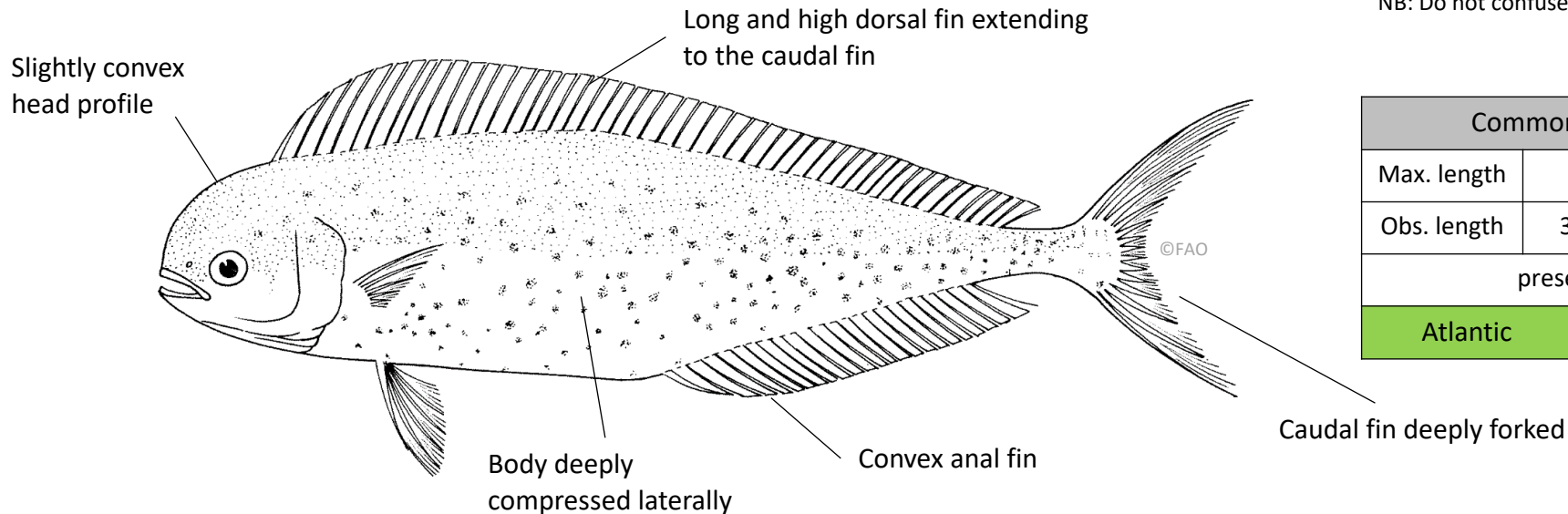
Common species		
Max. length	178 cm	FL
Obs. length	47-116 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Pompano dolphinfish ▶ Coryphène dauphin ▶ Llampuga borda

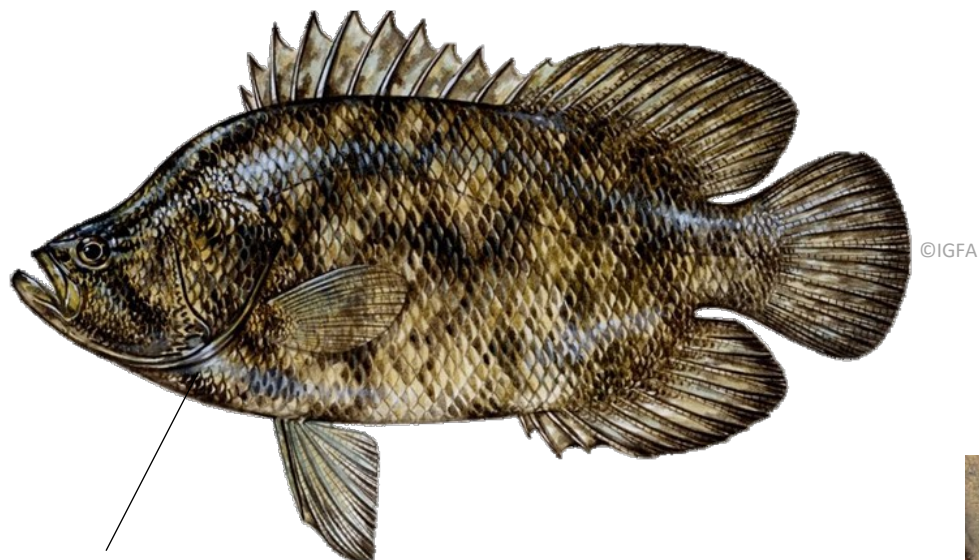
Coryphaena equiselis

NB: Do not confuse with a female *C. hippurus*



Common species		
Max. length	146 cm	FL
Obs. length	30-71 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





©IGFA

Various shades of yellow brown to dark brown with defined spots and mottling. Juveniles often bright yellowish, becoming darker with age

Common species		
Max. length	110 cm	TL
Obs. length	30-58 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



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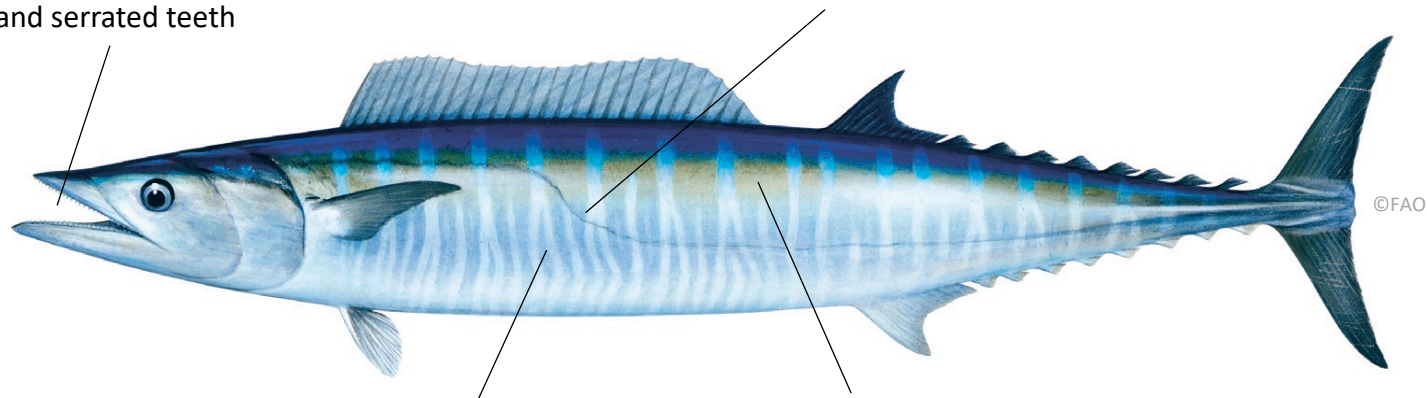
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Large mouth with fine and serrated teeth

Lateral line curving under the first dorsal fin



Very elongated and fusiform body, slightly compressed laterally

Iridescent bluish-green back; silver sides with cobalt-blue vertical bars extending below the lateral line

Common species		
Max. length	246 cm	FL
Obs. length	69-125 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

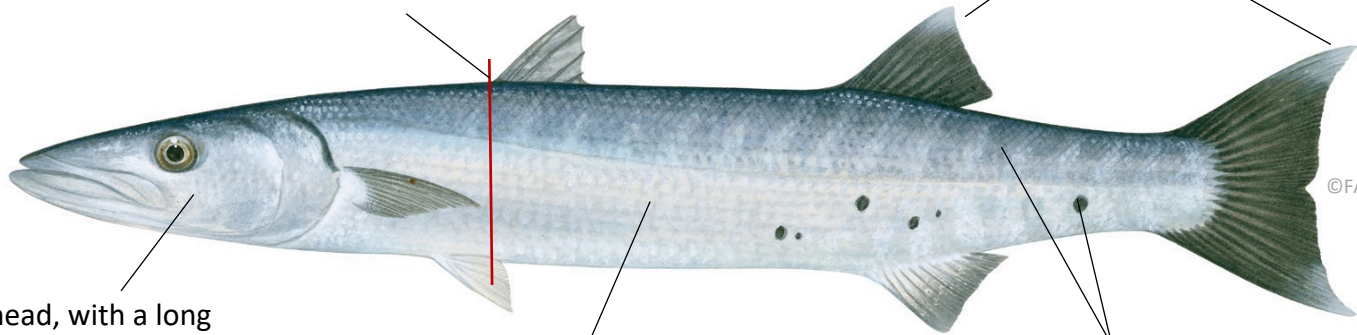


Great barracuda ▶ Barracuda ▶ *Picuda barracuda*

Sphyraena barracuda

Origin of the first dorsal fin slightly behind the origin of the pelvic fin

Second dorsal, anal and caudal fins purple to black with whitish tips



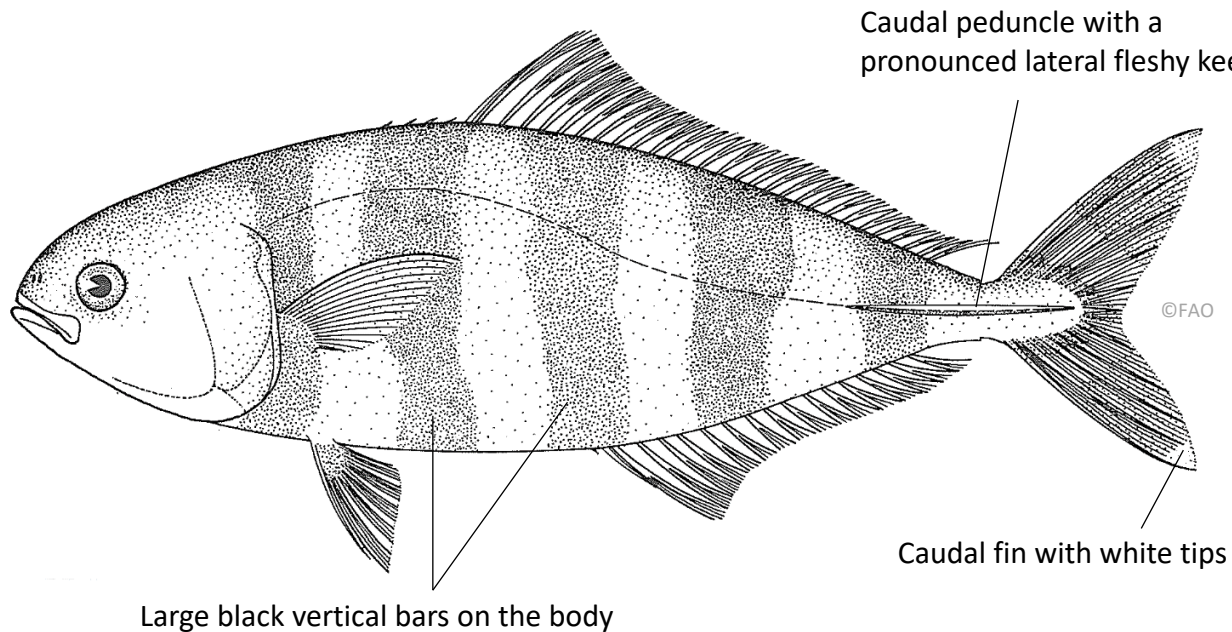
Large head, with a long and pointed snout

Elongated and slightly compressed body

Dark bars and spots

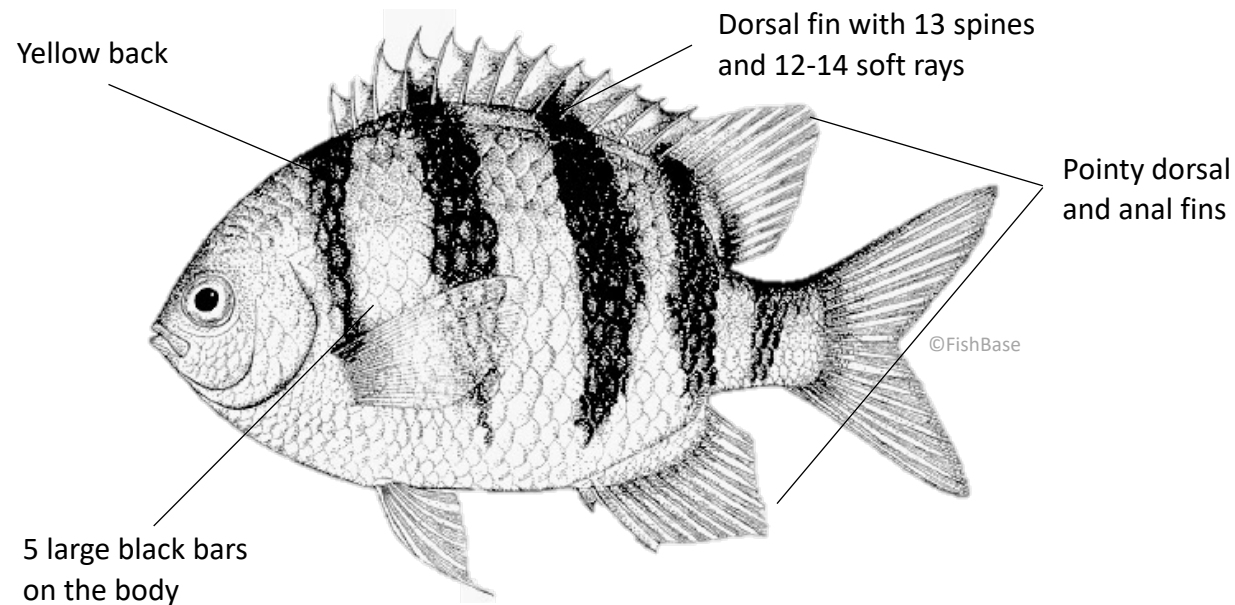
Common species		
Max. length	200 cm	TL
Obs. length	66-129 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Common species		
Max. length	65 cm	FL
Obs. length	17-37 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





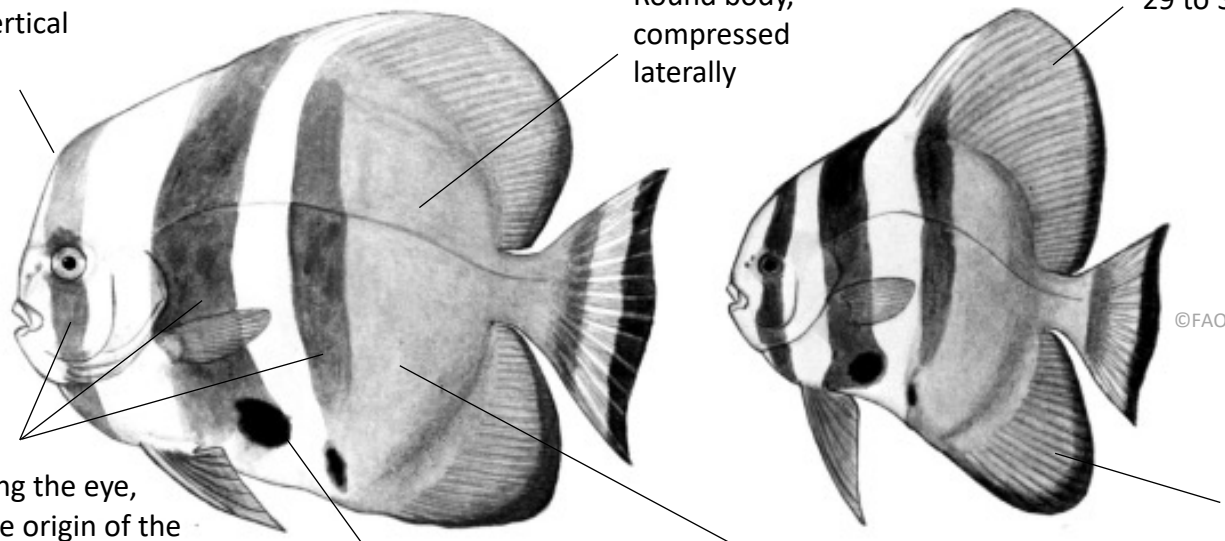
Rare species		
Max. length	17 cm	TL
Obs. length	6-11 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	



Hump and vertical head profile

Round body, compressed laterally

29 to 34 soft rays



Common species		
Max. length	70 cm	TL
Obs. length	13-47 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Black band crossing the eye, 2nd band from the origin of the dorsal fin reaching the belly, 3rd small band above the anal fin

Black spot under the pectoral fin

Silverish, yellowish body

21 à 26 soft rays



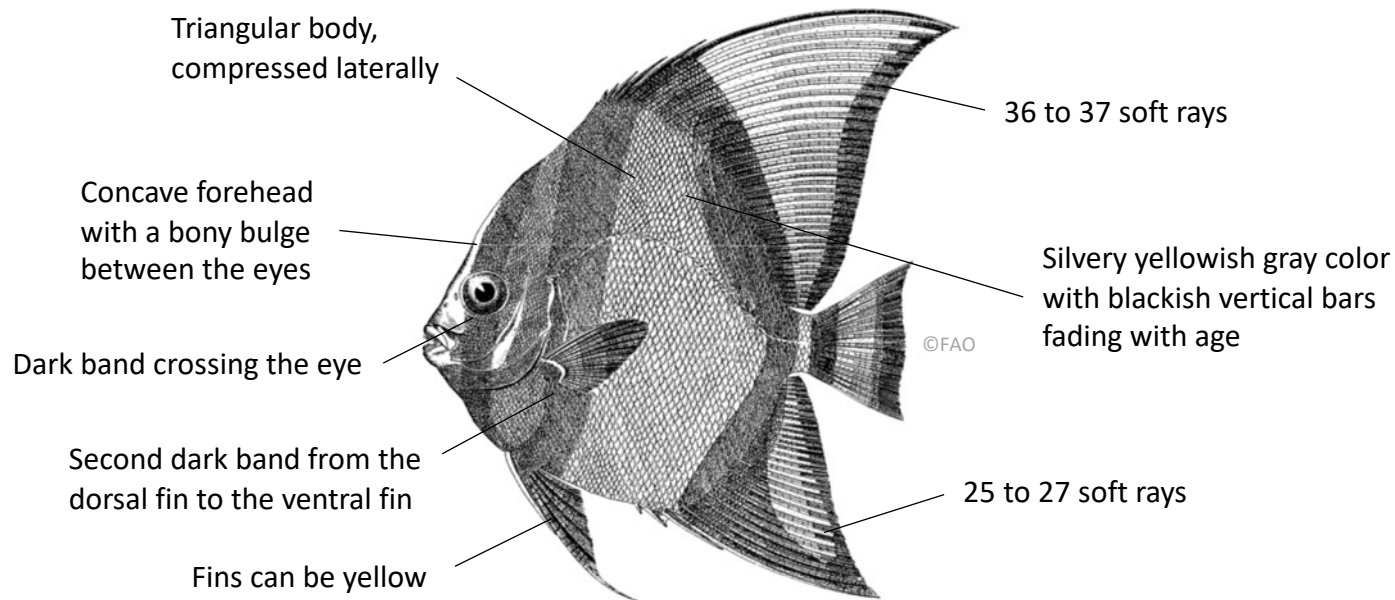
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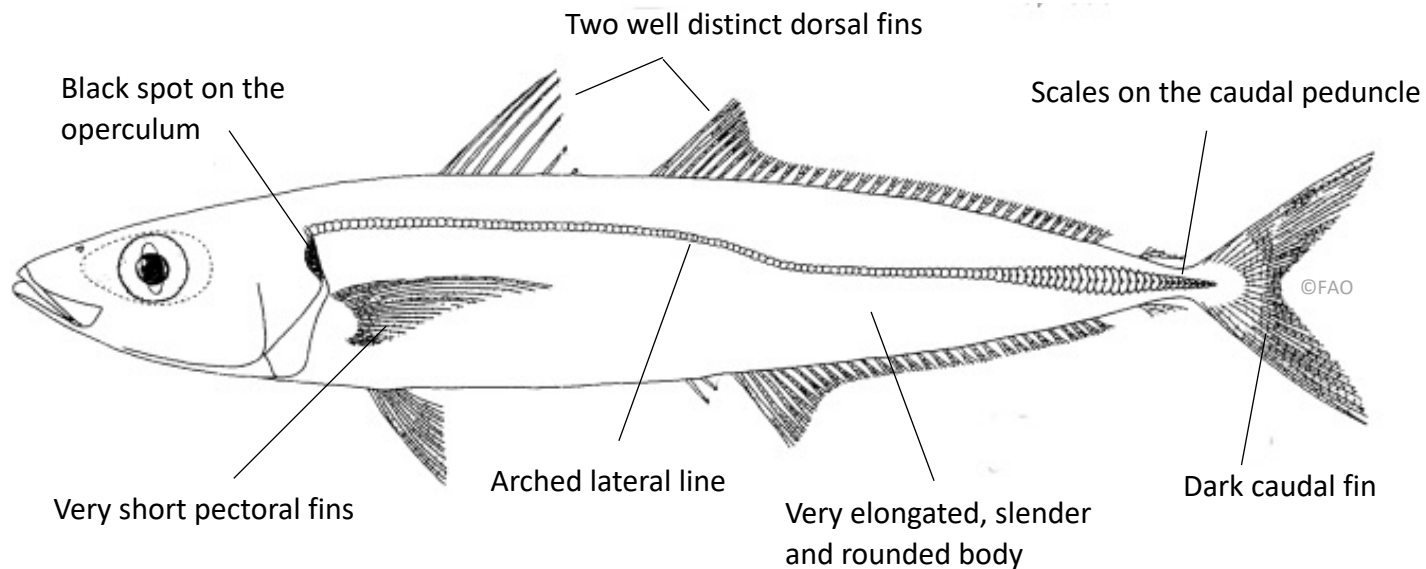


Common species		
Max. length	60 cm	TL
Obs. length	14-36 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



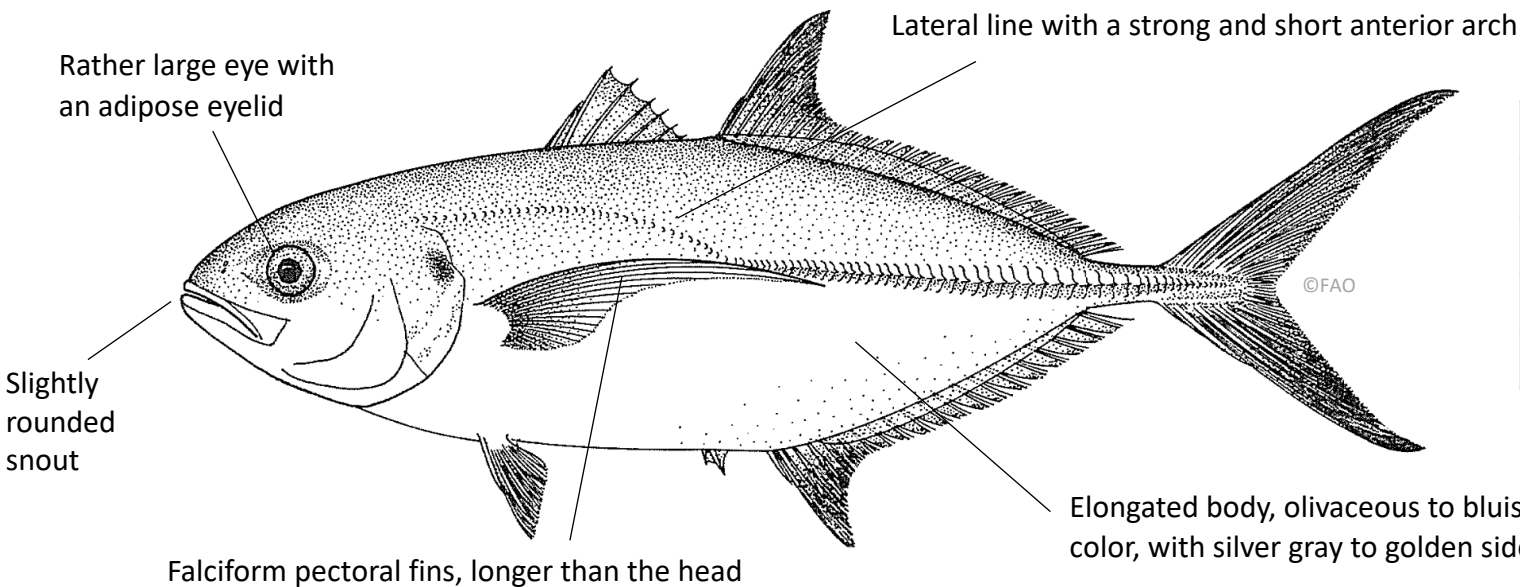
Mackerel scad ▶ Comète maquereau ▶ Macarela indica

Decapterus macarellus



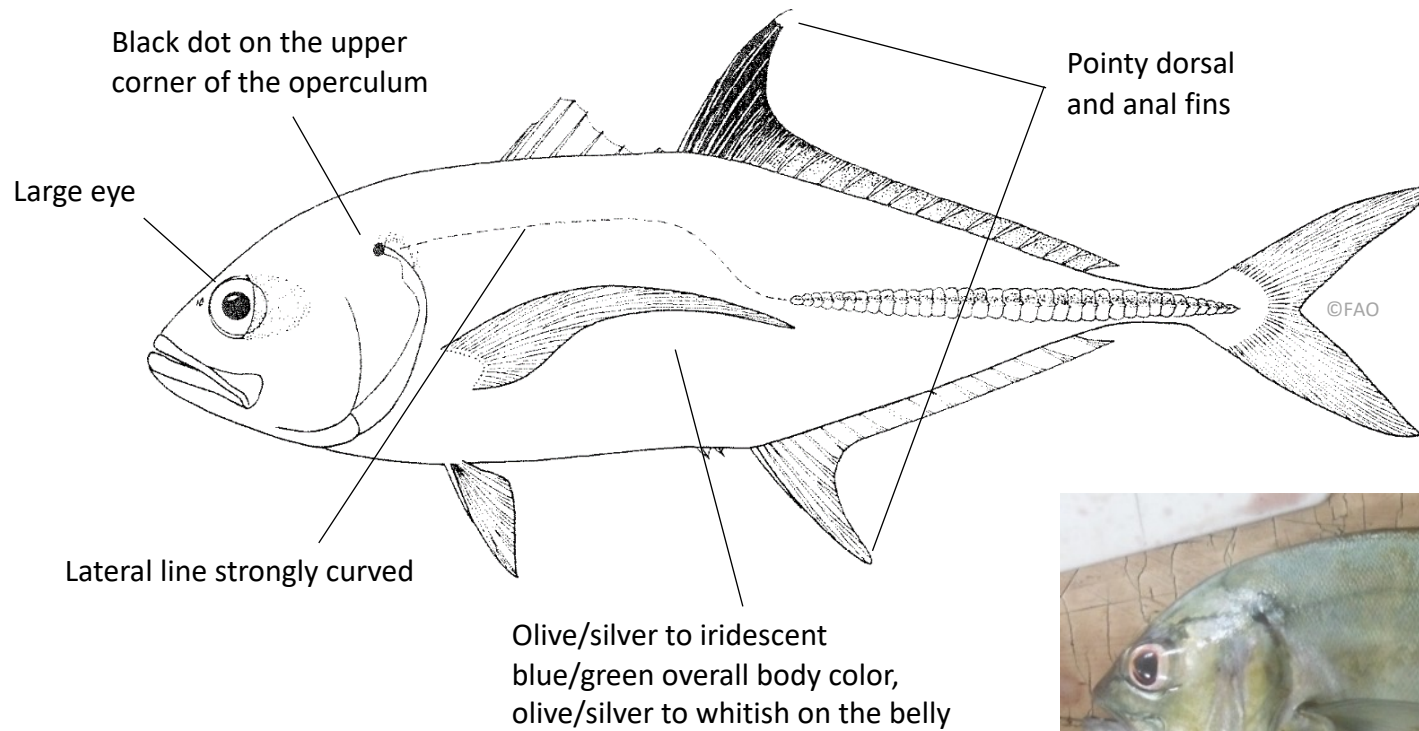
Common species		
Max. length	70 cm	FL
Obs. length	24-43 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





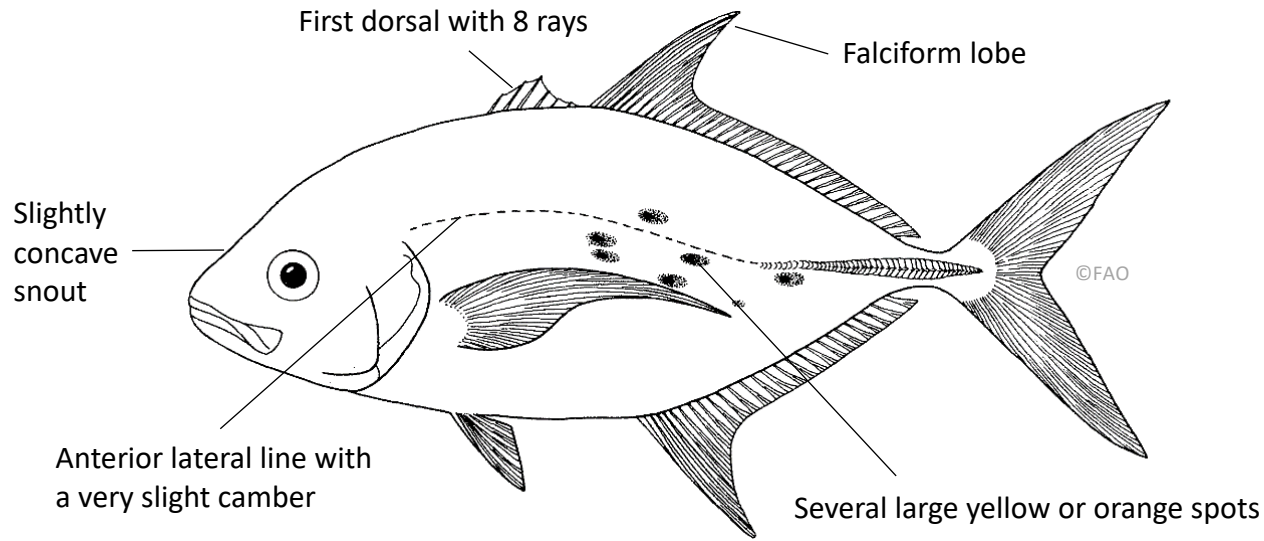
Common species		
Max. length	60 cm	FL
Obs. length	25-40 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





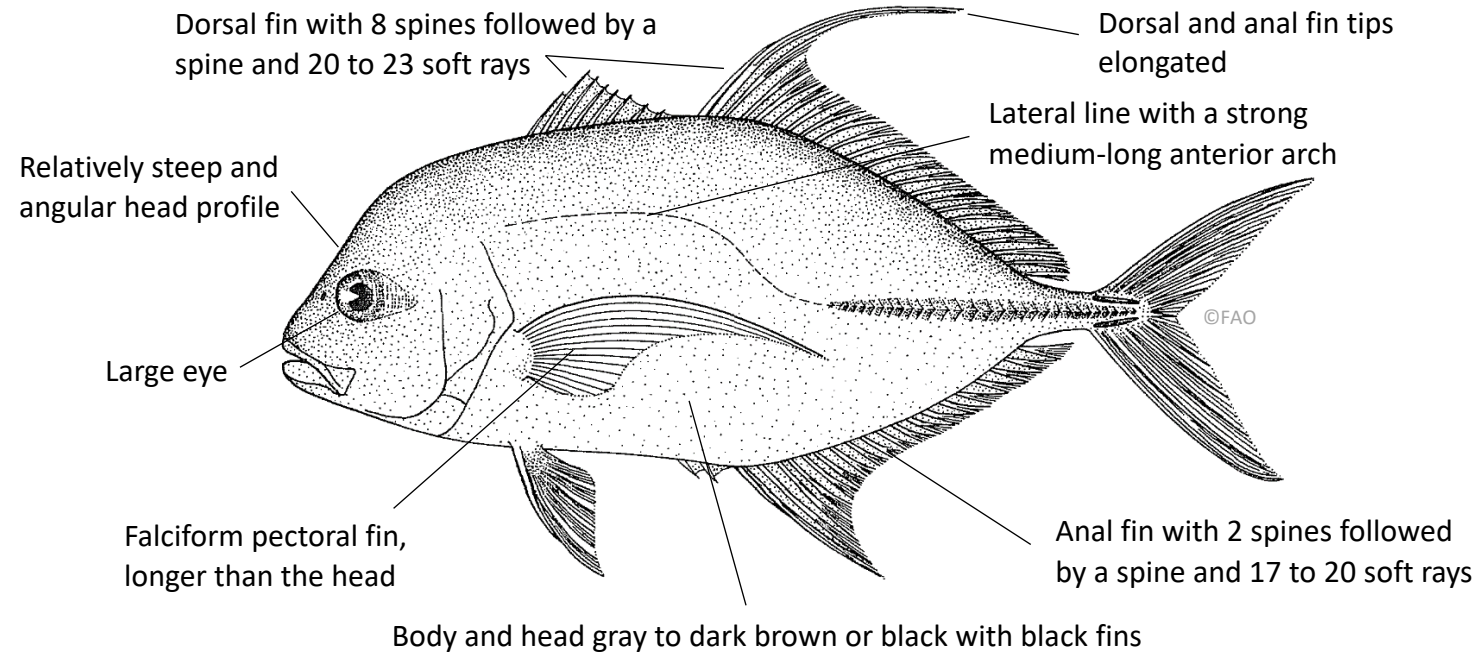
Common species		
Max. length	110 cm	FL
Obs. length	24-62 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





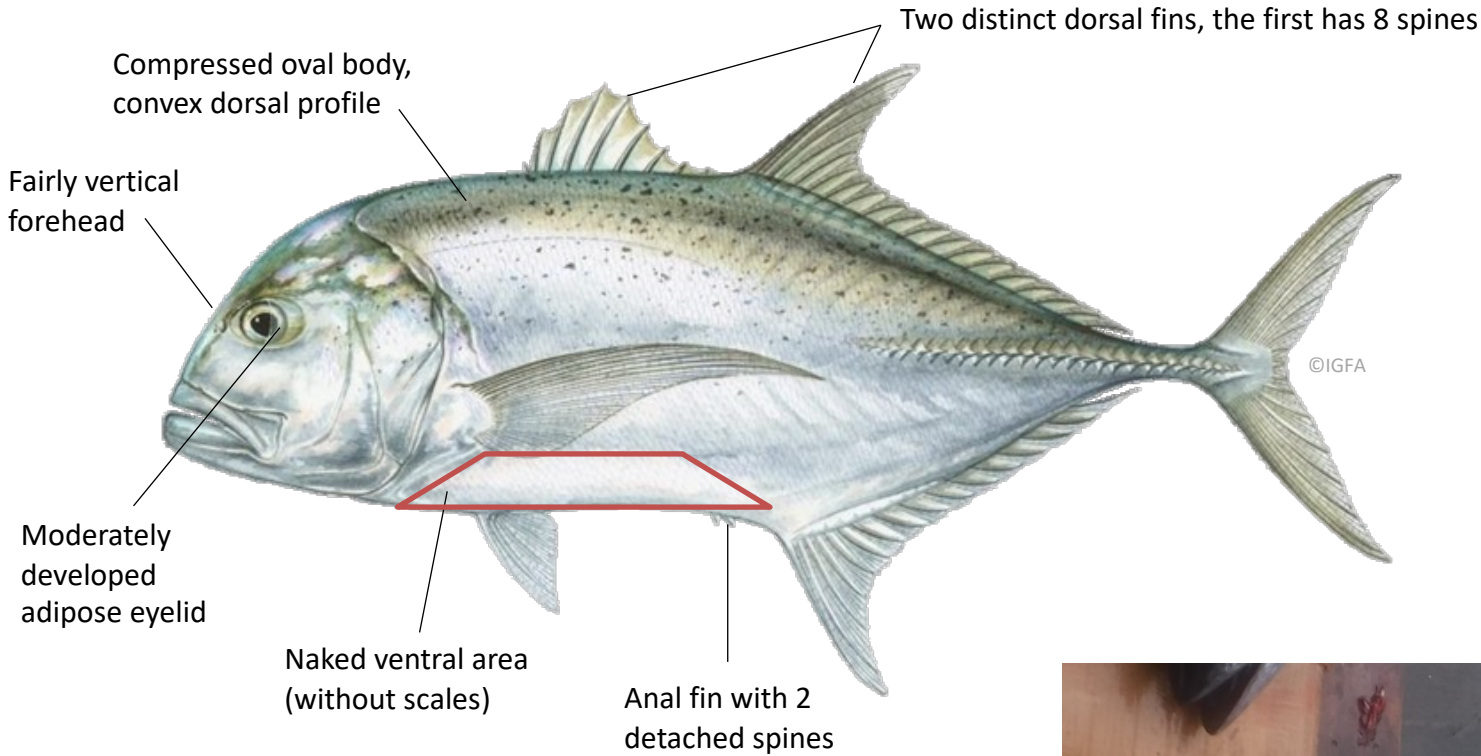
Common species		
Max. length	67 cm	FL
Obs. length	21-33 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rather rare species		
Max. length	93 cm	FL
Obs. length	31-37 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Uncommon species		
Max. length	155 cm	FL
Obs. length	61-78 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	



Whitetongue jack ▶ **Carangue langue blanche** ▶ **Jurel lengua blanca**

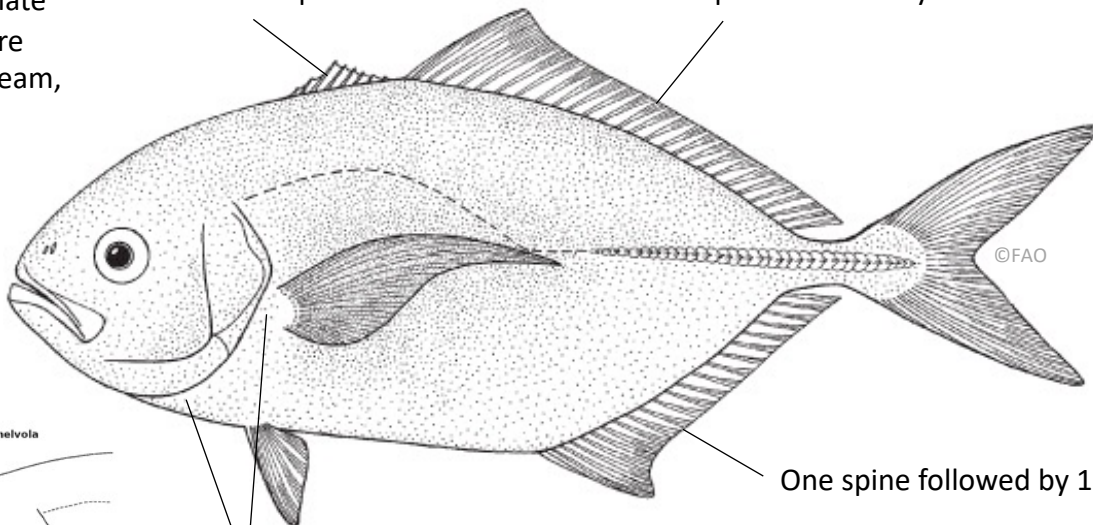
Uraspis helvola



Tongue, palate and floor are white or cream, the rest is blue/black

8 short thin spines

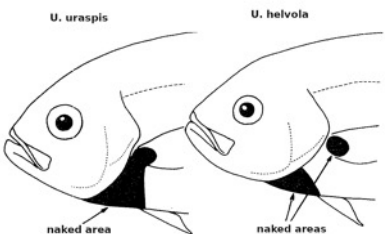
One spine followed by 27 to 32 soft rays



©FAO

One spine followed by 19 to 23 soft rays

2 naked areas (without scales)



U. uraspis

U. helvola

naked area

naked areas

Common species		
Max. length	53 cm	FL
Obs. length	21-32 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



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Whitemouth jack ▶ Carangue paia ▶ Jurel paia

Uraspis uraspis

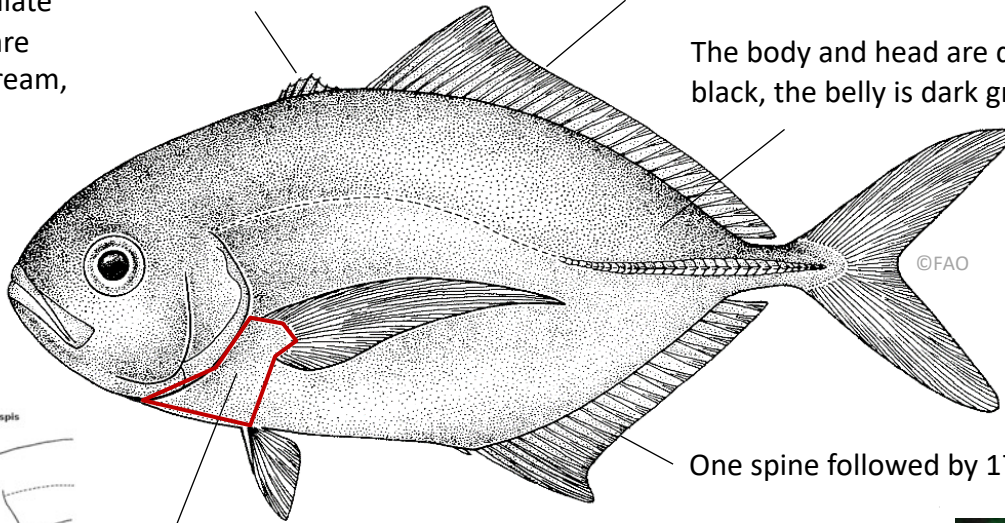


Tongue, palate and floor are white or cream, the rest is blue/black

8 short thin spines

One spine followed by 25 to 30 soft rays

The body and head are dark, the back is black, the belly is dark gray or pale

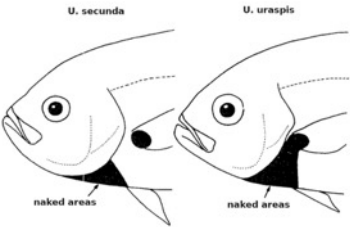


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One spine followed by 17 to 22 soft rays

Large naked area (without scales) below the operculum reaching the origin of the pelvic fins

Common species		
Max. length	28 cm	FL
Obs. length	25-28 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



U. secunda

U. uraspis

naked areas

naked areas



©IRD



©IRD



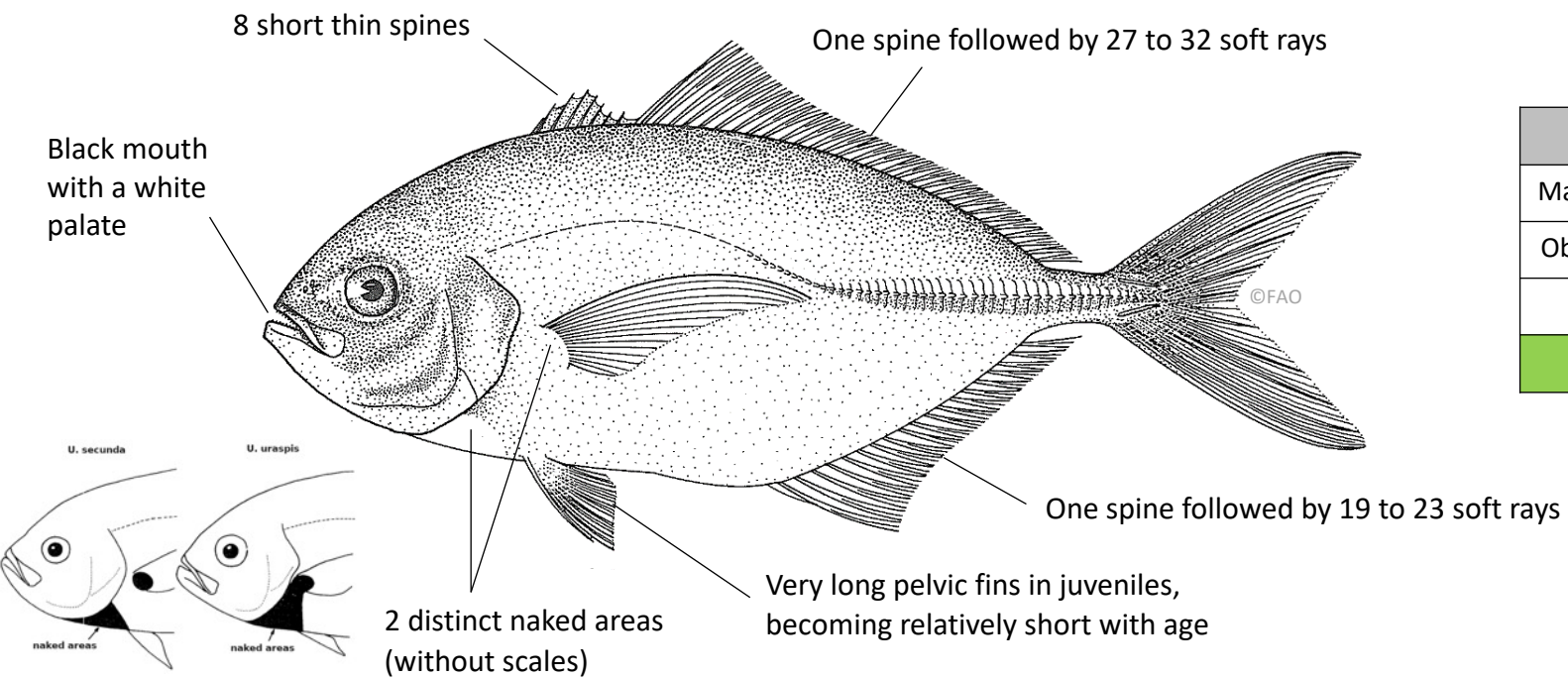
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Cottonmouth jack ▶ Carangue coton ▶ Jurel volantín

Uraspis secunda

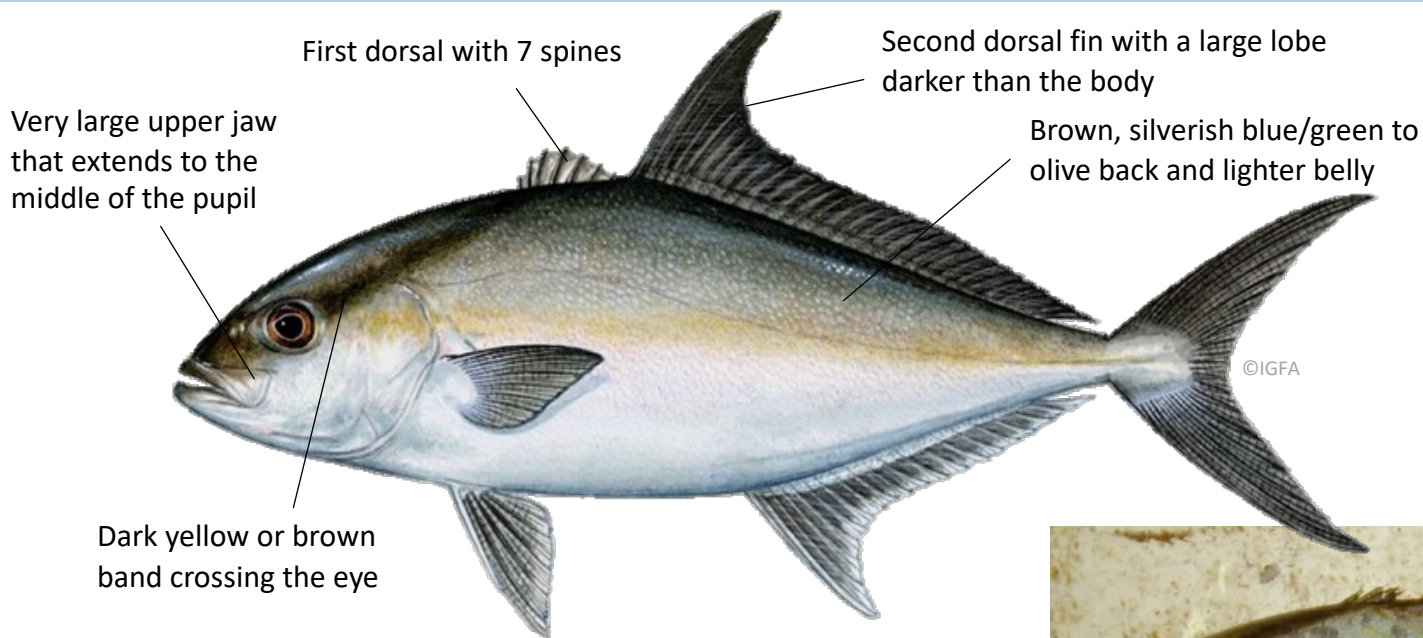


Common species		
Max. length	45 cm	FL
Obs. length	23-39 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Longfin yellowtail ▶ Sériole limon ▶ Madregal limón

Seriola rivoliana

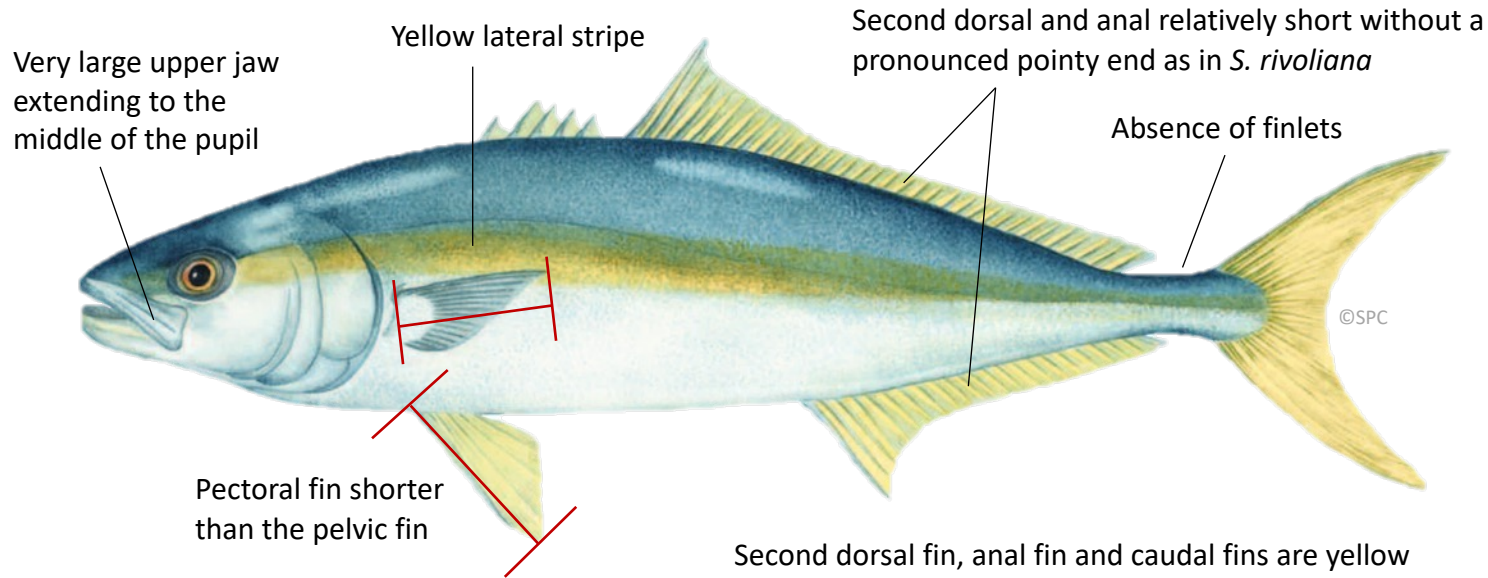


Common species		
Max. length	160 cm	FL
Obs. length	26-125 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Yellowtail amberjack ▶ Sérieole chicard ▶ Madregal rabo amarillo

Seriola lalandi



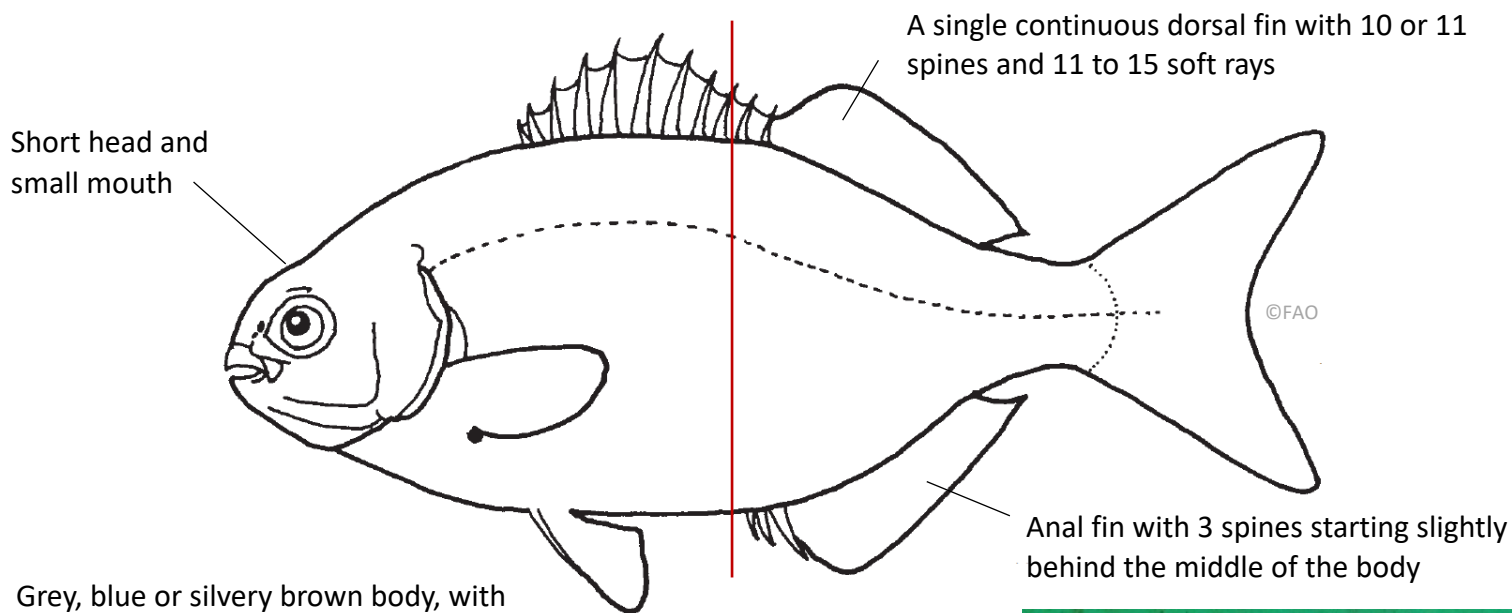
Rare species		
Max. length	232 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Sea chub nei ▶ Calicagère nca ▶ Chopa nep

Kyphosus spp

NB: Code KYP to be used when it is impossible to discriminate KYV and KYS



Grey, blue or silvery brown body, with distinct longitudinal lines on the sides

Common species		
Max. length	80 cm	TL
Obs. length	20-50 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

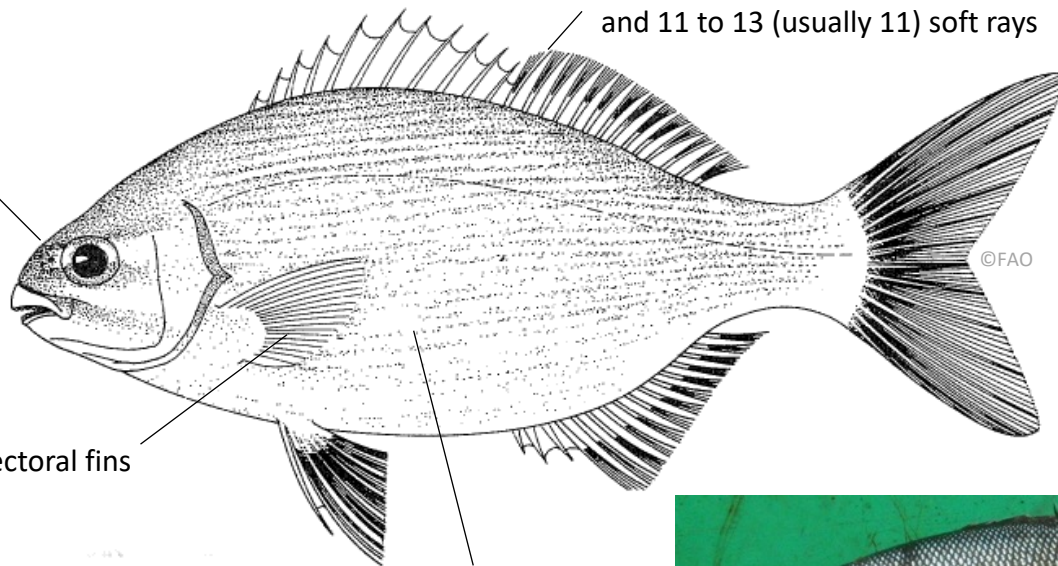


Bermuda sea chub ▶ Calicagère blanche ▶ Chopa blanca

Kyphosus sectatrix

Short head and small mouth

A single continuous dorsal fin with 11 spines and 11 to 13 (usually 11) soft rays



Short pectoral fins

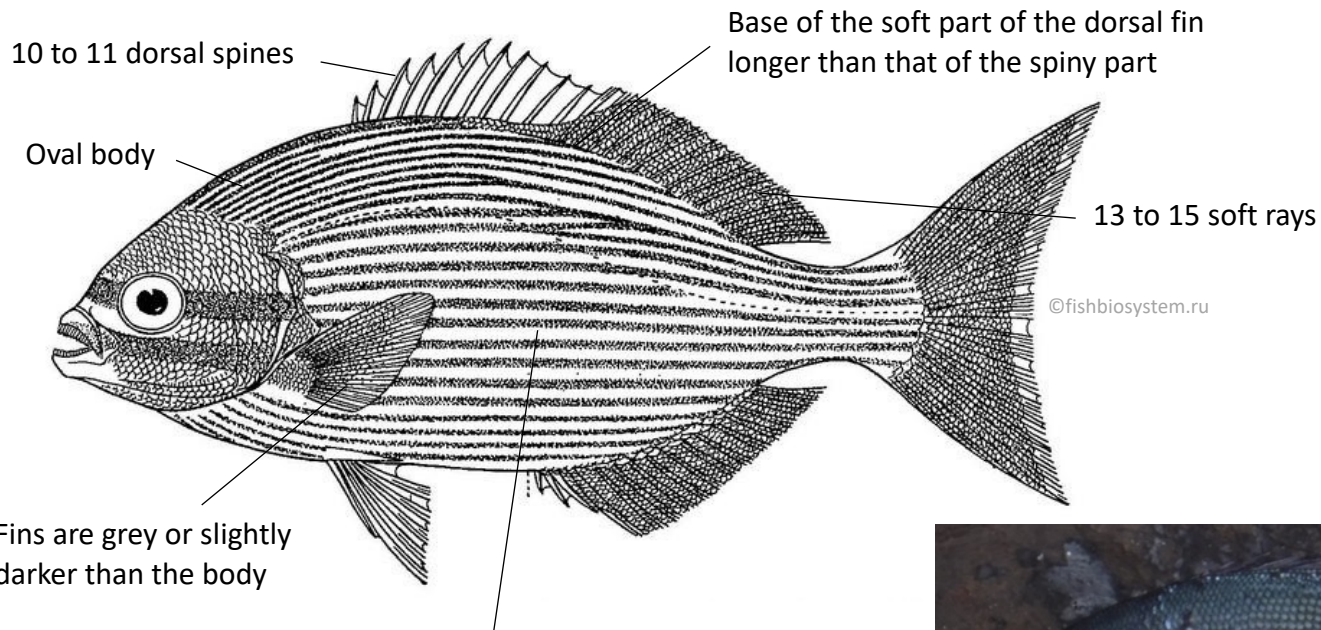
Grey body with pale yellow lines on the side and a yellow line from the corner of the mouth

Common species		
Max. length	76 cm	TL
Obs. length	23-44 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	



Brassy chub ▶ Saupe grise à lignes jaunes ▶ Chopa rayada

Kyphosus vaigiensis



Silverish body with a bluish sheen, with horizontal golden lines along the body

Common species		
Max. length	70 cm	TL
Obs. length	20-36 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	



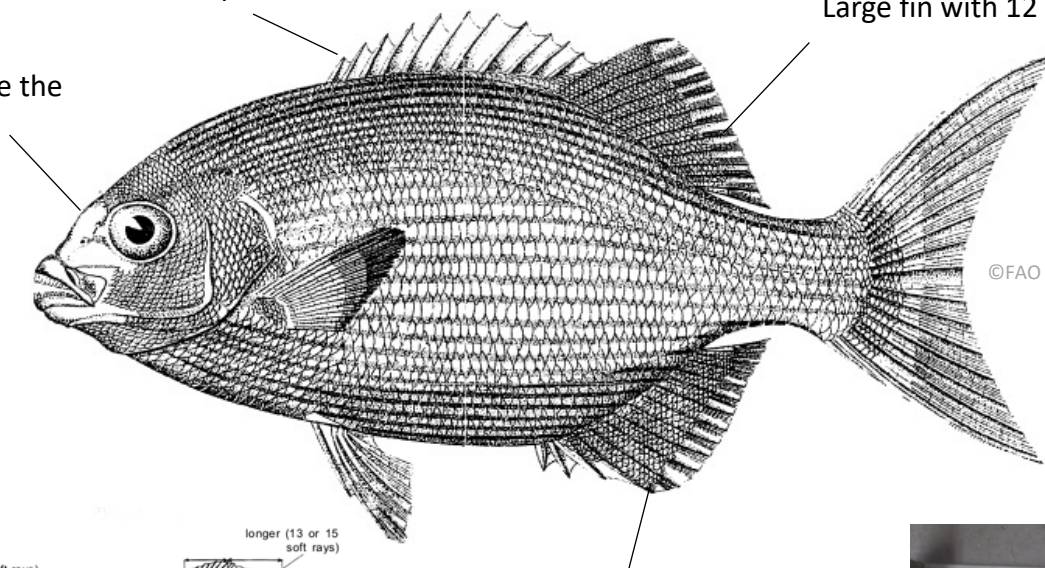
Blue sea chub ▶ **Calicagère bleue** ▶ **Chopa azul**

Kyphosus cinerascens

11 dorsal spines

Large fin with 12 soft rays extending backwards

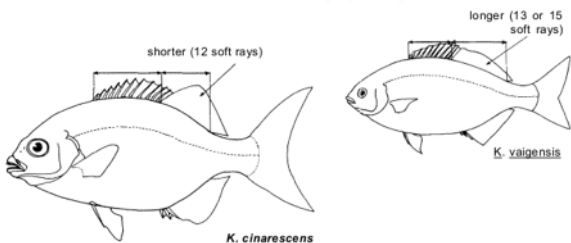
Bump above the nostrils



©FAO

Common species		
Max. length	55 cm	TL
Obs. length	18-37 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Large anal fin extending backwards



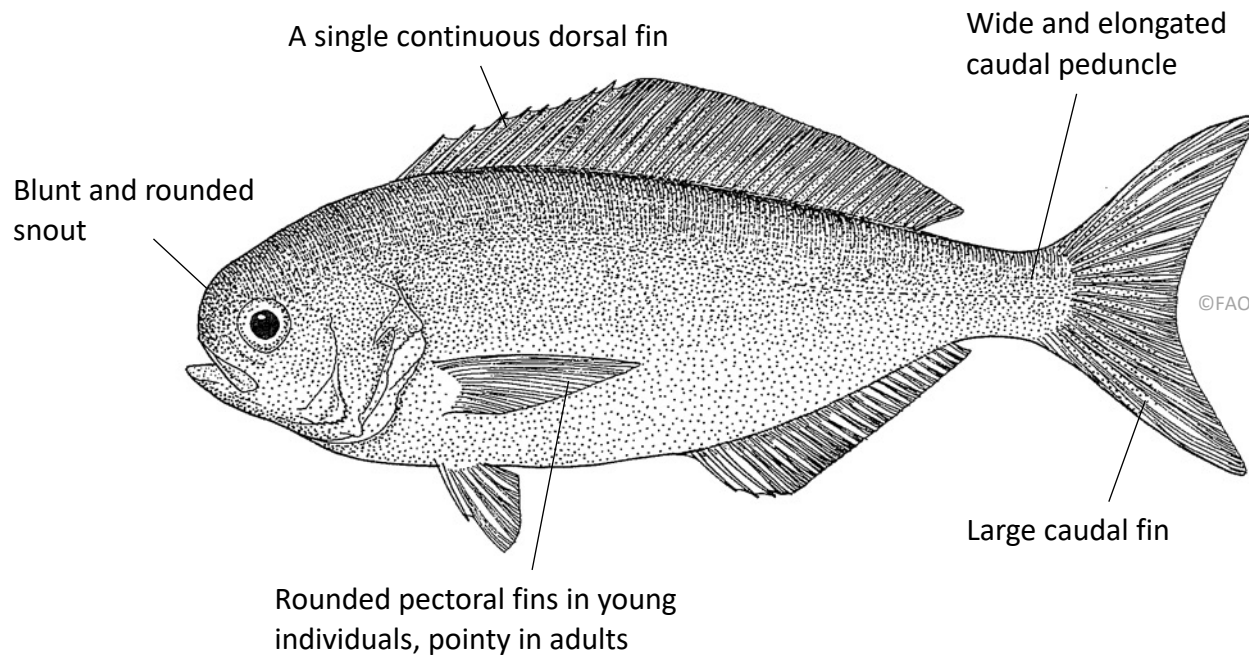
©IRD



©TAAF

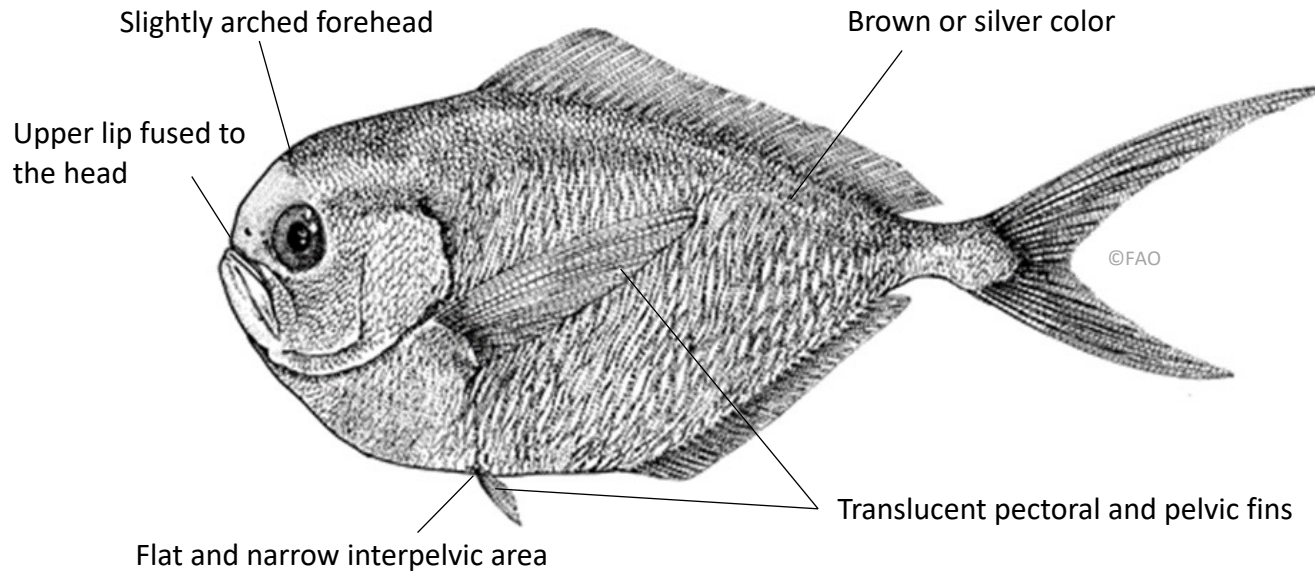


©IRD



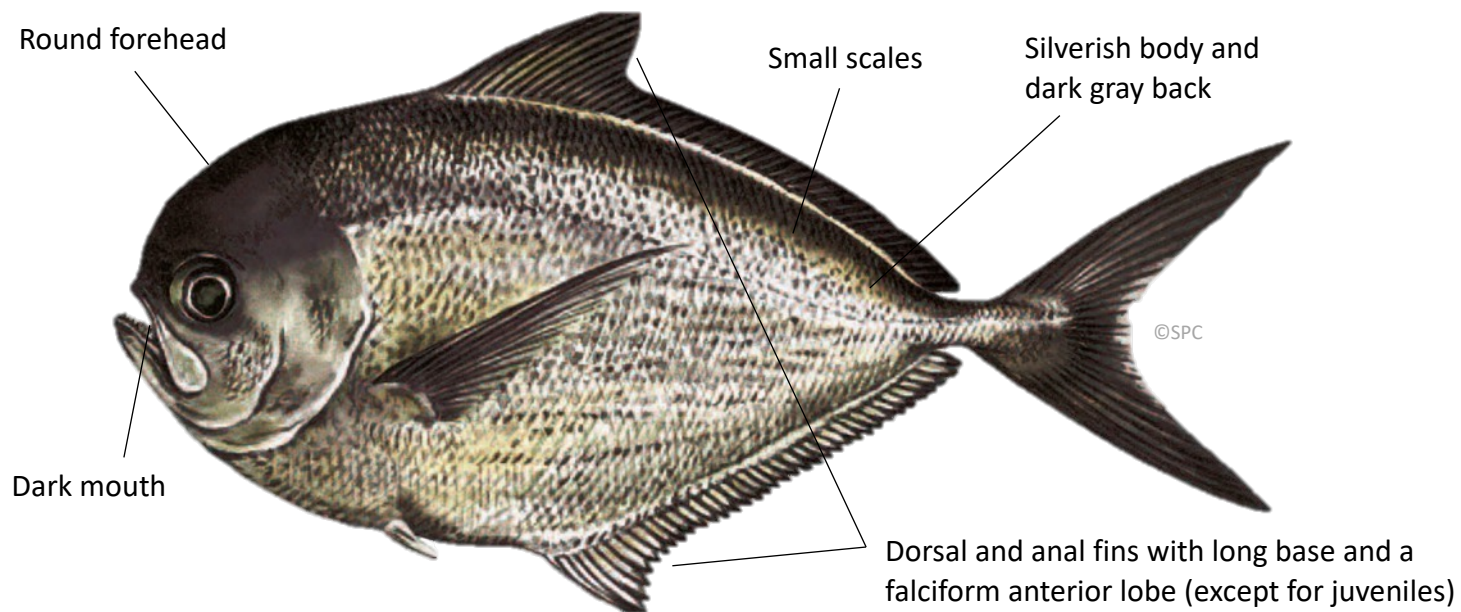
Rare species		
Max. length	100 cm	TL
Obs. length	39-47 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rare species		
Max. length	42 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	

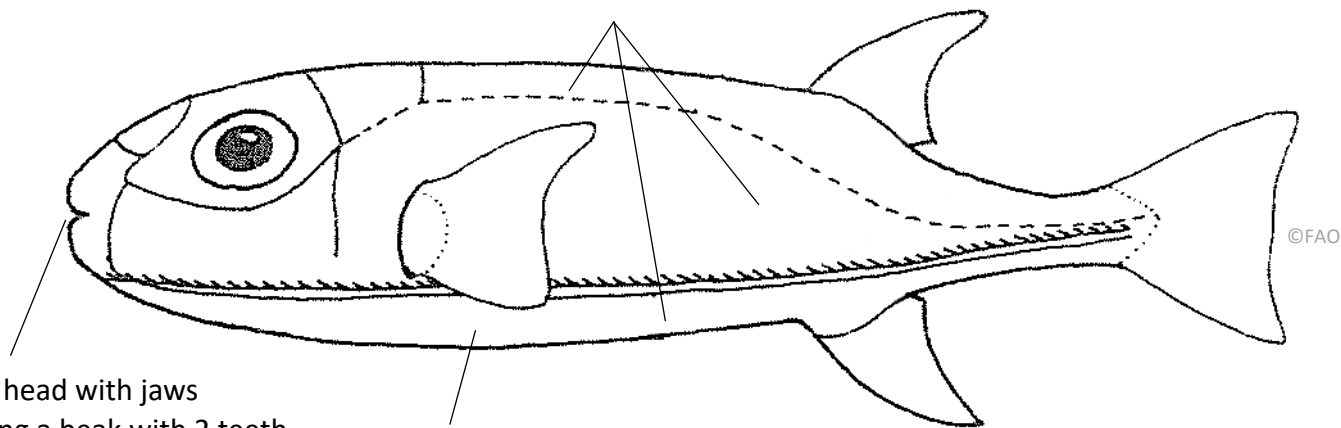




Rare species		
Max. length	78 cm	FL
Obs. length	16-28 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Greenish-grey back, silverish sides, white belly



Blunt head with jaws forming a beak with 2 teeth

Rough skin and belly pouch that can inflate

Common species

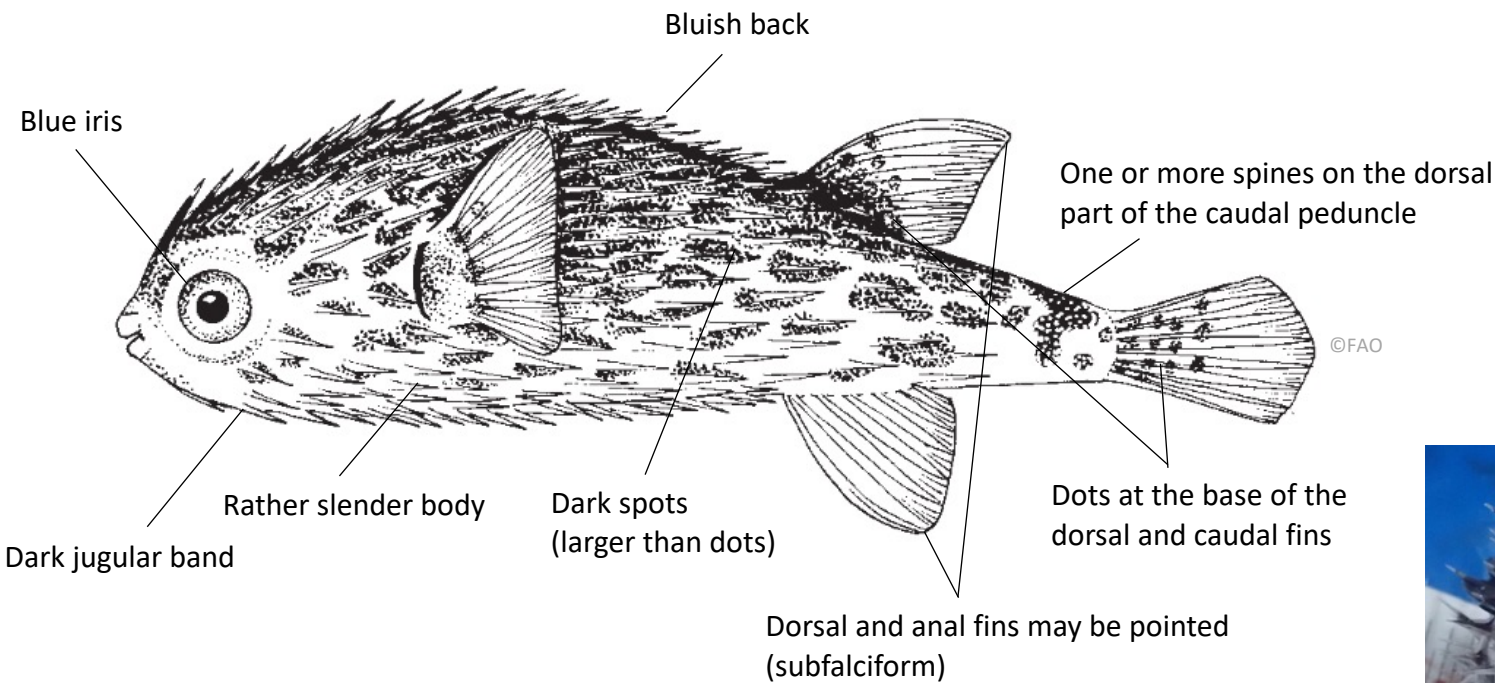
Max. length	61 cm	TL
Obs. length	26-47 cm	TL

present in

Atlantic

Indian





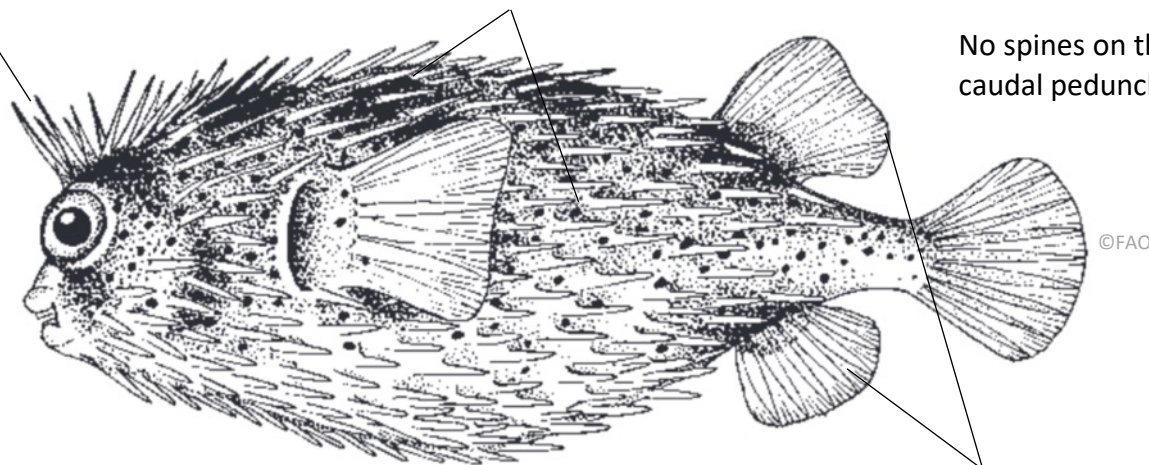
Common species		
Max. length	27 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Very long frontal spines

Light body color with large dark spots on the back and small black spots on the sides

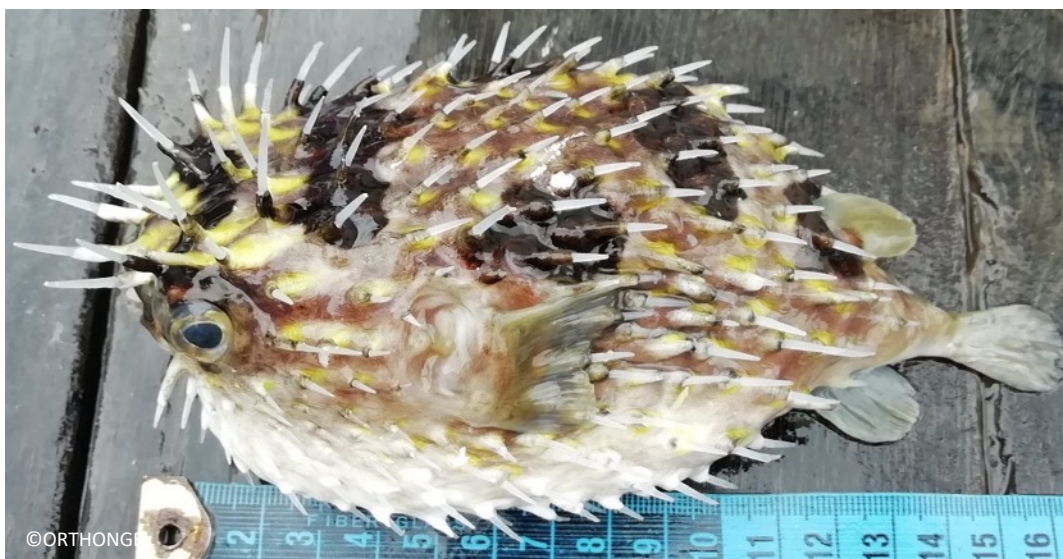
No spines on the caudal peduncle



No spots on the fins

Rounded dorsal and anal fins rounded

Uncommon species		
Max. length	50 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



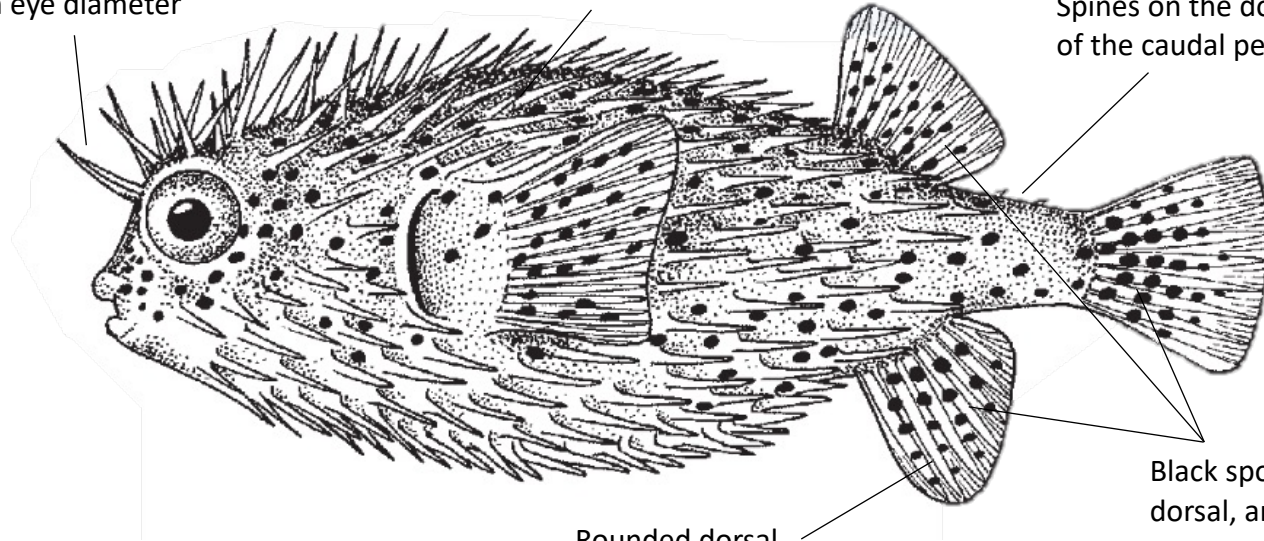
Spotted porcupinefish ▶ Porc-épic boubou ▶ Pejerizo común

Diodon hystrix

Frontal spines longer than eye diameter

Stocky, light brown body with many black dots

Spines on the dorsal part of the caudal peduncle



©FAO

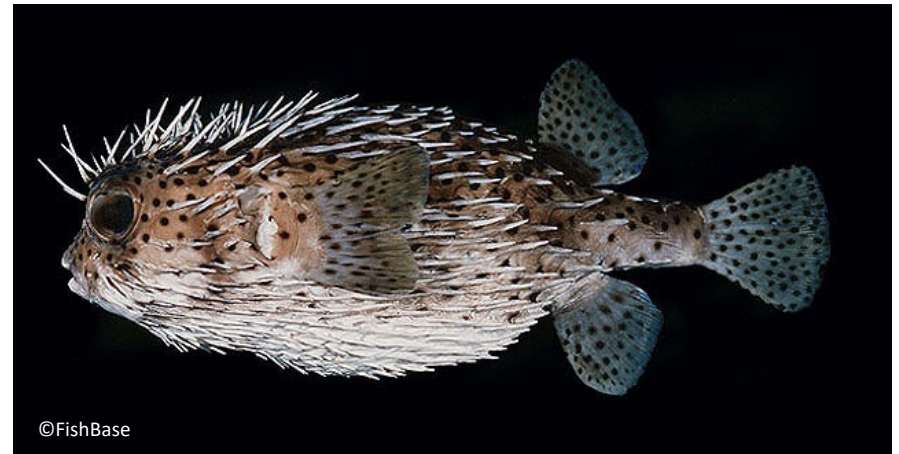
Black spots on the pectoral, dorsal, anal and caudal fins

Rounded dorsal and anal fins

Rare species		
Max. length	91 cm	TL
Obs. length	8-33 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



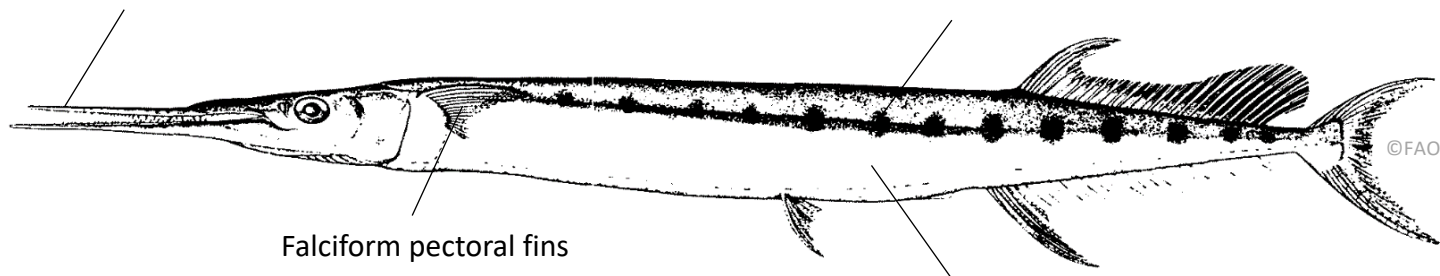
©IRD



©FishBase

Very elongated upper and lower jaws
with small pointy teeth

Black spots in the middle of the body



Falciform pectoral fins

Laterally compressed body

Common species		
Max. length	140 cm	TL
Obs. length	32-116 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



©IRD



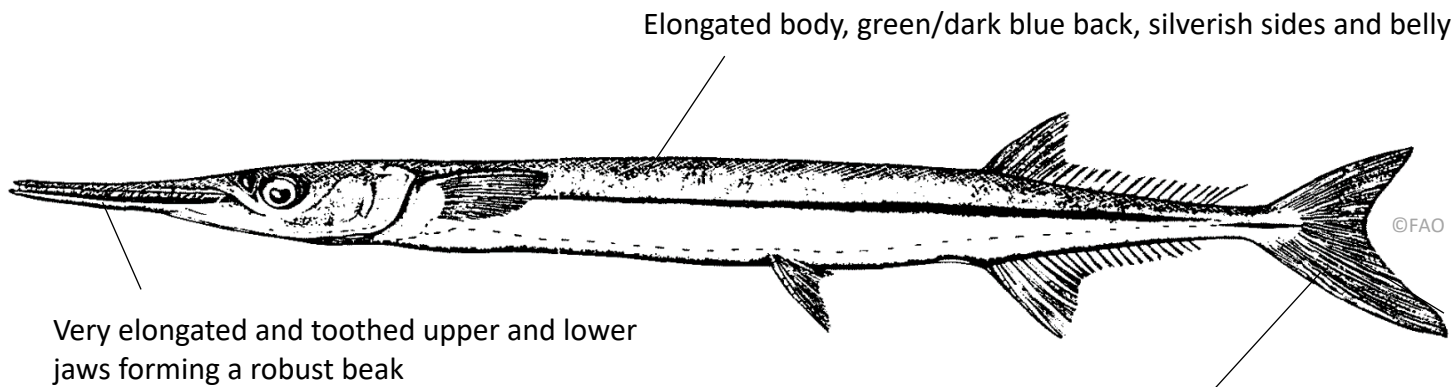
©ORTHONGEL



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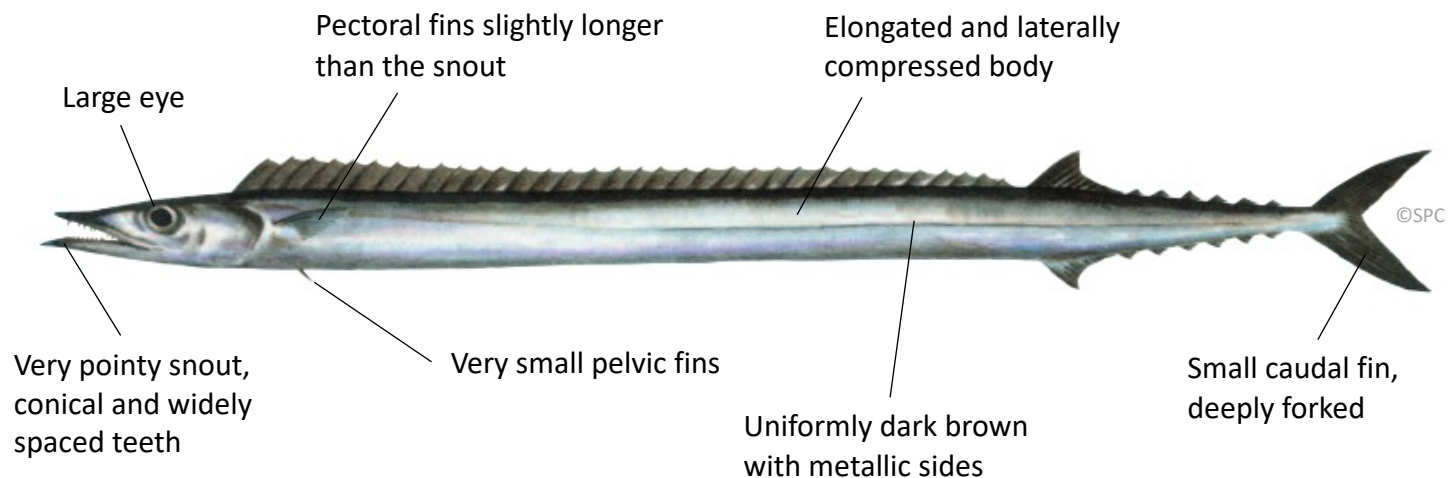
©ORTHONGEL



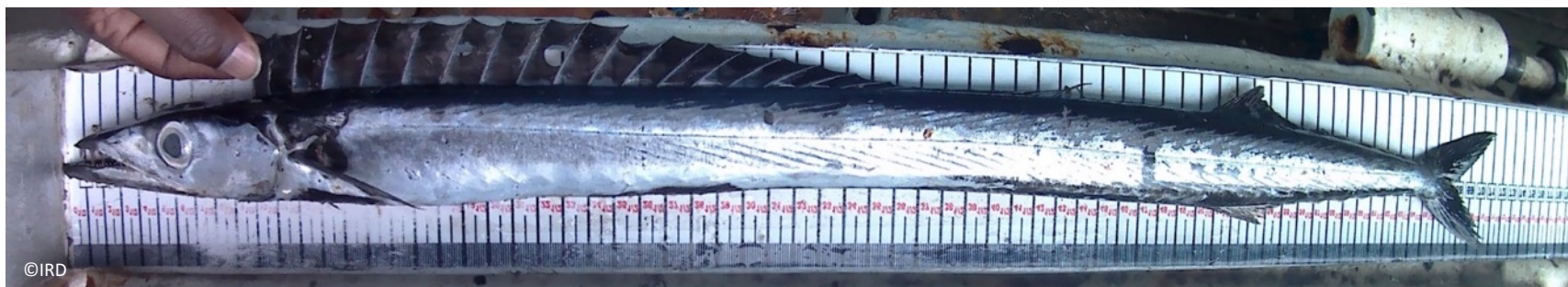
Common species		
Max. length	150 cm	TL
Obs. length	80-120 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

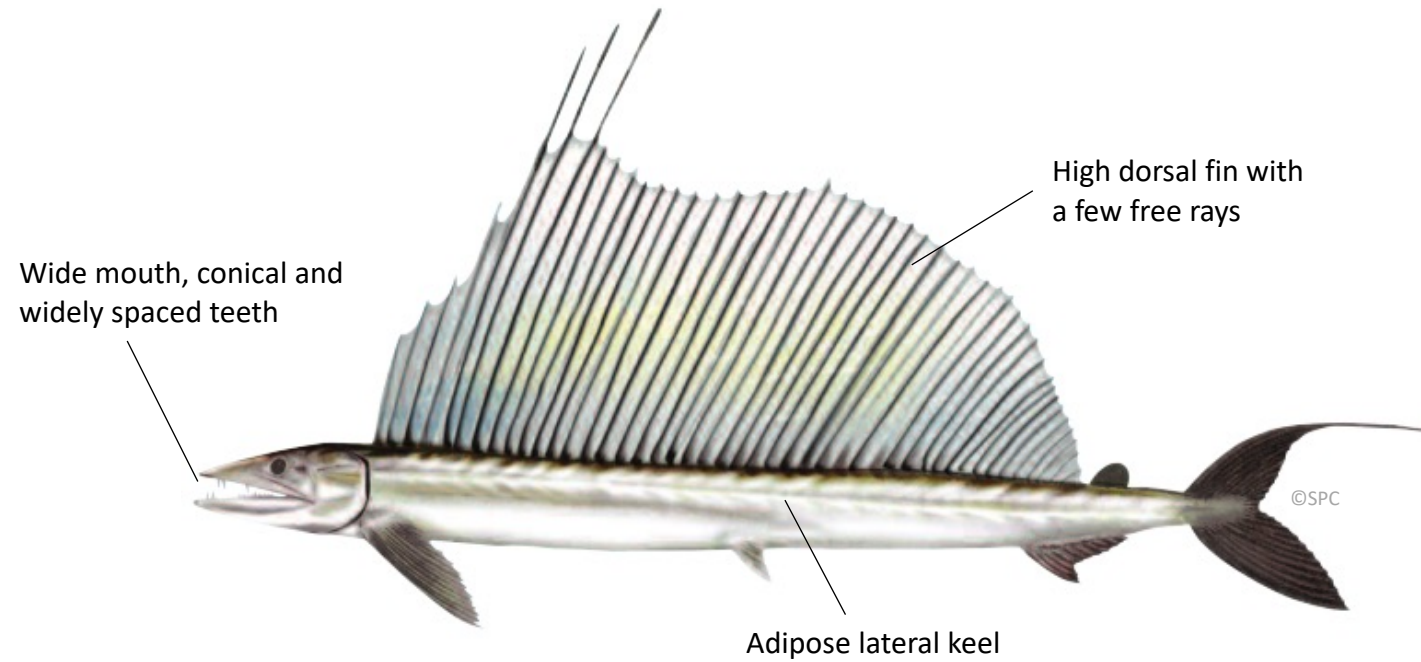
Caudal fin deeply forked, lower lobe much longer than the upper lobe





Uncommon species		
Max. length	195 cm	FL
Obs. length	66-105 cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



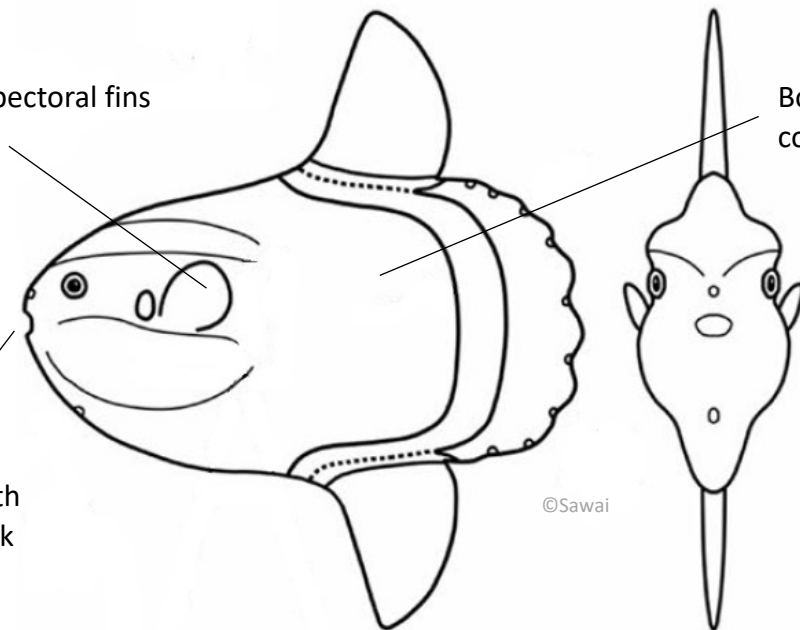


Uncommon species		
Max. length	195 cm	FL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	FL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Small and rounded pectoral fins pointing upwards

Very small fused teeth forming a parrot beak

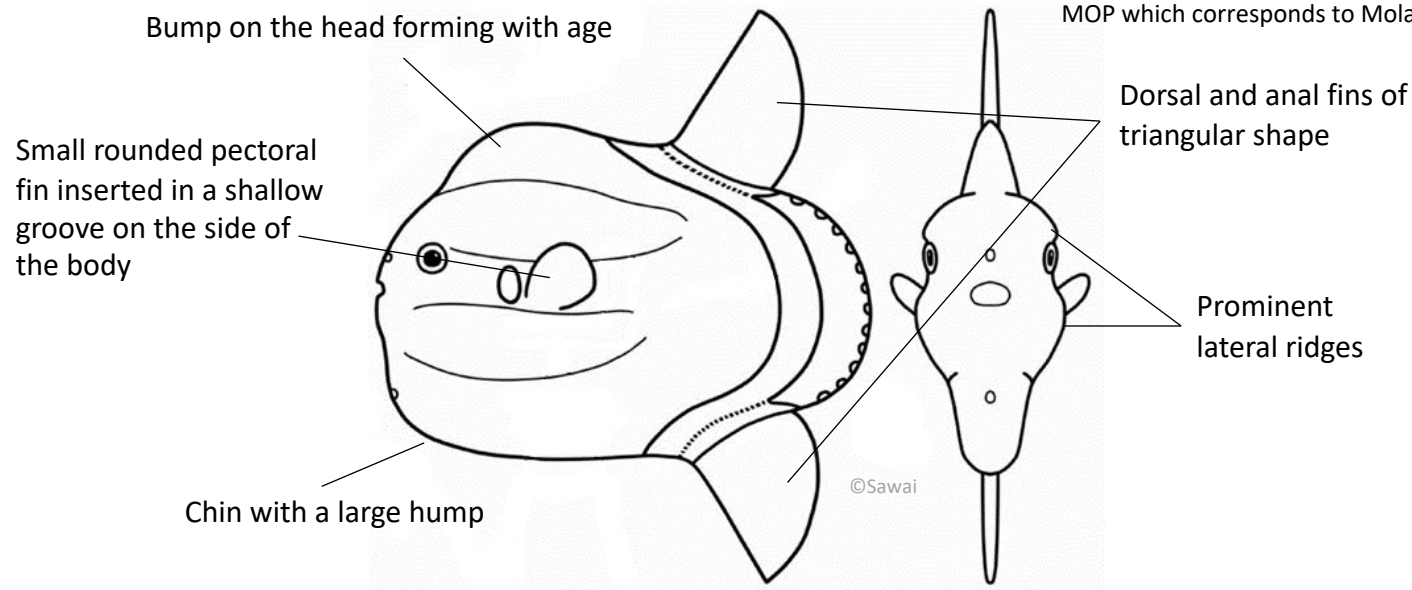


Body without scales covered with a thick skin

Uncommon species		
Max. length	333 cm	TL
Obs. length	52-185 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

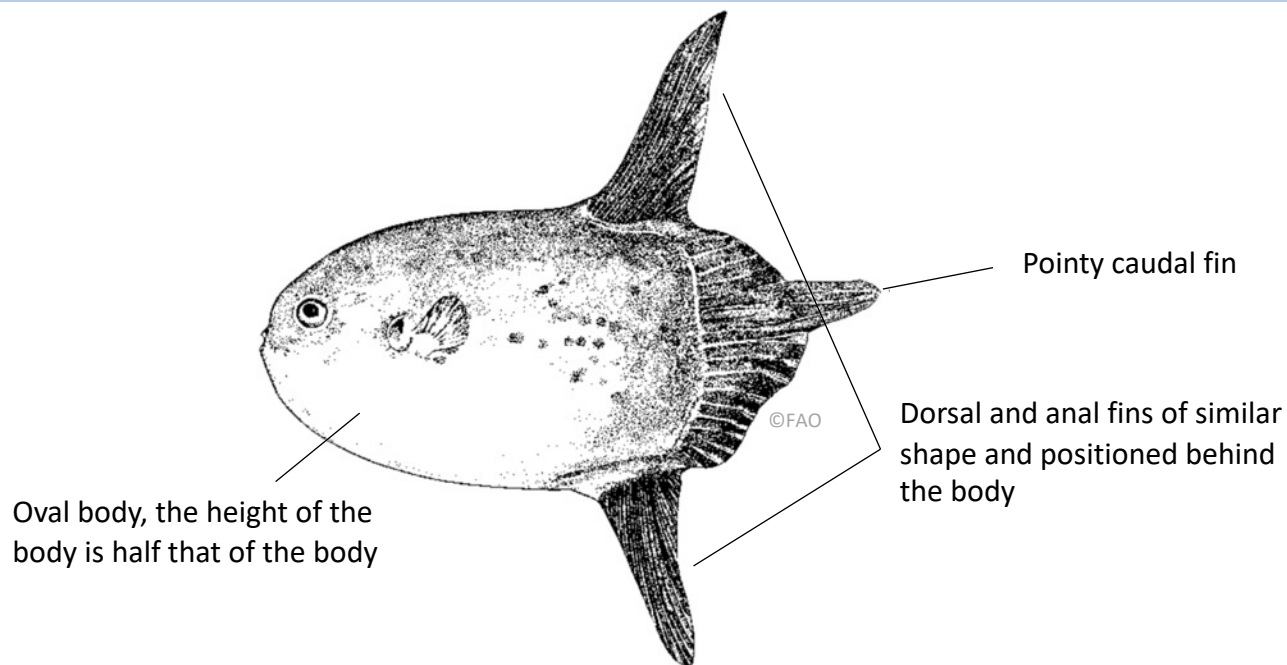


NB: Considering the absence of a dedicated FAO code for *M. alexandrini*, we will use MOP which corresponds to *Mola* spp, specifying each time the species in the note section



Uncommon species		
Max. length	300 cm	TL
Obs. length	65-207 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





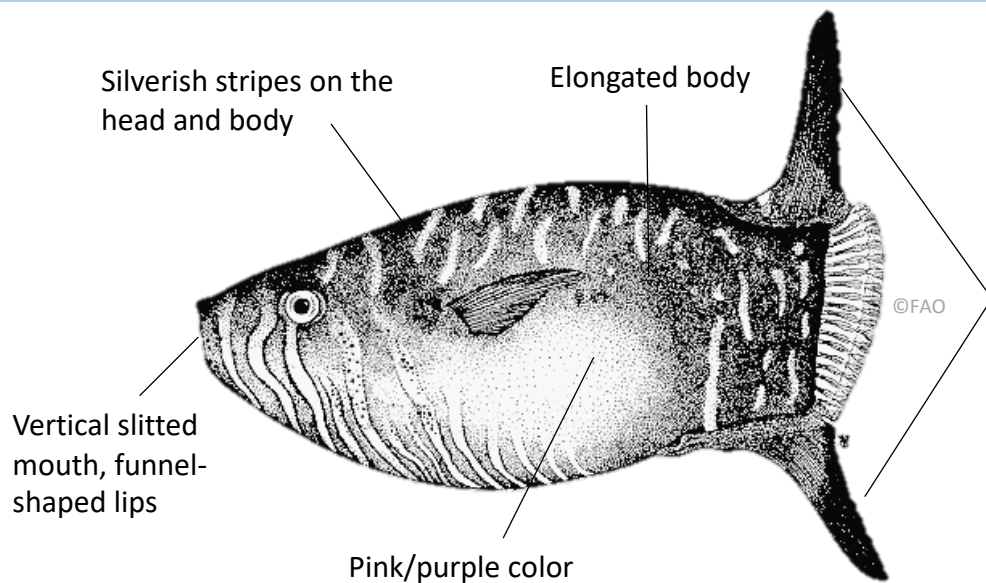
Oval body, the height of the body is half that of the body

Uncommon species		
Max. length	337 cm	TL
Obs. length	48-161 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Slender sunfish ▶ Ranzania ▶ Bot allargat

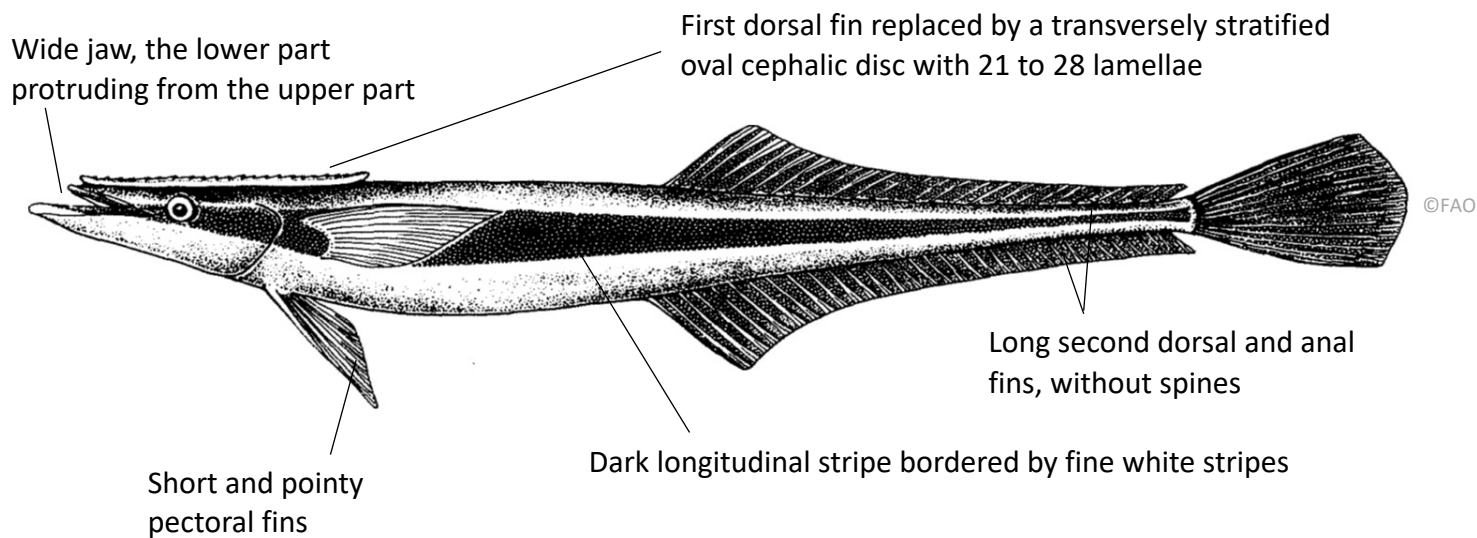
Ranzania laevis



Dorsal and anal fins of similar shape positioned at the very end of the body

Uncommon species		
Max. length	100 cm	TL
Obs. length	45-62 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



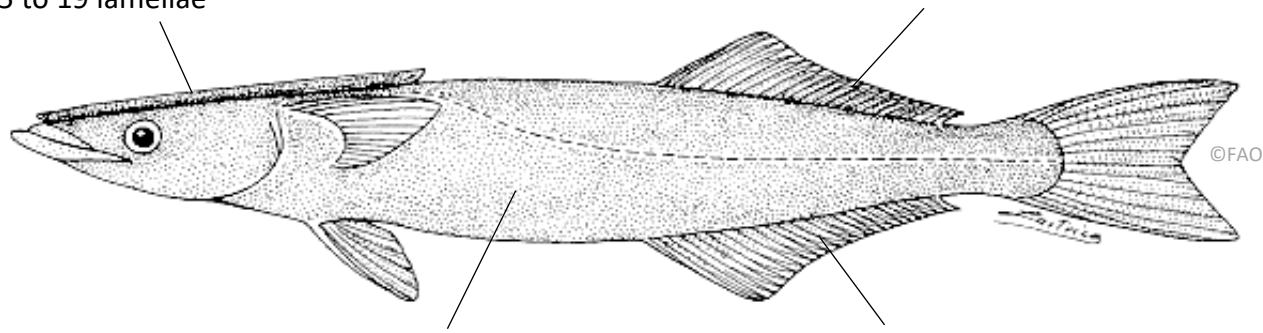


Common species		
Max. length	110 cm	TL
Obs. length	9-81 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Cephalic disc composed of
15 to 19 lamellae

22 to 26 soft rays



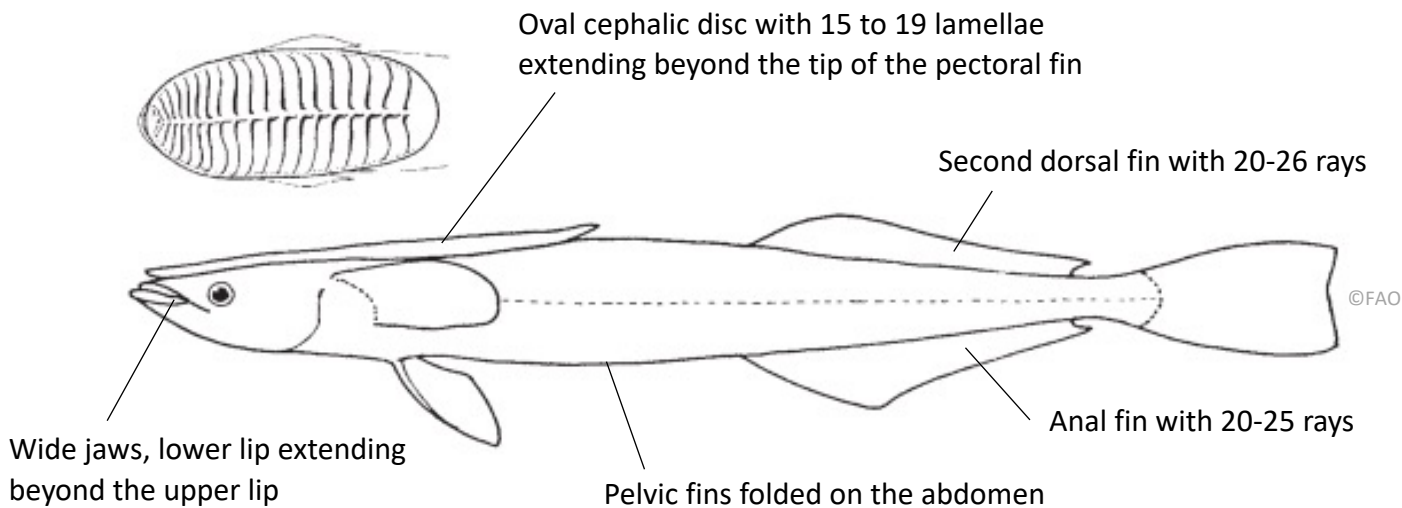
Light to dark brown color

22 to 24 soft rays

Common species		
Max. length	86 cm	TL
Obs. length	10-78 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

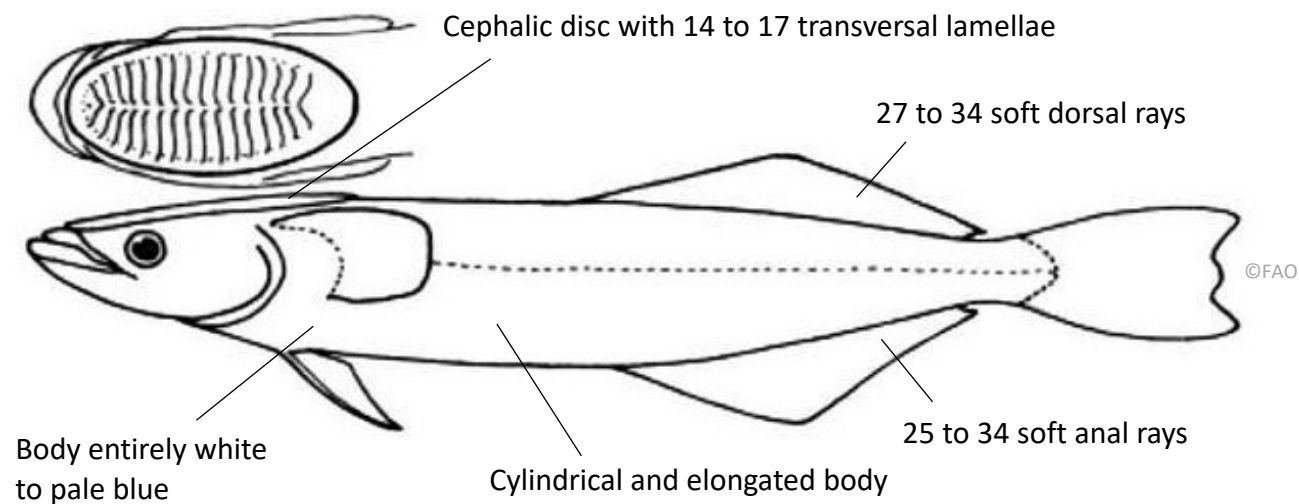
Hosts: sharks, swordfish or cetaceans.
Present on at least 12 species of sharks





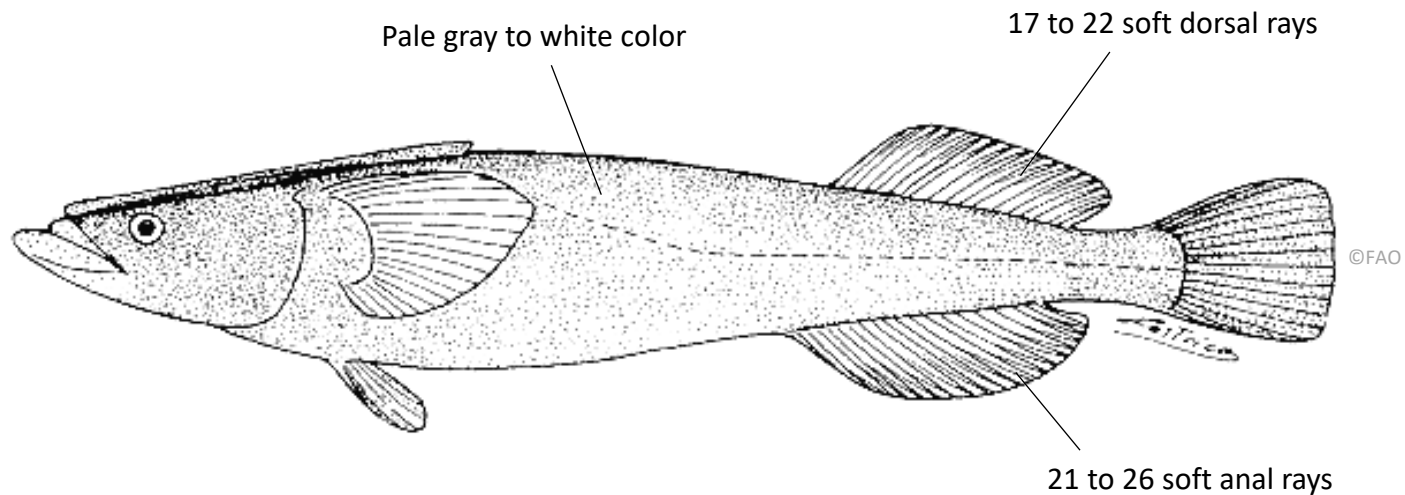
Uncommon species		
Max. length	47 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rare species		
Max. length	50 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





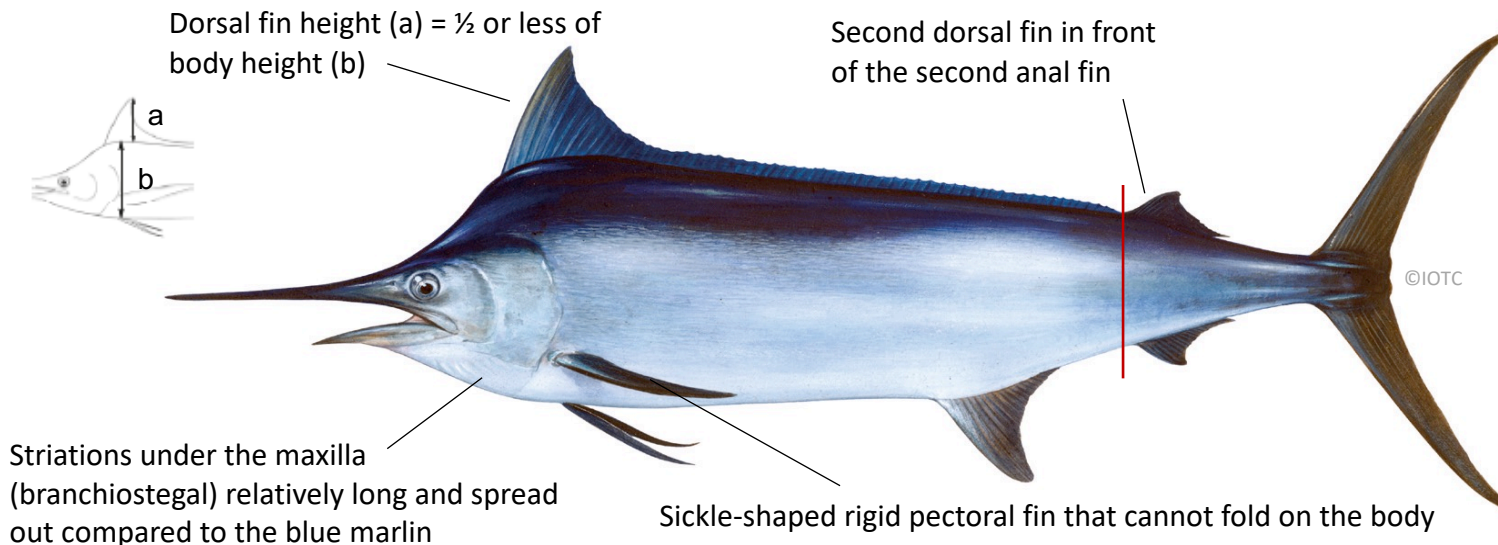
Rare species		
Max. length	34 cm	TL
Obs. length	12-24 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Hosts: mainly on large rays, but there are also some reports on sharks



Black marlin ▶ **Makaire noir, marlin noir** ▶ **Aguja negra**

Makaira indica (or *Istiompax indica*)

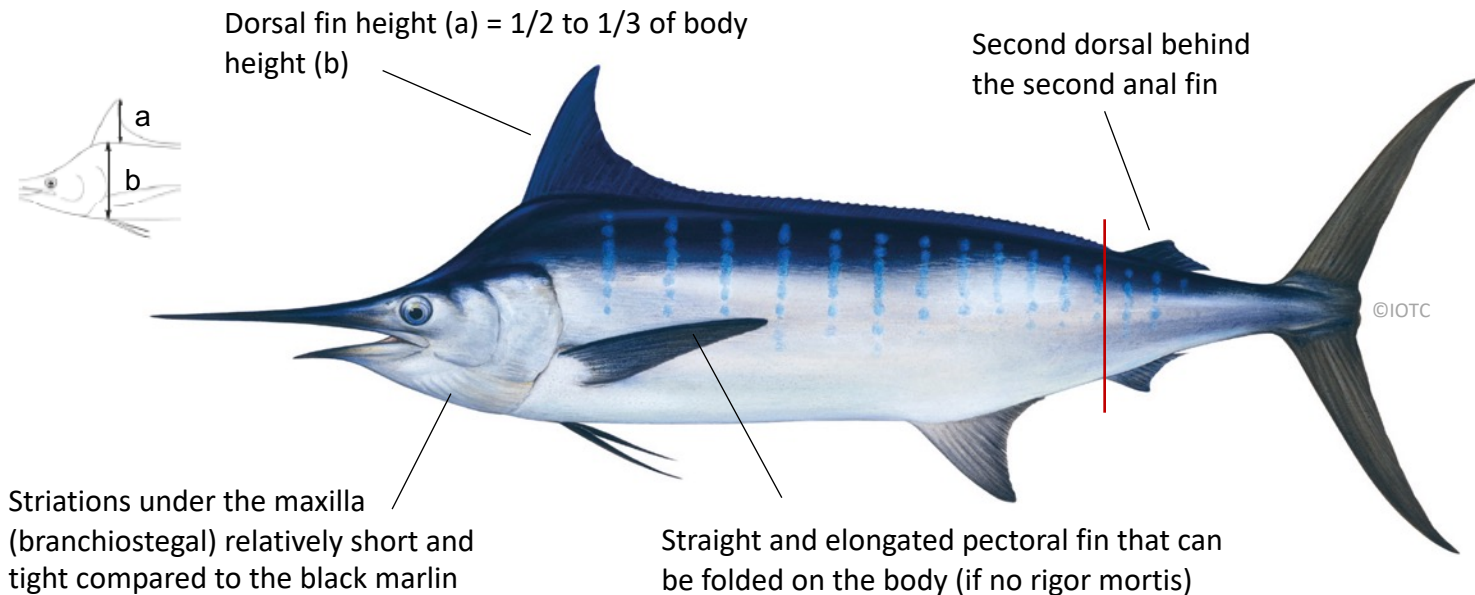


Uncommon species		
Max. length	465 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	154-354 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

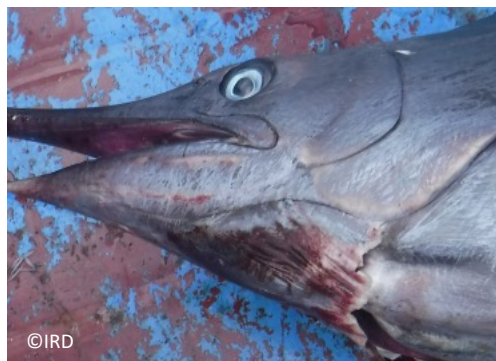


Blue marlin ▶ **Makaire bleu, marlin bleu** ▶ **Aguja azul**

Makaira nigricans (or *Makaira mazara*)



Common species		
Max. length	459 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	161-315 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



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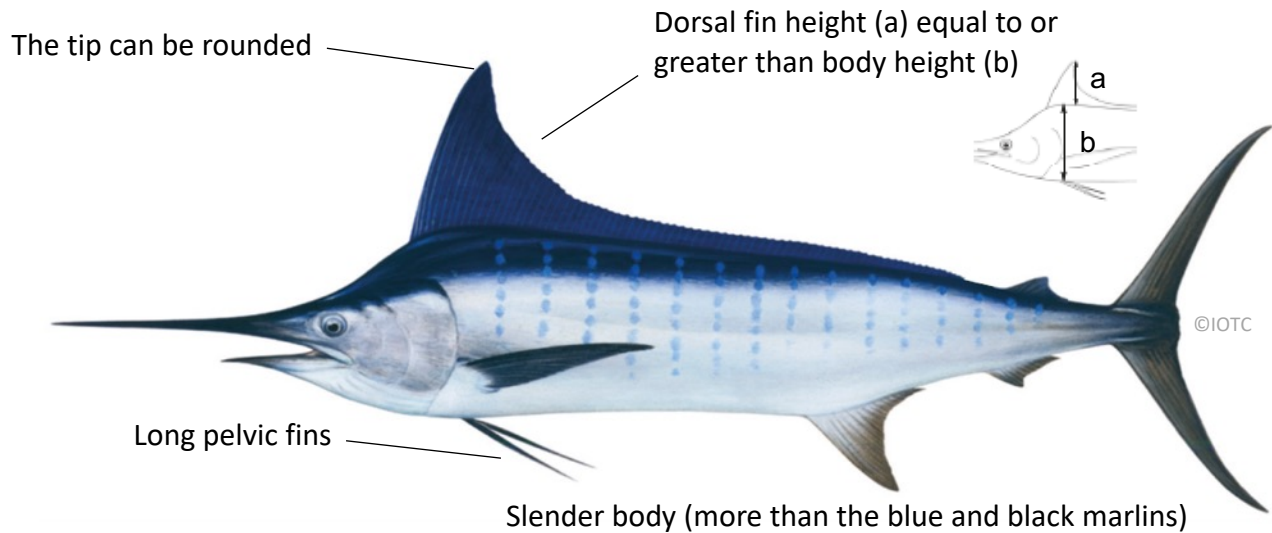
©ORTHONGEL



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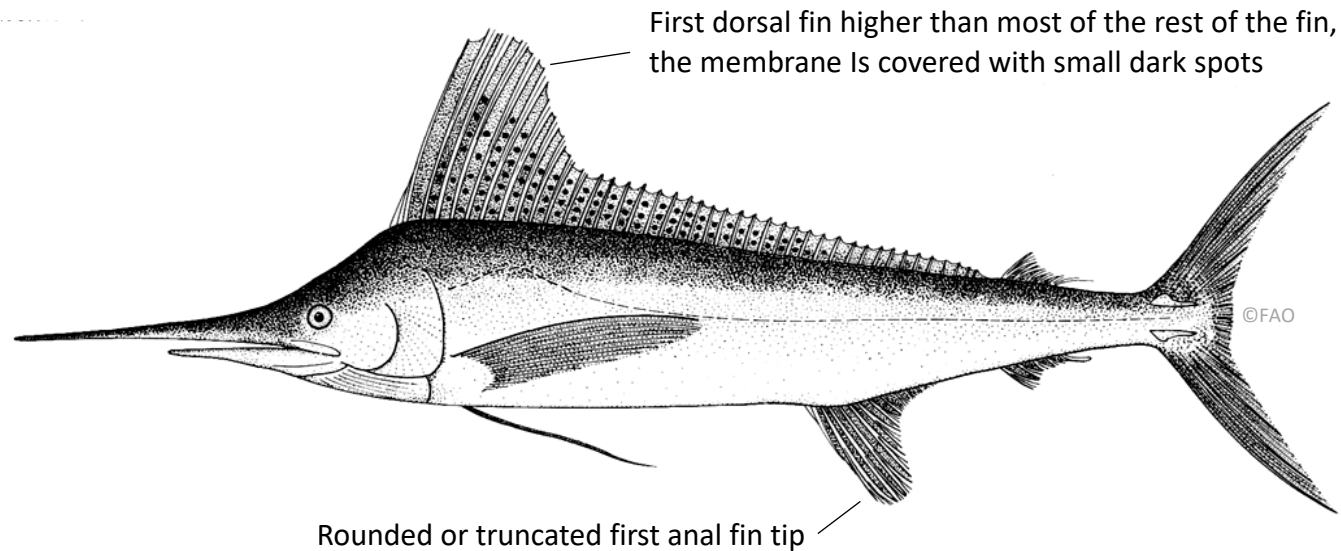
Striped marlin ▶ Marlin rayé ▶ Marlin rayado

Tetrapturus audax (or *Kajikia audax*)



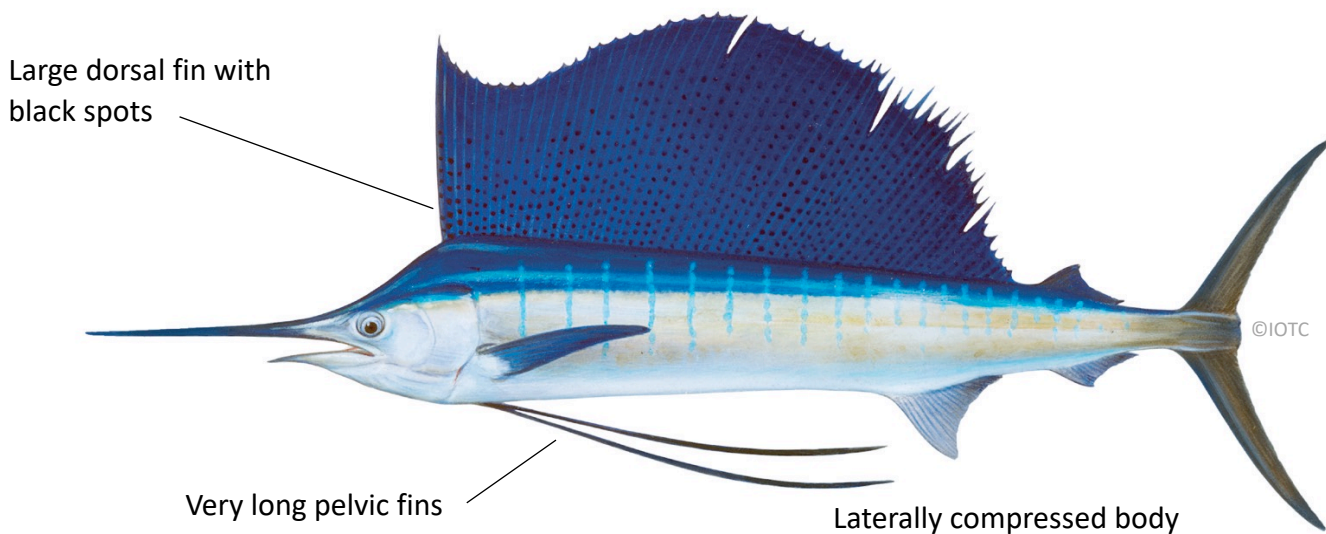
Uncommon species		
Max. length	420 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	112-279 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	





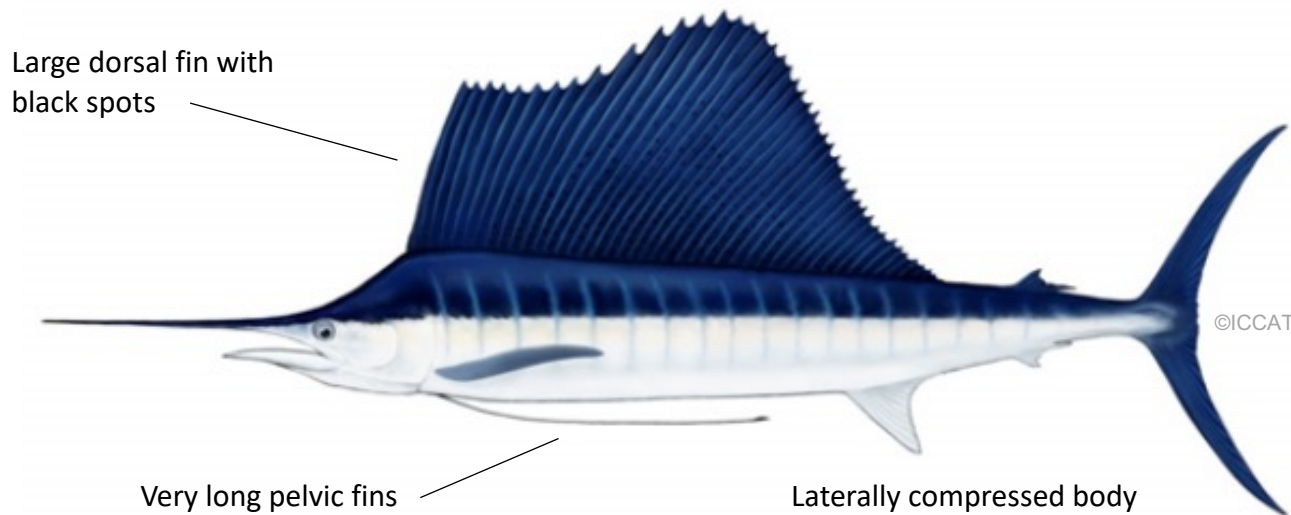
Uncommon species		
Max. length	300 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	160-225 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	





Common species		
Max. length	348 cm	LFFL
Obs. length	111-242 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



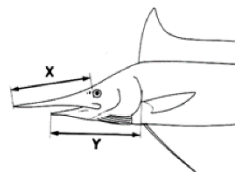


Common species		
Max. length	315 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	130-212 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



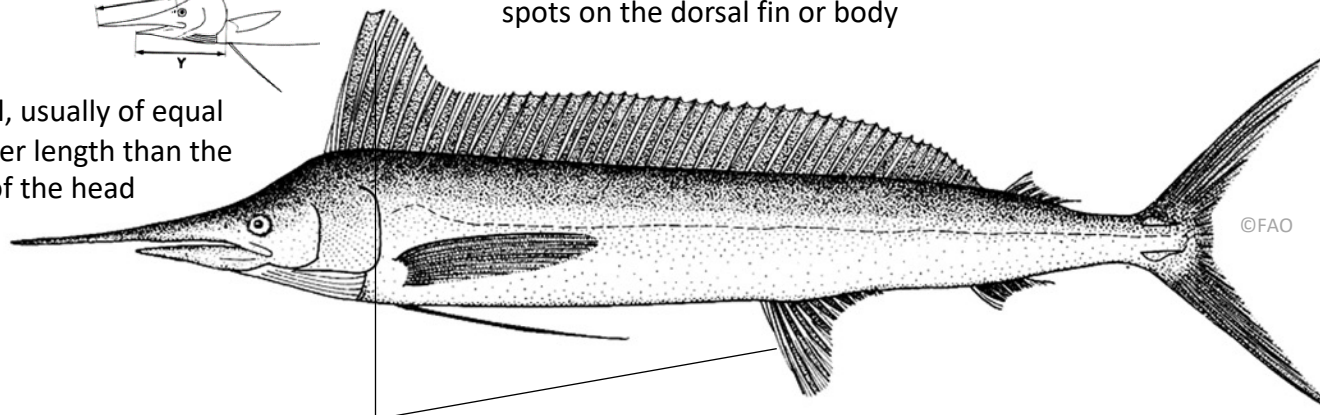
Longbill spearfish ▶ Makaire bécune ▶ Aguja picuda

Tetrapturus pfluegeri



Long bill, usually of equal or greater length than the length of the head

Absence of vertical marks and spots on the dorsal fin or body



©FAO

Rare species		
Max. length	254 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	100-220 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	

First dorsal and first anal fin with pointy tips



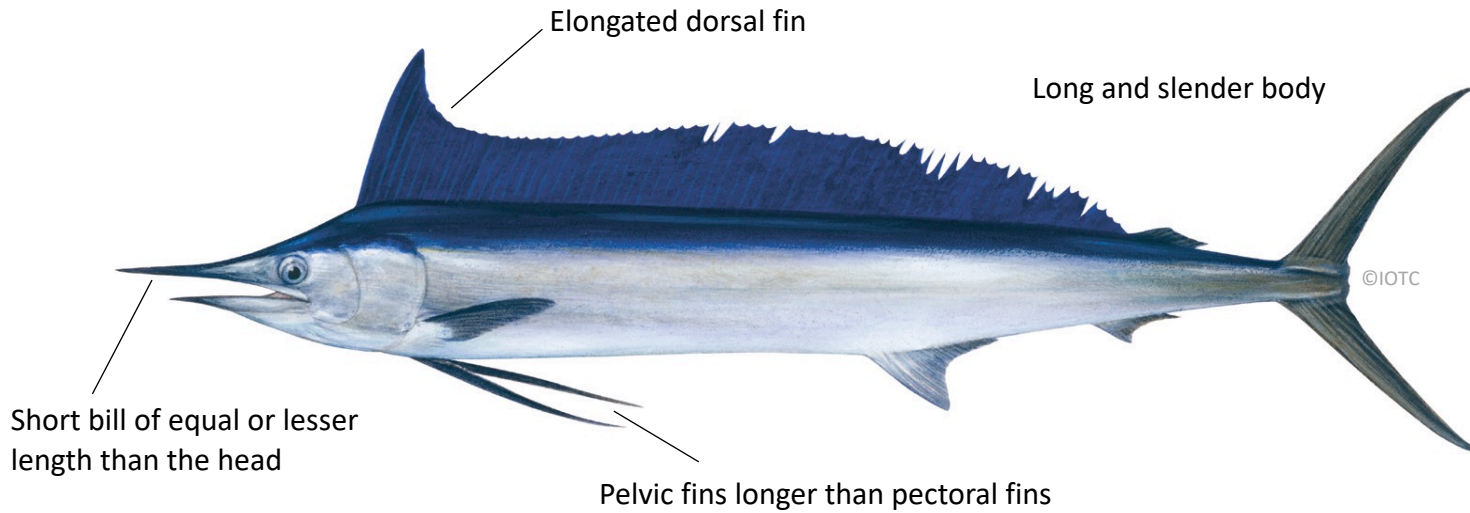
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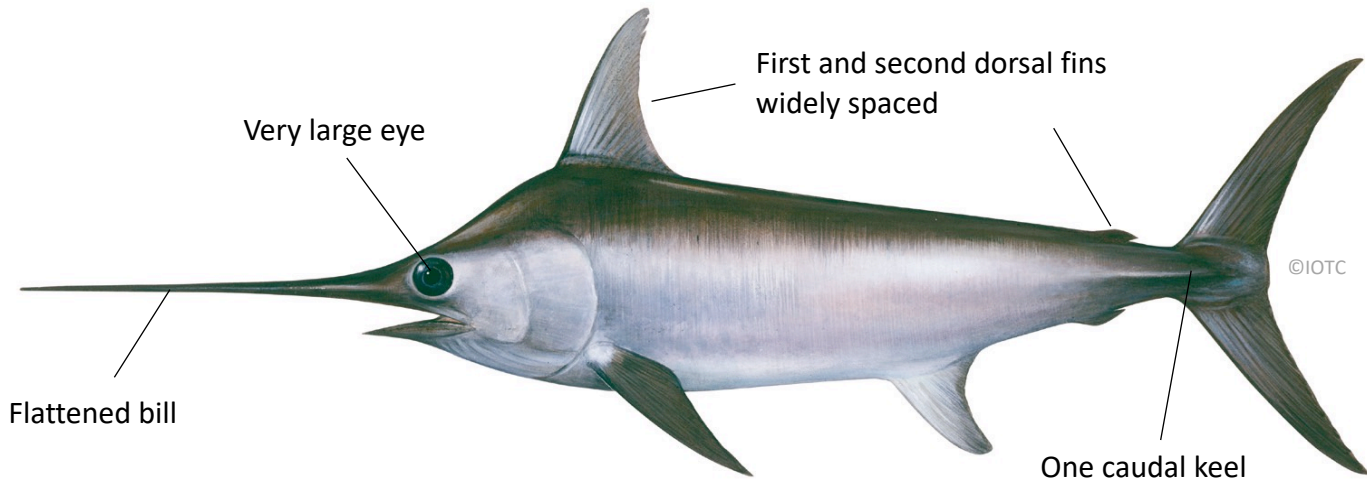


©FishBase



Rare species		
Max. length	230 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	94-170 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	





Common species		
Max. length	455 cm	LJFL
Obs. length	77-315 cm	LJFL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

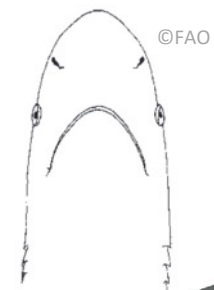


Juveniles have a long dorsal fin



©ORTHONGEL

©ORTHONGEL



Tip of the first dorsal
without coloration

Very low second dorsal fin
with a very long free rear tip

Space between the origin of the
first dorsal fin and the posterior
edge of the pectoral fin

Pectoral, pelvic, anal and caudal fins often
dark at their extremity

Interdorsal ridge

©IOTC

Common species

Max. length	350 cm	TL
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Obs. length	64-210 cm	TL
-------------	-----------	----

present in

Atlantic

Indian



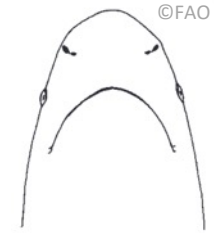
©IRD



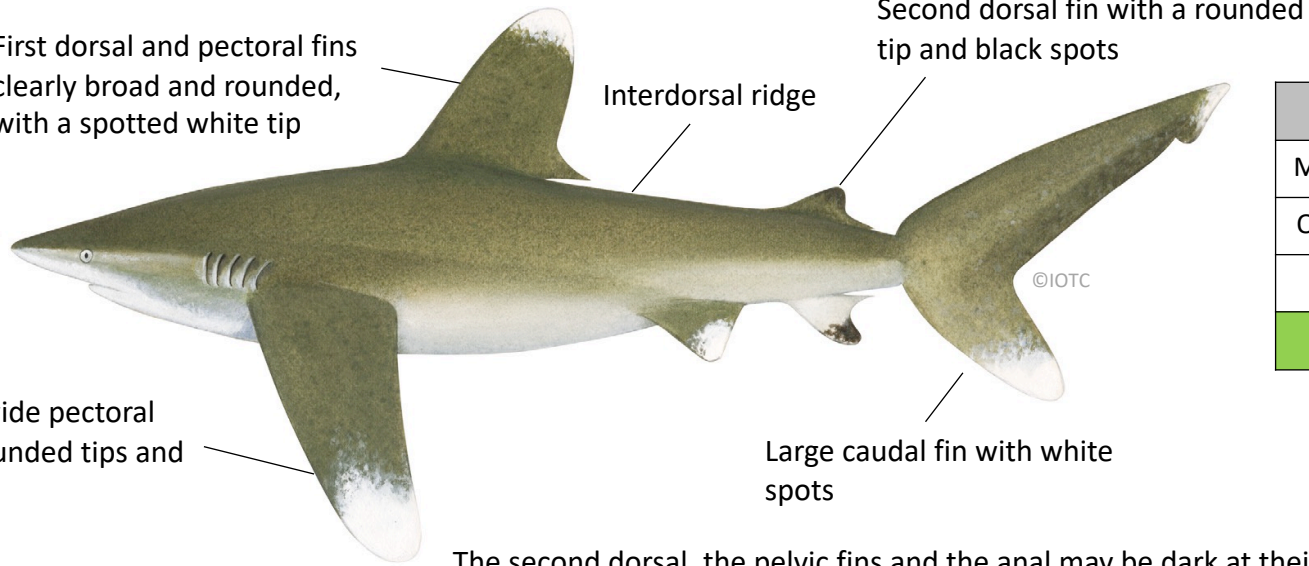
©ORTHONGEL



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First dorsal and pectoral fins clearly broad and rounded, with a spotted white tip



Second dorsal fin with a rounded tip and black spots

Interdorsal ridge

Large and wide pectoral fins with rounded tips and white spots

Large caudal fin with white spots

Common species		
Max. length	400 cm	TL
Obs. length	83-226 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

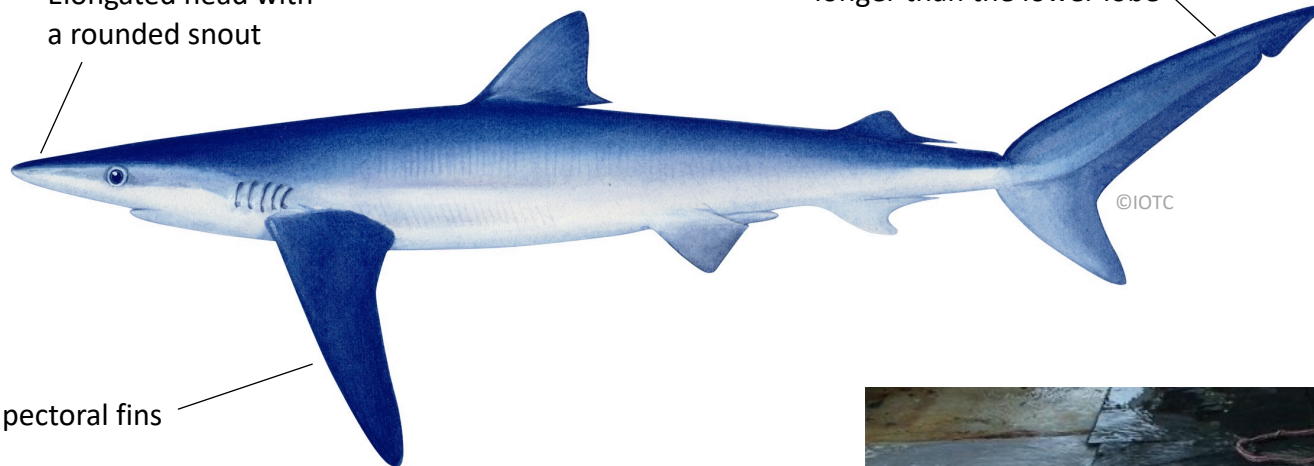
The second dorsal, the pelvic fins and the anal may be dark at their extremity





Elongated head with a rounded snout

Upper caudal lobe much longer than the lower lobe



Long pectoral fins

Rather rare species

Max. length	400 cm	TL
-------------	--------	----

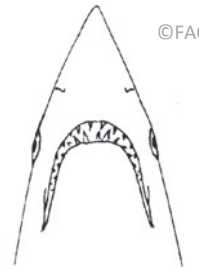
Obs. length	130-278 cm	TL
-------------	------------	----

present in

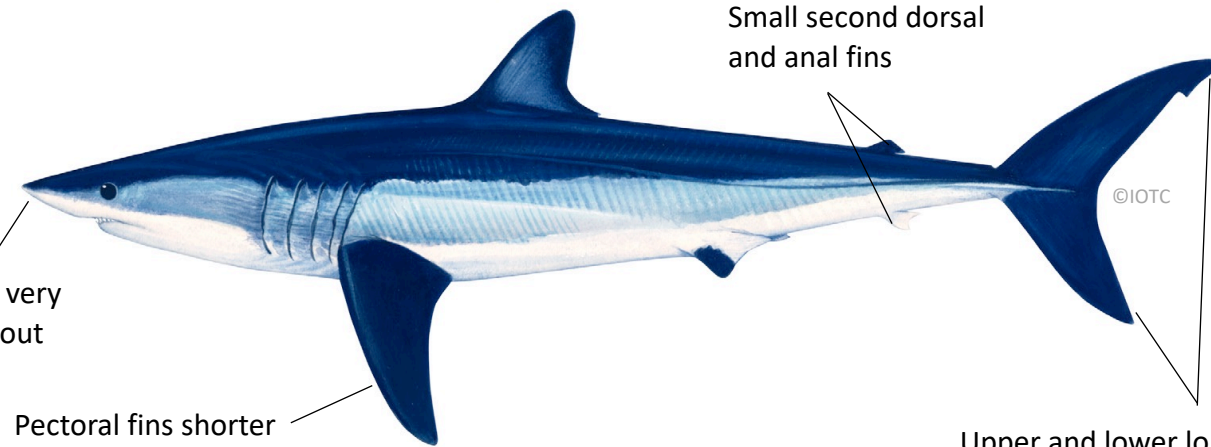
Atlantic

Indian





Long and very pointy snout



Pectoral fins shorter than the head

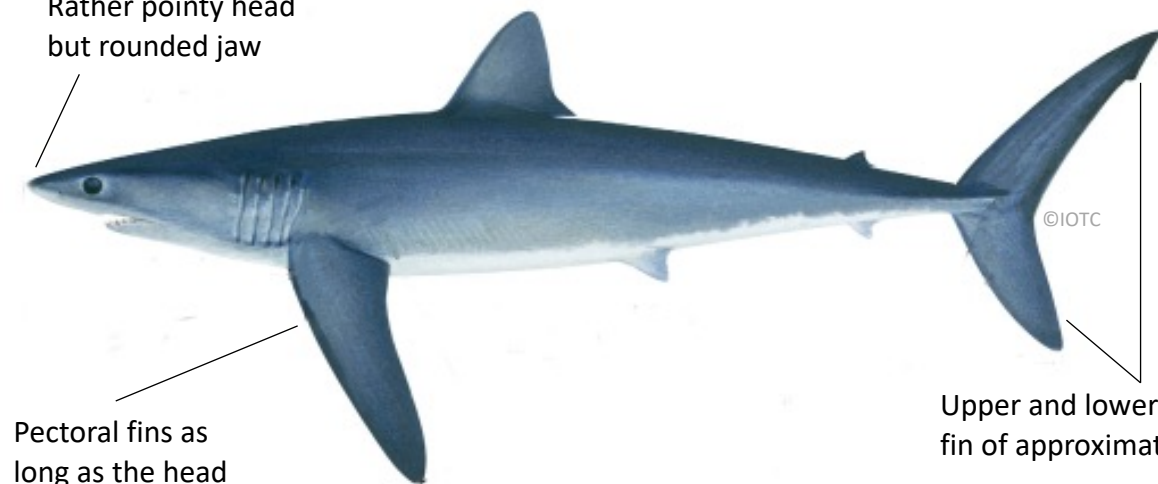
Upper and lower lobes of the caudal fin of approximately equal length

Rather rare species		
Max. length	455 cm	TL
Obs. length	91-250 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rather pointy head
but rounded jaw

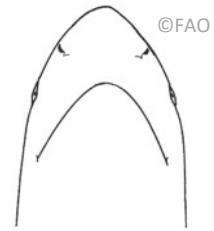


Pectoral fins as
long as the head

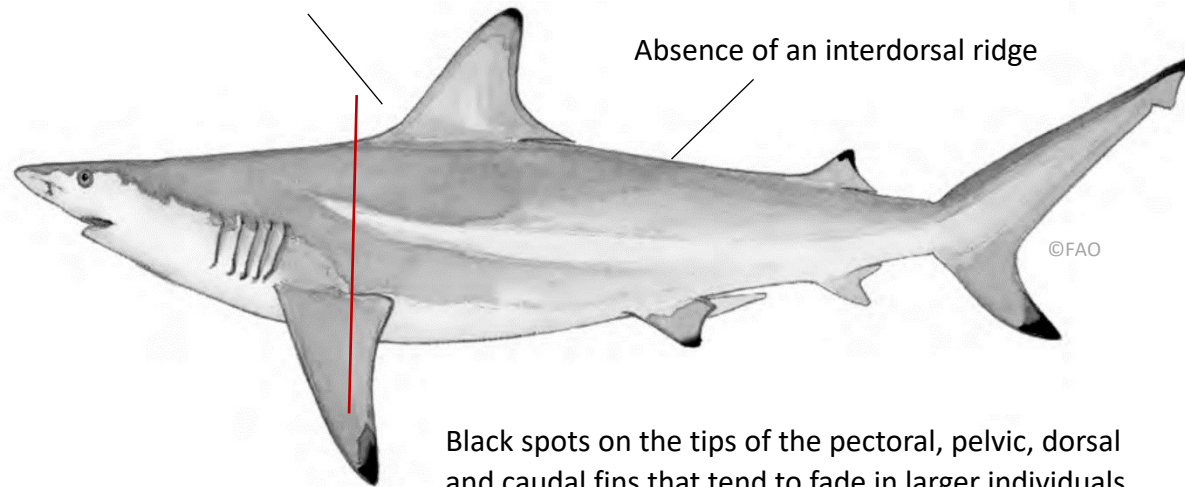
Upper and lower lobes of the caudal
fin of approximately equal length

Rare species		
Max. length	427 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





High first dorsal fin starting in front of the pectoral fin base



Black spots on the tips of the pectoral, pelvic, dorsal and caudal fins that tend to fade in larger individuals

Rather rare species

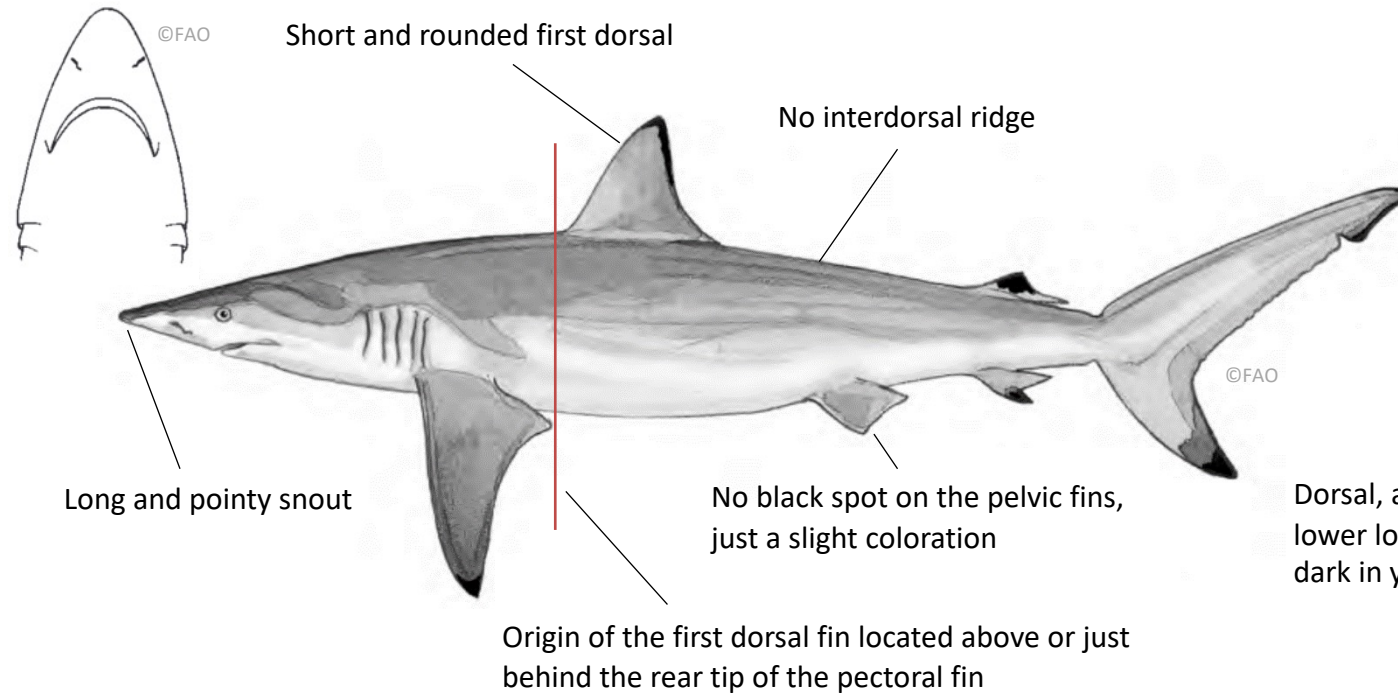
Max. length	275 cm	TL
Obs. length	174-238 cm	TL

present in

Atlantic

Indian





Rare species		
Max. length	300 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





First dorsal fin with an almost straight anterior edge and a narrow and rounded tip

Bronze to grey back coloration

Pronounced interdorsal ridge

Rounded snout

Origin of the first dorsal fin at the base of the pectoral fin

Ventral surface almost white

©fishIDER

Fin tips often dark

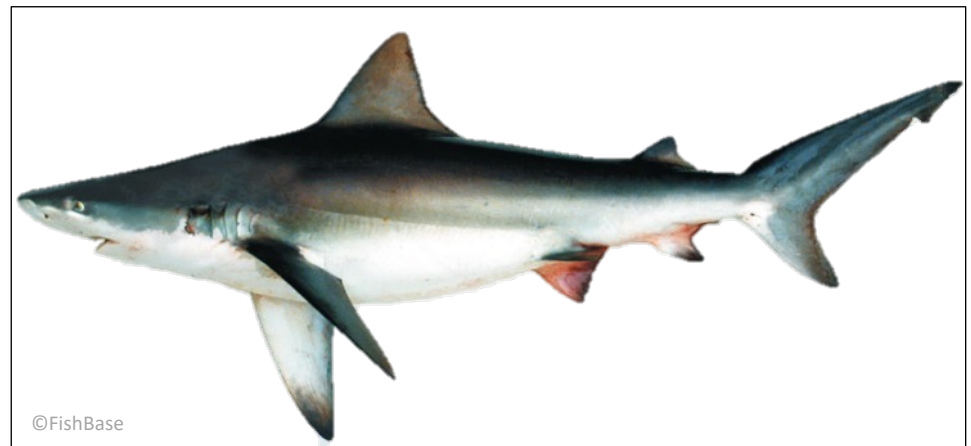
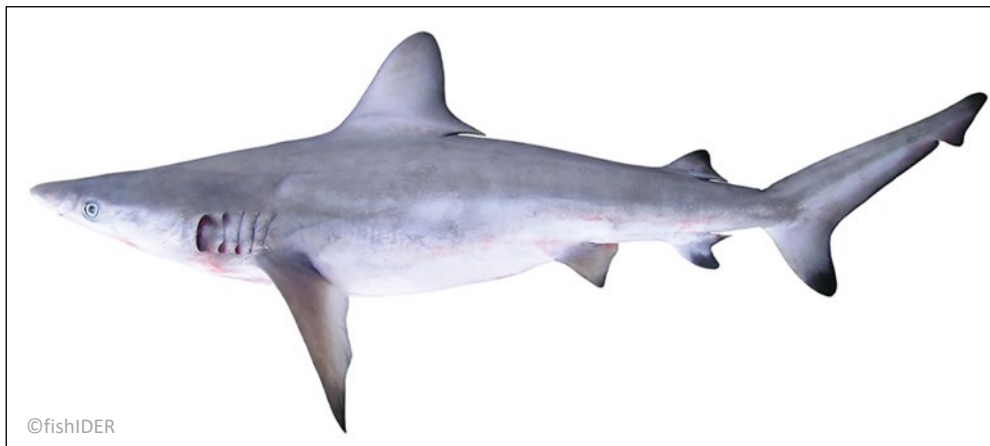
Rare species

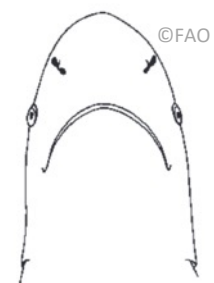
Max. length	300 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL

present in

Atlantic

Indian

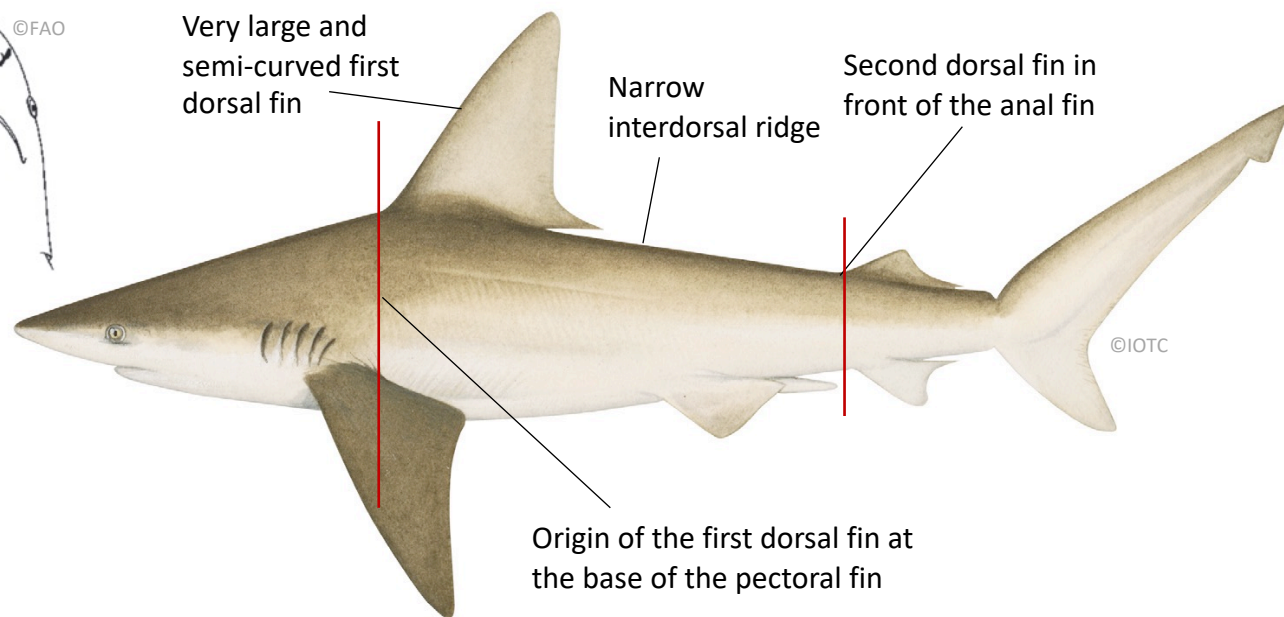




Very large and semi-curved first dorsal fin

Narrow interdorsal ridge

Second dorsal fin in front of the anal fin



Origin of the first dorsal fin at the base of the pectoral fin

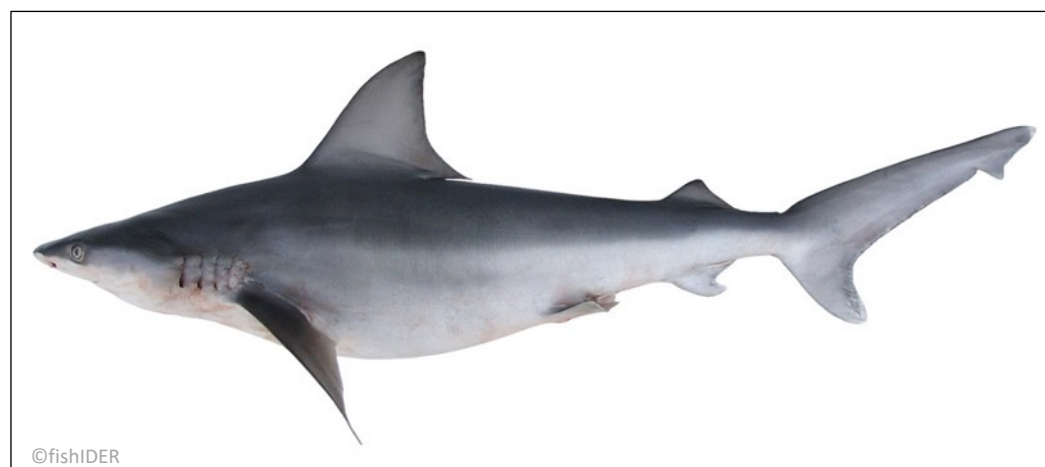
Rare species

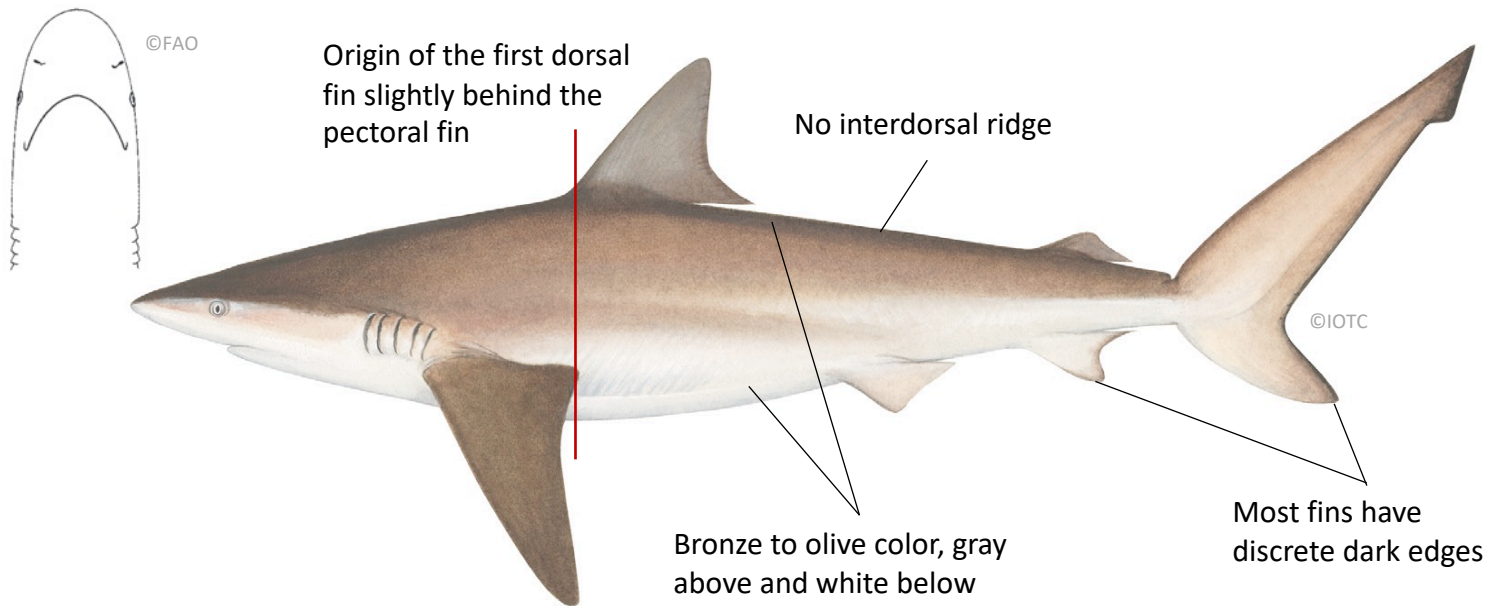
Max. length	250 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL

present in

Atlantic

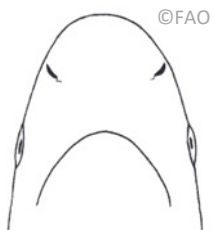
Indian





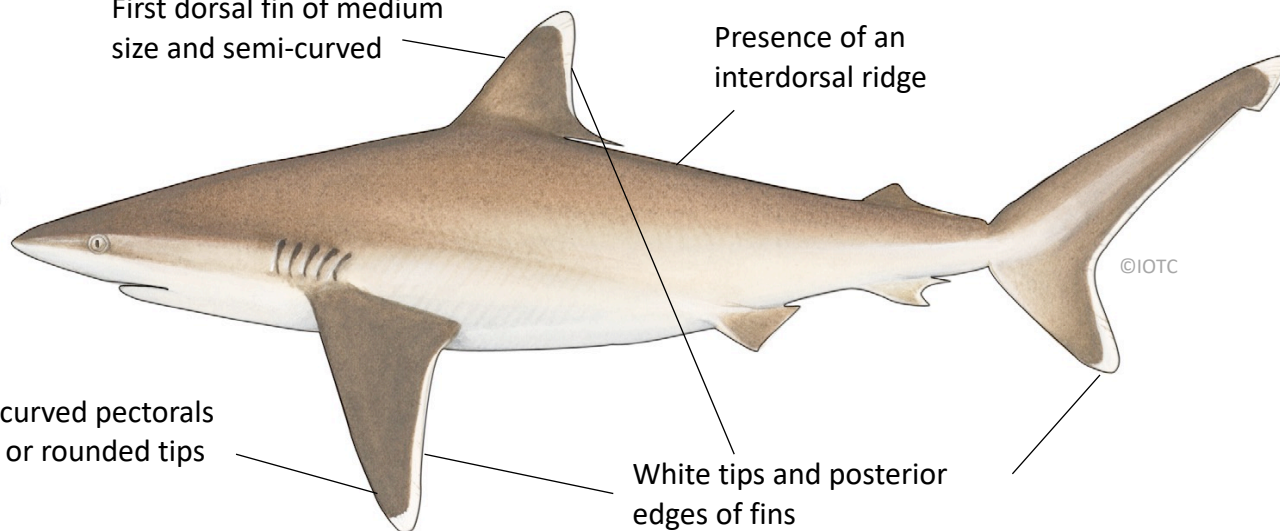
Rare species		
Max. length	325 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





First dorsal fin of medium size and semi-curved

Presence of an interdorsal ridge



Large semi-curved pectorals with pointy or rounded tips

White tips and posterior edges of fins

Rare species

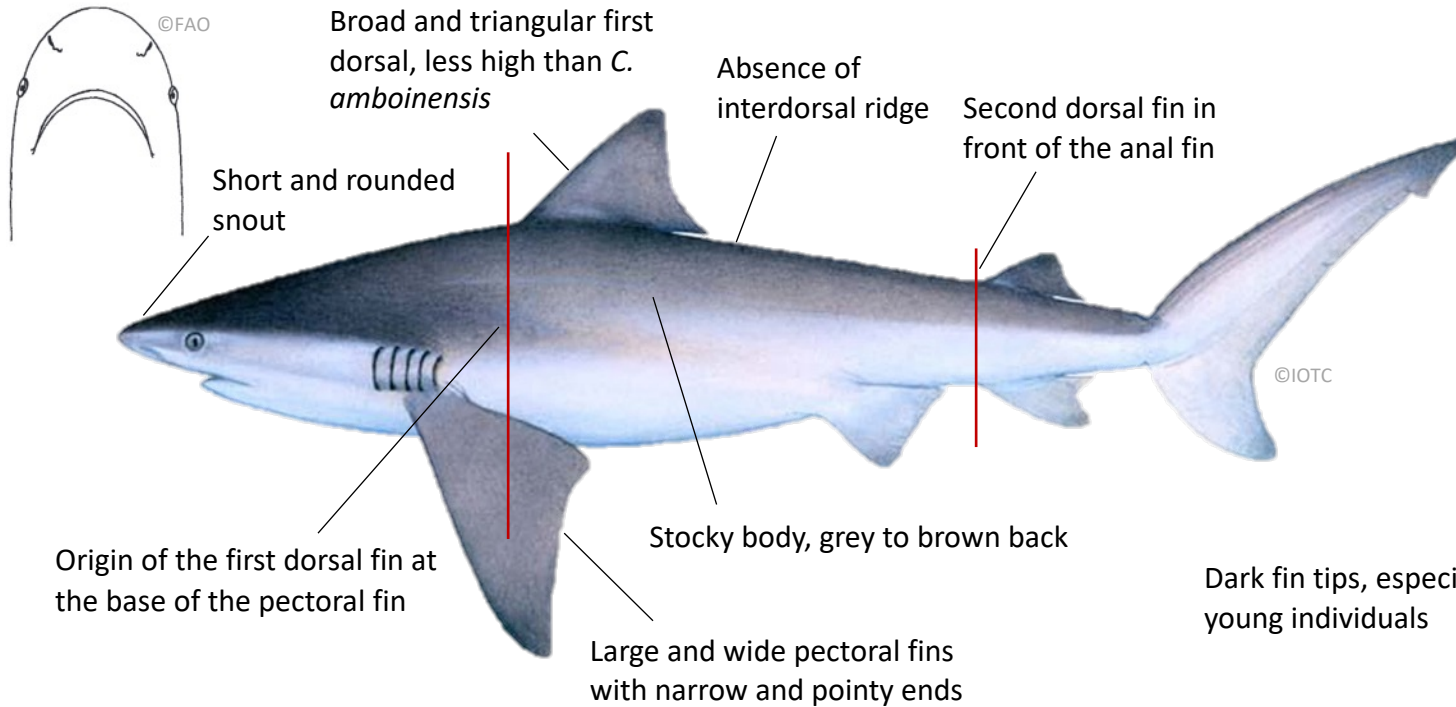
Max. length	300 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL

present in

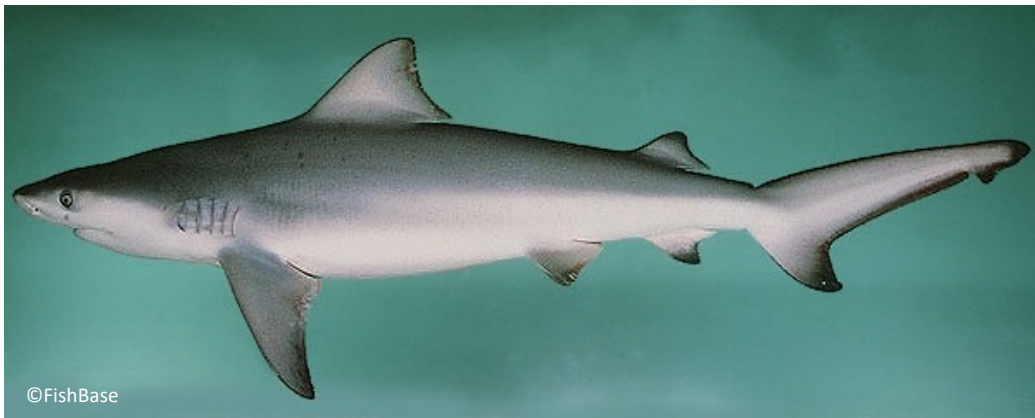
Atlantic

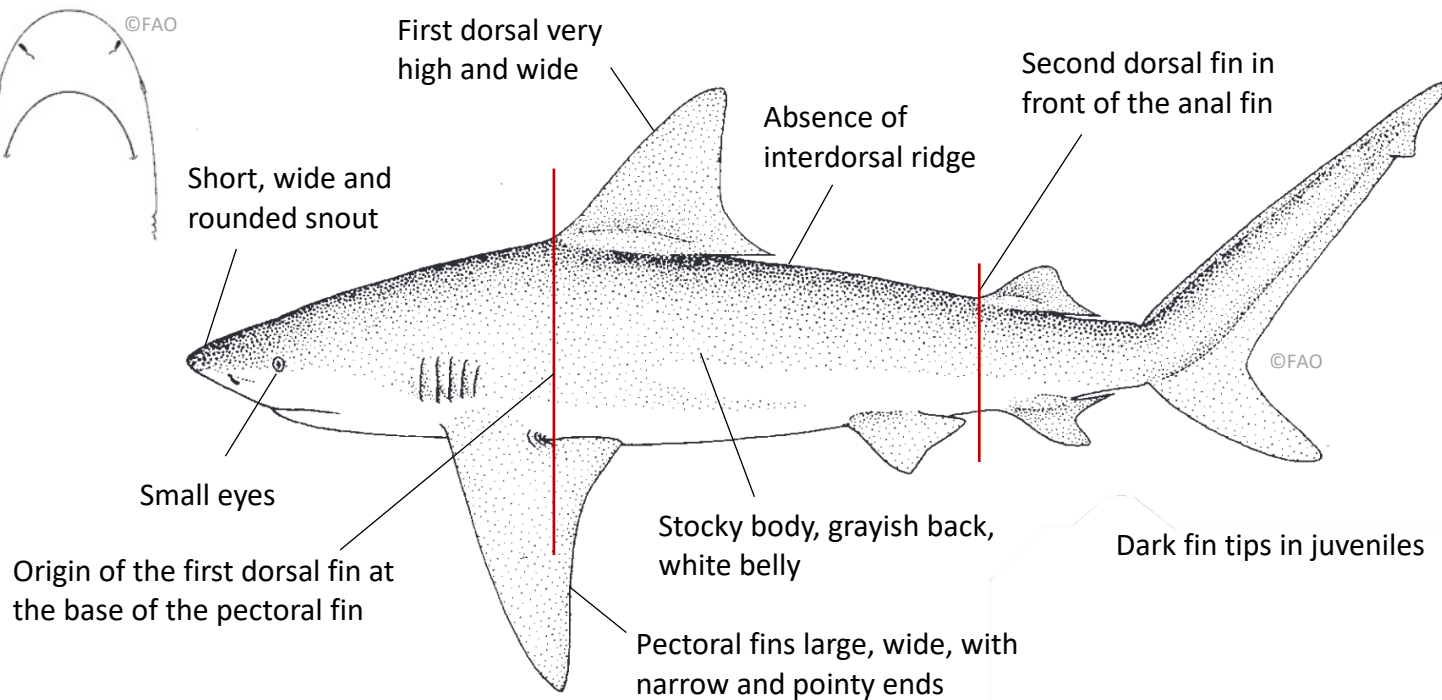
Indian





Rare species		
Max. length	360 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



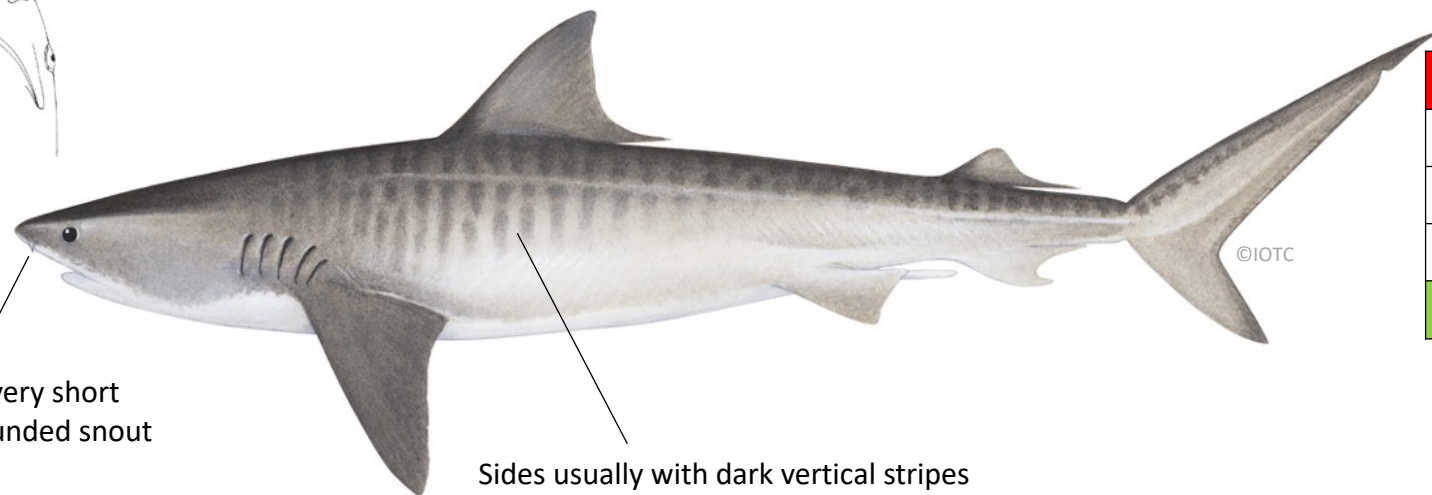


Rare species		
Max. length	280 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





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Wide, very short
and rounded snout

Sides usually with dark vertical stripes
that may fade in adults

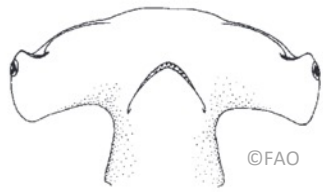
Rare species		
Max. length	750 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



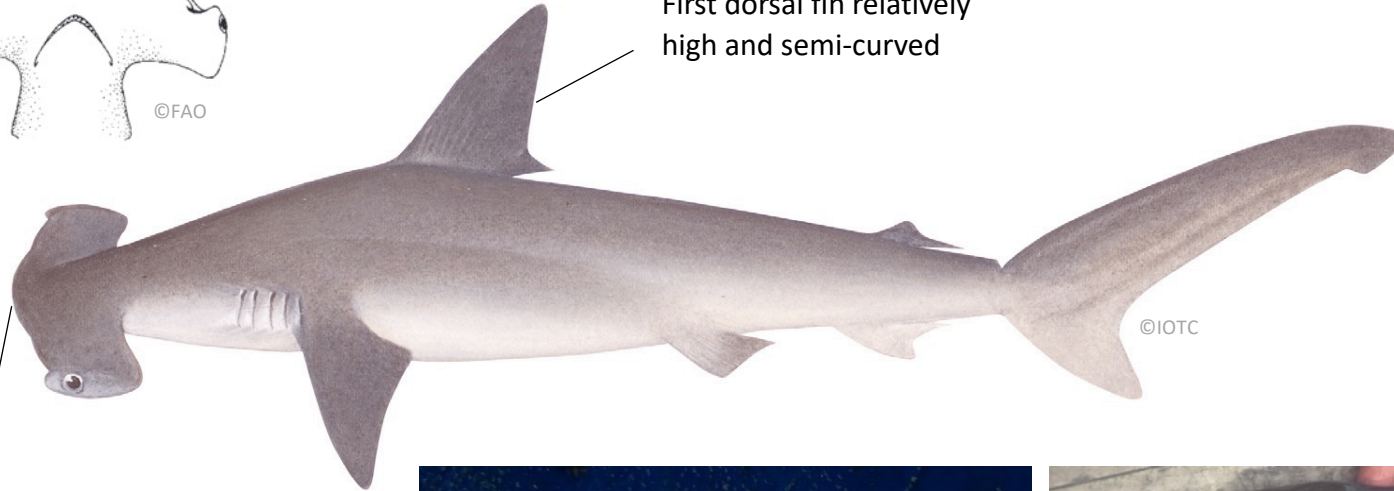
©FishBase



©TAAF



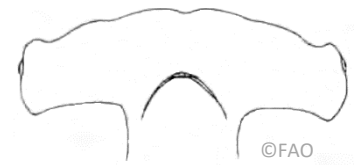
First dorsal fin relatively high and semi-curved



Rather rare species		
Max. length	500 cm	TL
Obs. length	142-265 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Anterior margin of head curved, absence of a median indentation (or it is faint)





Anterior margin of head curved with a median marked dent and a distinct lobe at each end

First dorsal fin is semi-falciform and moderately high

Second dorsal with a black edge

©IOTC

Rather rare species

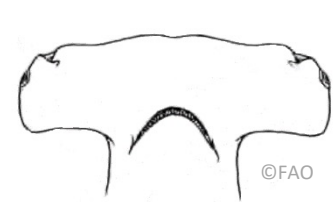
Max. length	430 cm	TL
Obs. length	140-276 cm	TL

present in

Atlantic

Indian





Large head, anterior margin of head nearly straight with small indentation in the middle

Very tall and falciform dorsal fin

Pelvic fins with concave posterior edges

©IOTC

Rare species

Max. length	610 cm	TL
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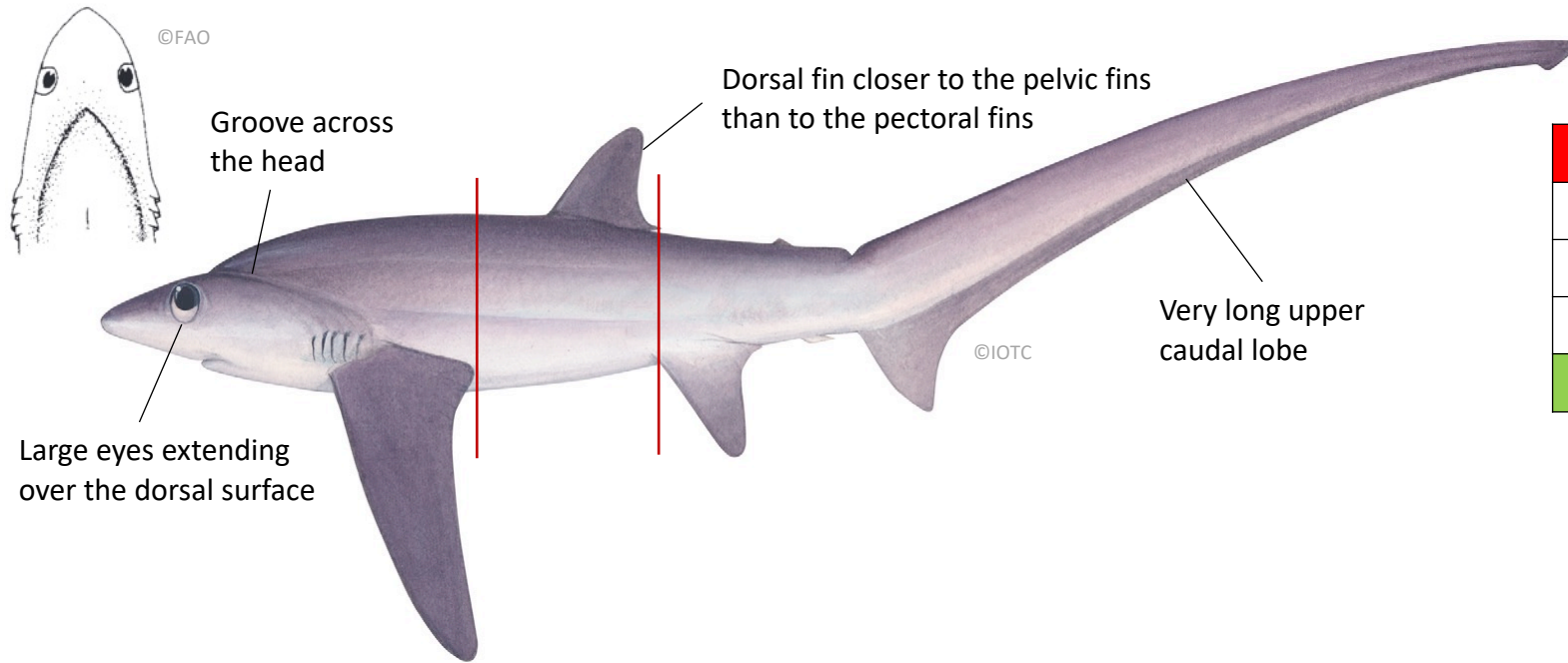
Obs. length	100-276 cm	TL
-------------	------------	----

present in

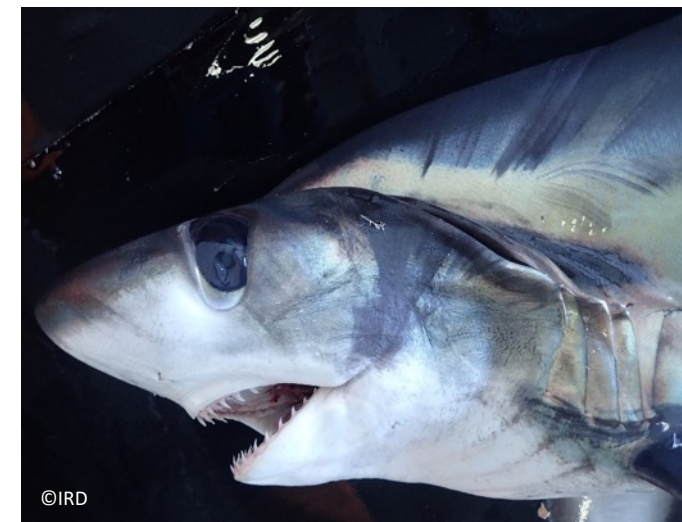
Atlantic

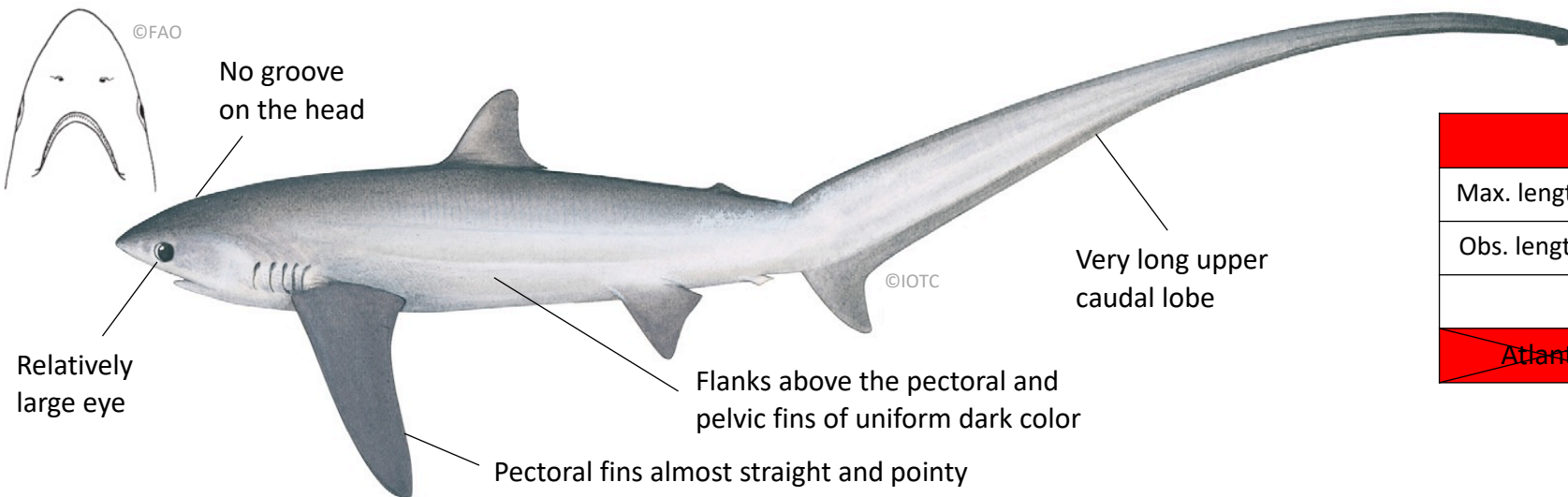
Indian





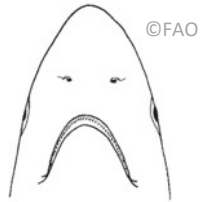
Rare species		
Max. length	488 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



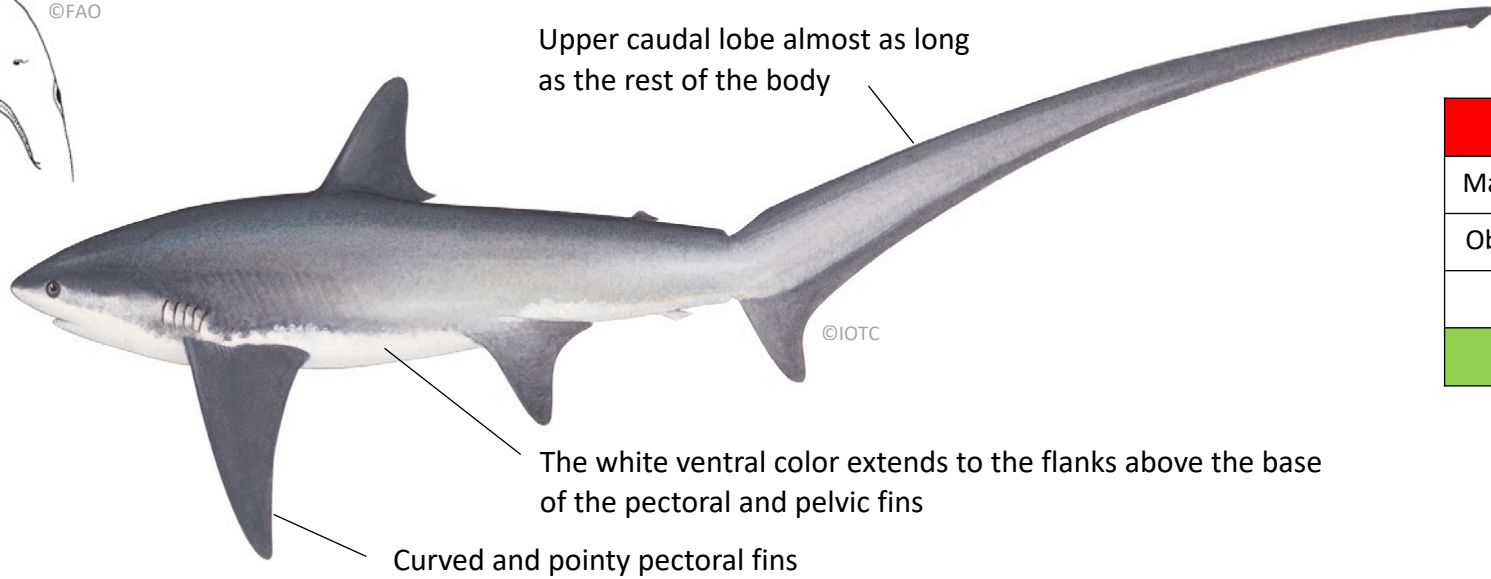


Rare species		
Max. length	428 cm	TL
Obs. length	179-347 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	





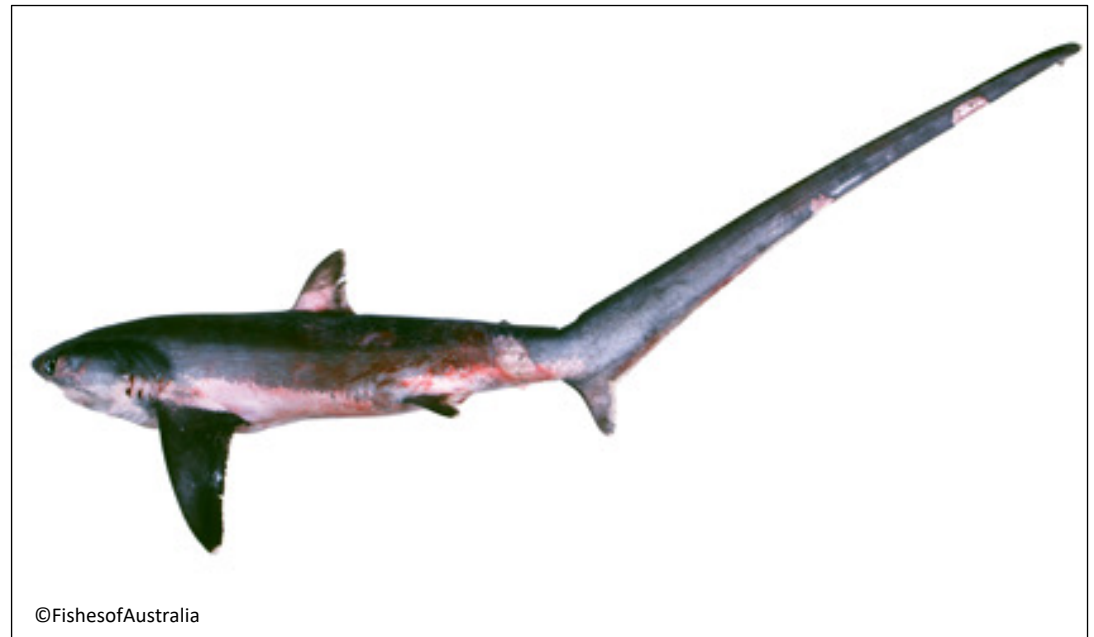
Upper caudal lobe almost as long as the rest of the body

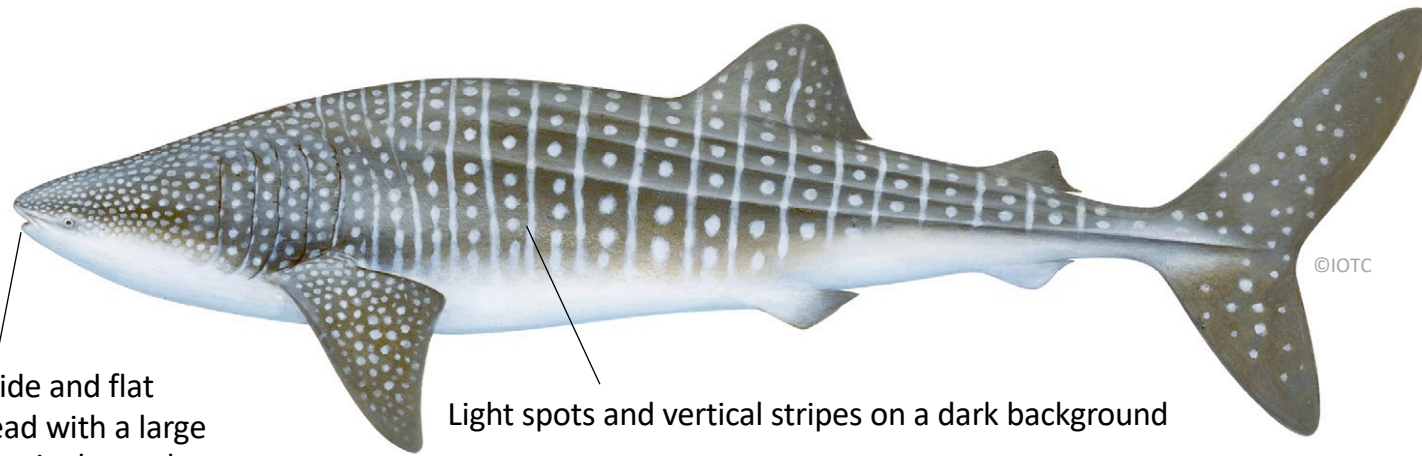


The white ventral color extends to the flanks above the base of the pectoral and pelvic fins

Curved and pointy pectoral fins

Rare species		
Max. length	573 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	



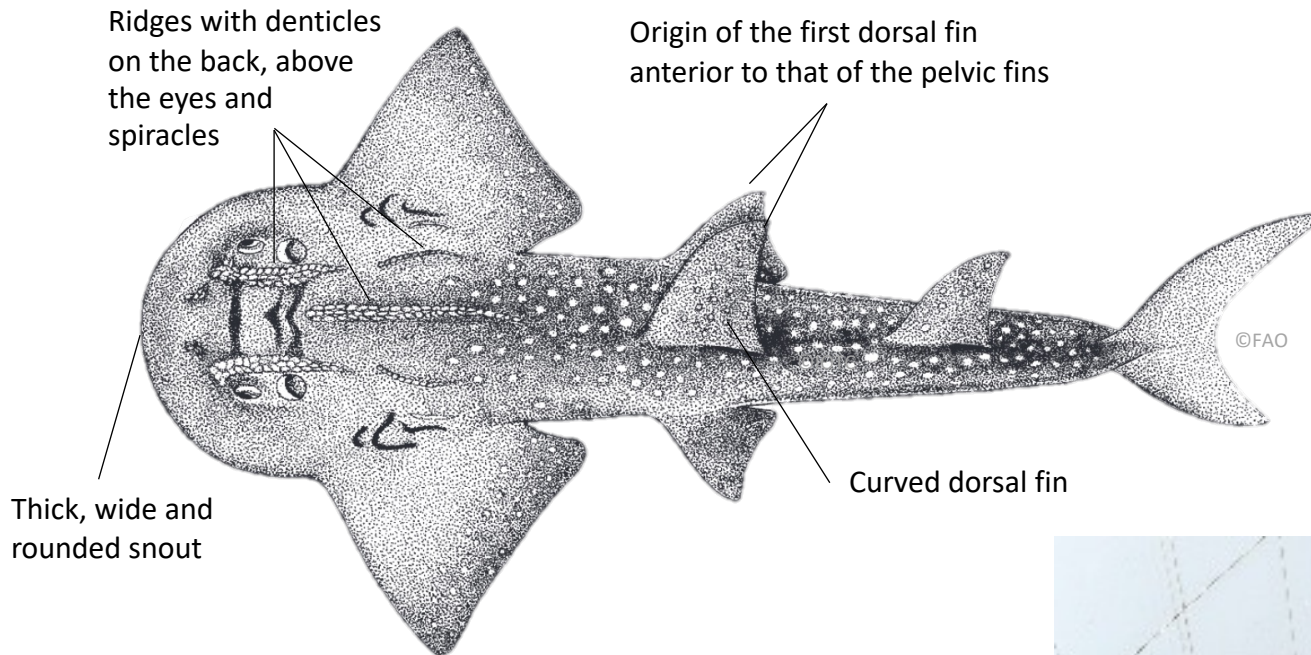


Wide and flat head with a large terminal mouth

Light spots and vertical stripes on a dark background

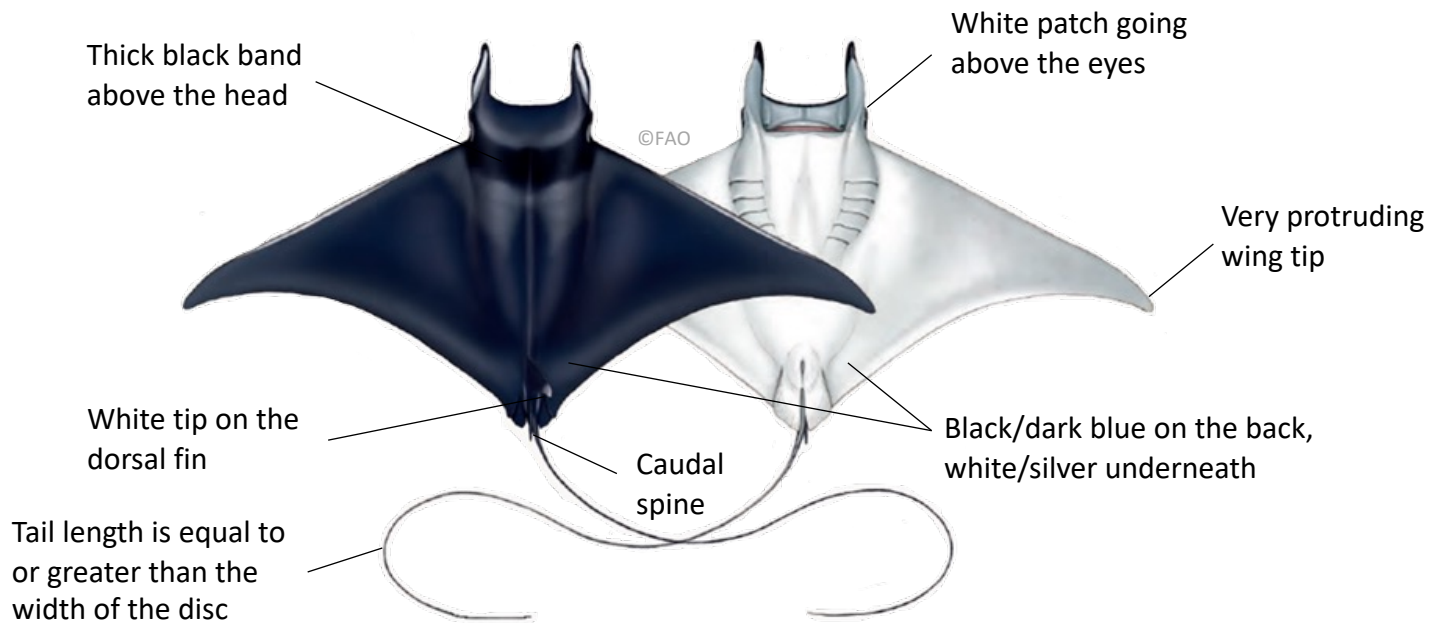
Rather rare species		
Max. length	1700 cm	TL
Obs. length	60-1200 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rare species		
Max. length	465 cm	TL
Obs. length	154-354 cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	





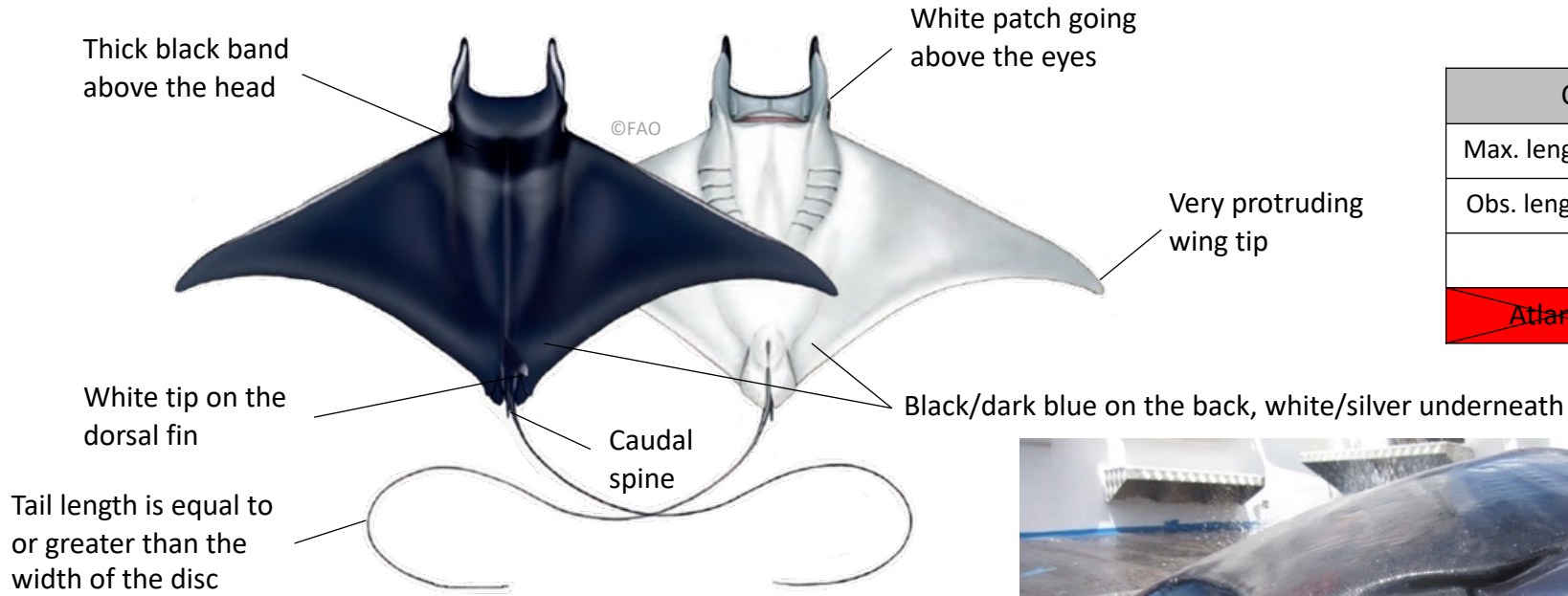
Common species		
Max. length	520 cm	DW
Obs. length	108-301 cm	DW
present in		
Atlantic	Indian	



Spinetail mobula ▶ Mante aiguillat ▶ Manta de aguijón

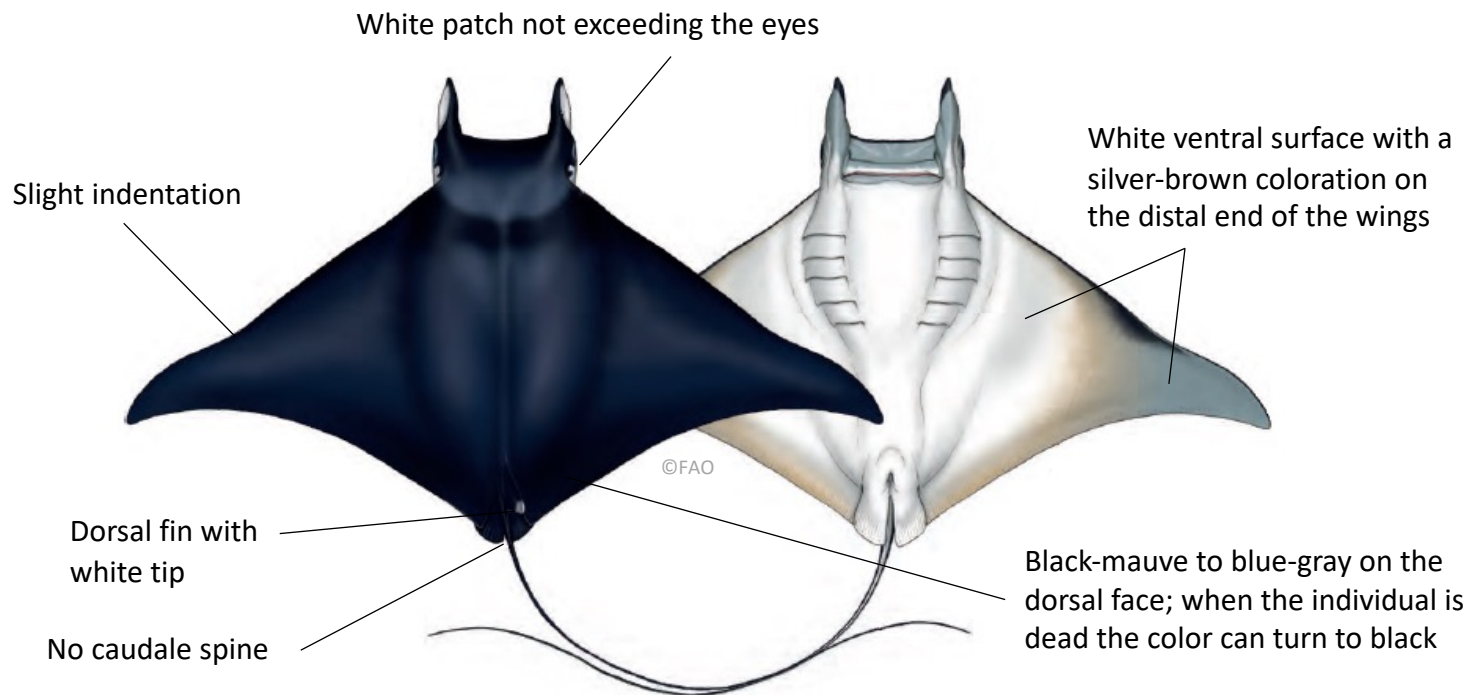
Mobula japonica

M. japonica is the same species as *M. mobular*



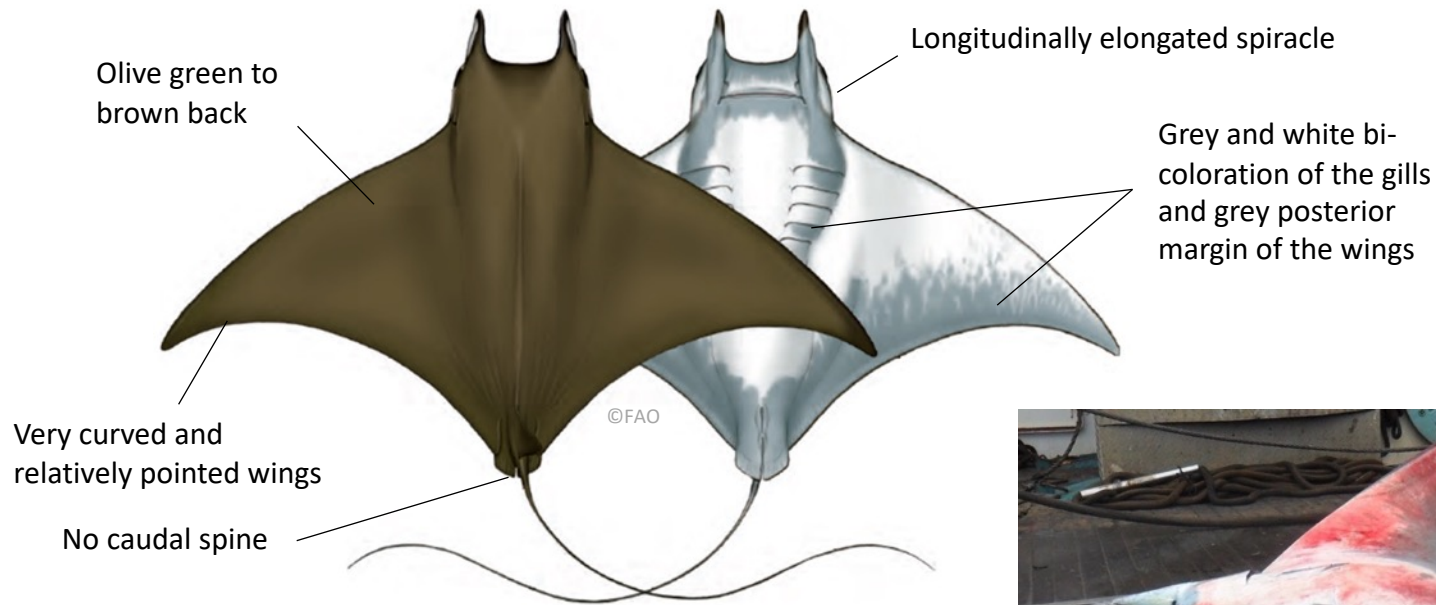
Common species		
Max. length	521 cm	DW
Obs. length	79-301 cm	DW
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





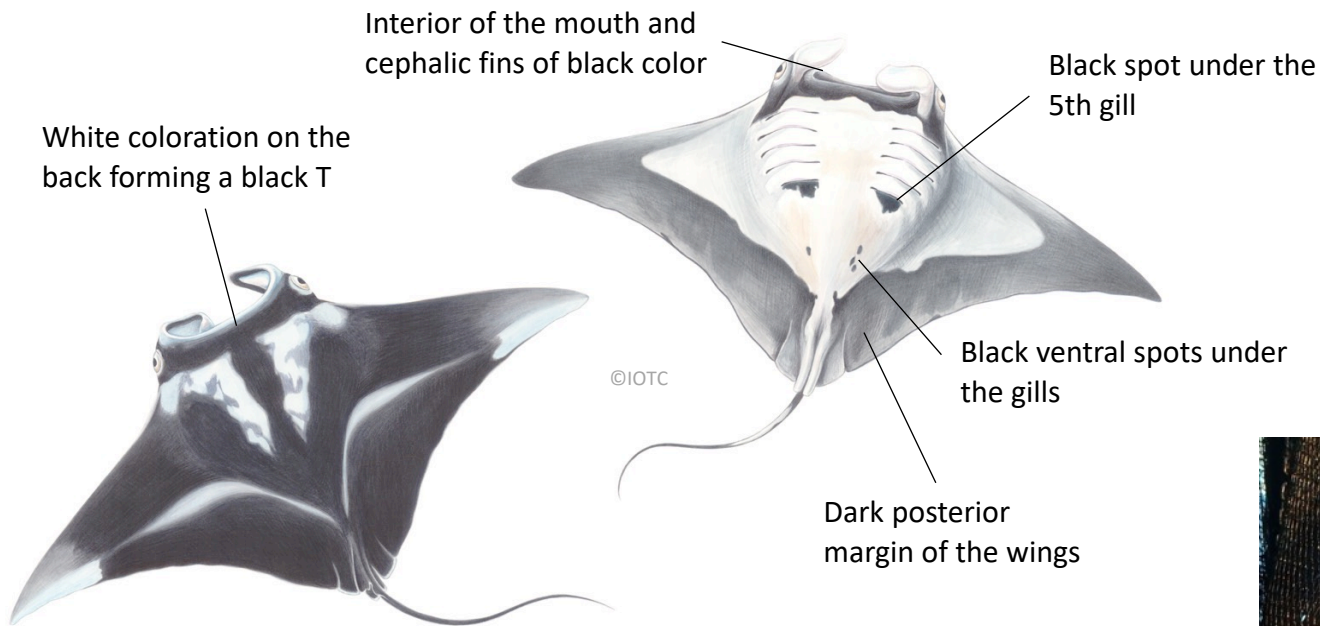
Rather rare species		
Max. length	220 cm	DW
Obs. length	119-217 cm	DW
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





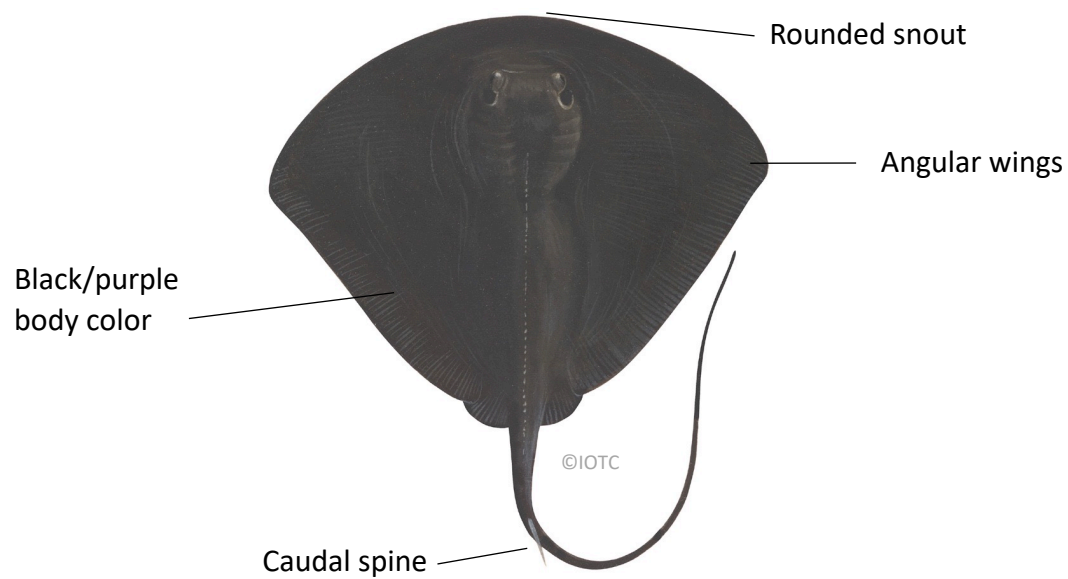
Common species		
Max. length	328 cm	DW
Obs. length	168-320 cm	DW
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





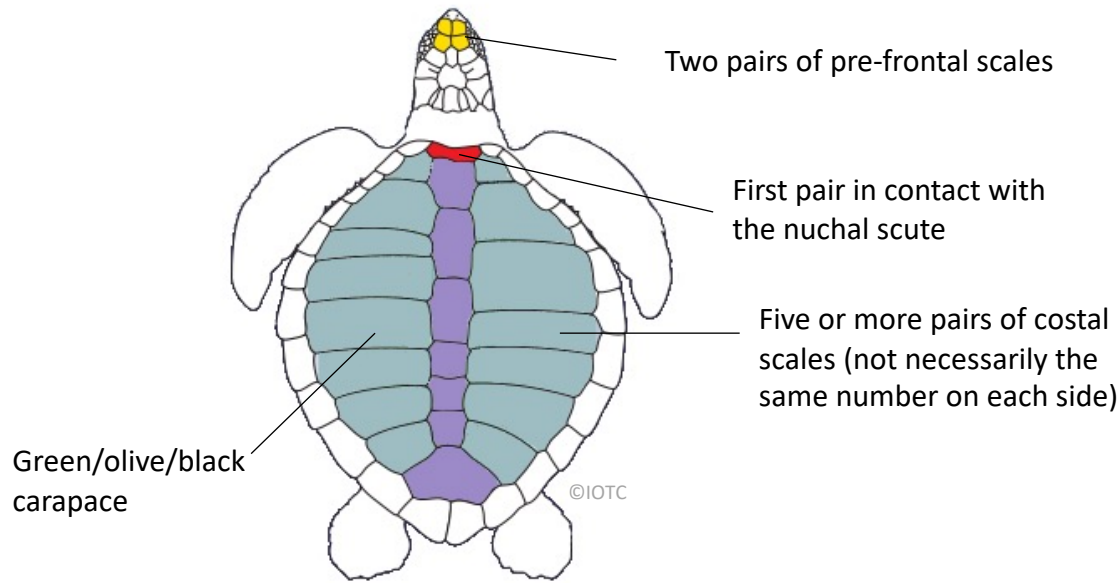
Common species		
Max. length	910 cm	DW
Obs. length	150-525 cm	DW
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





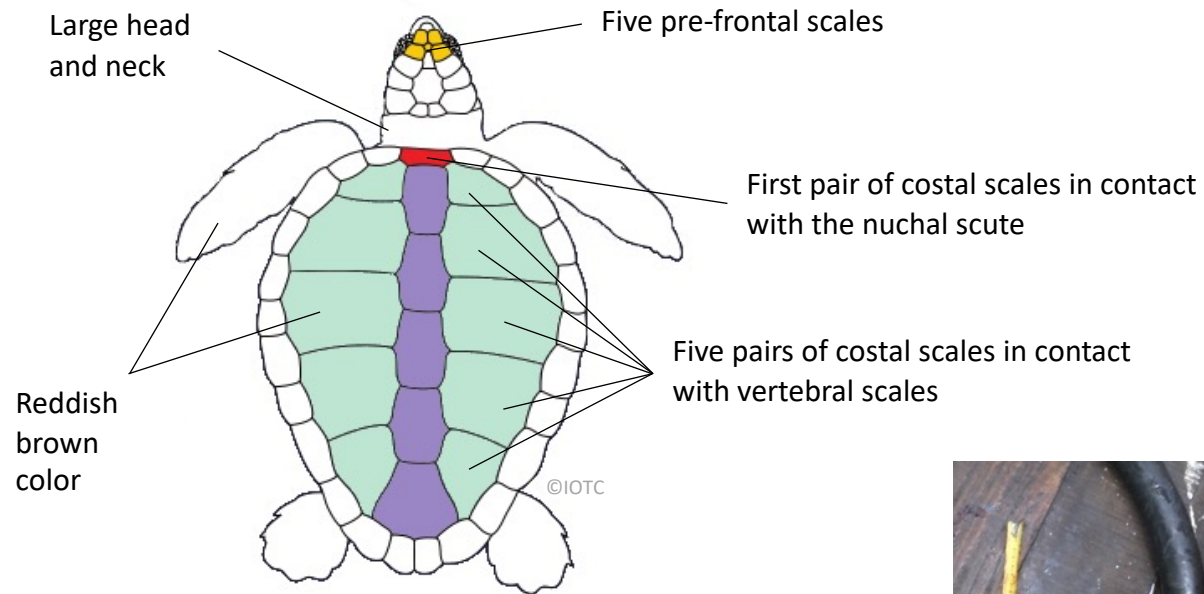
Common species		
Max. length	96 cm	DW
Obs. length	26-60 cm	DW
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





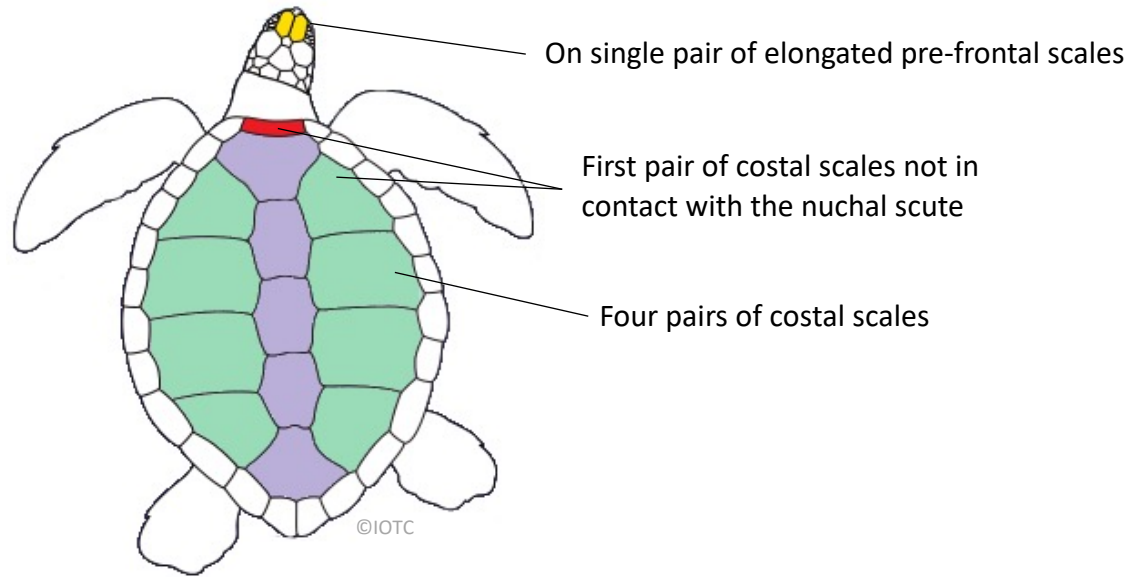
Common species		
Max. length	76 cm	SCL
Obs. length	39-76 cm	SCL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





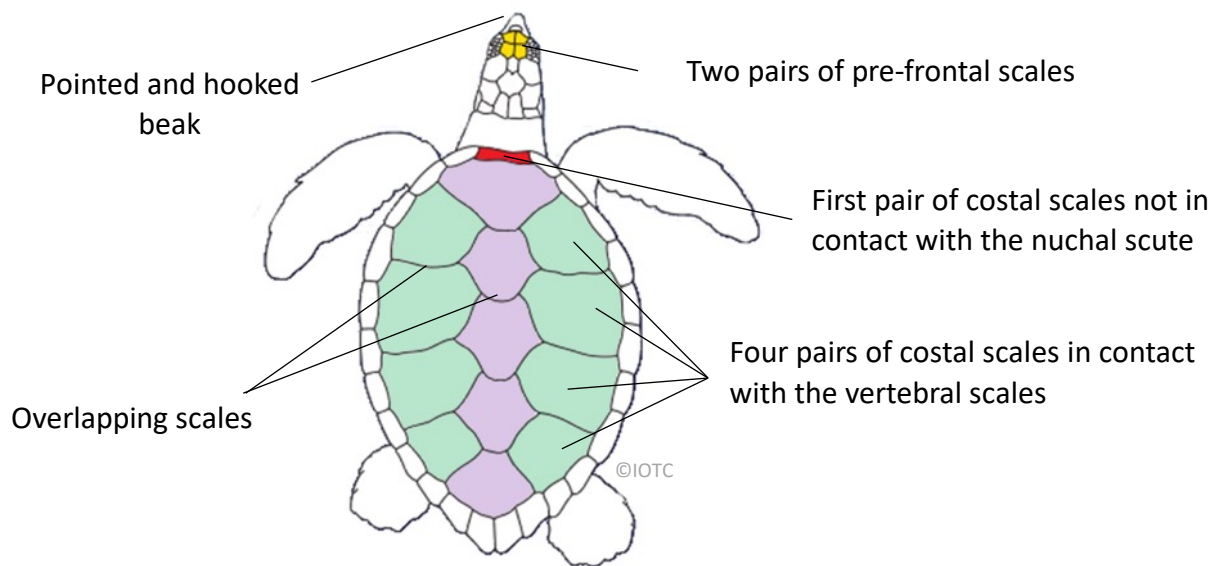
Common species		
Max. length	125 cm	SCL
Obs. length	39-95 cm	SCL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



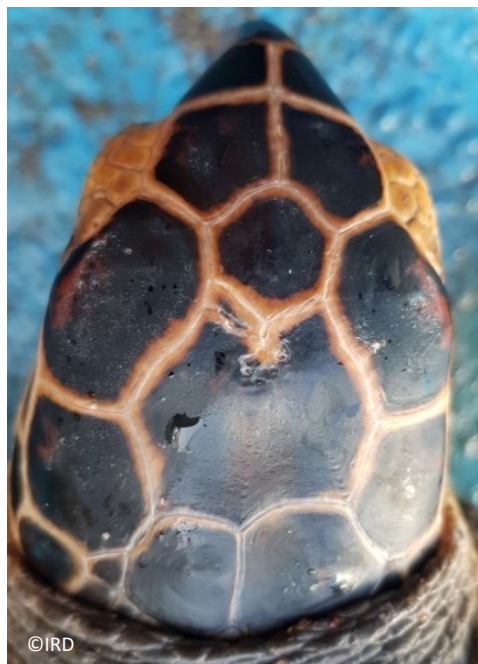


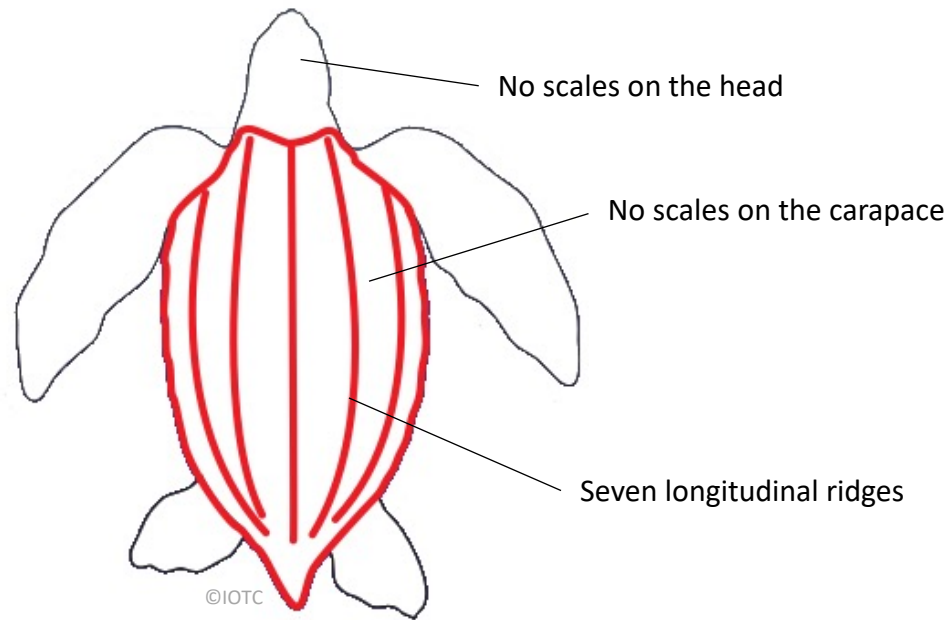
Rather rare species		
Max. length	105 cm	SCL
Obs. length	27-103 cm	SCL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rather rare species		
Max. length	90 cm	SCL
Obs. length	21-73 cm	SCL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian





Rare species		
Max. length	257 cm	SCL
Obs. length	52-167 cm	SCL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Short-finned pilot whale ▶ Globicéphale tropical ▶ Calderón de aletas cortas

Globicephala macrorhynchus

Wide, low, and falciform dorsal fin, positioned far forward on the back

Strong, black body with a gray saddle behind the dorsal fin

Globular head

Short pectoral fins

©FAO

Rare species

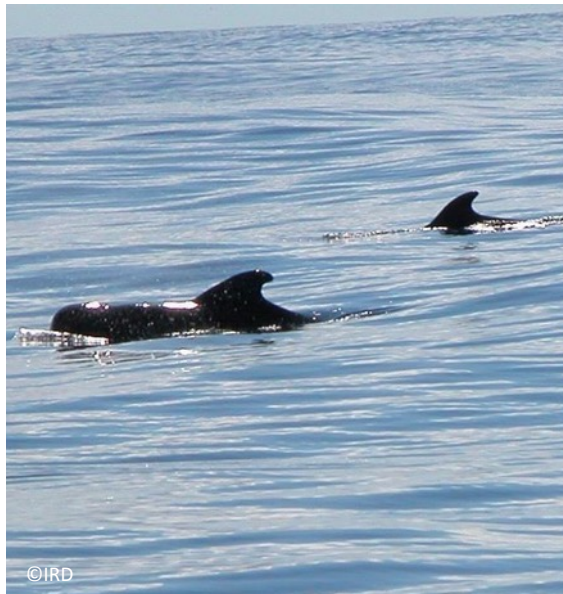
Max. length	610 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL

present in

Atlantic

Indian

Schools generally composed of 15 to 20 individuals, although groups of a hundred or more individuals can be observed

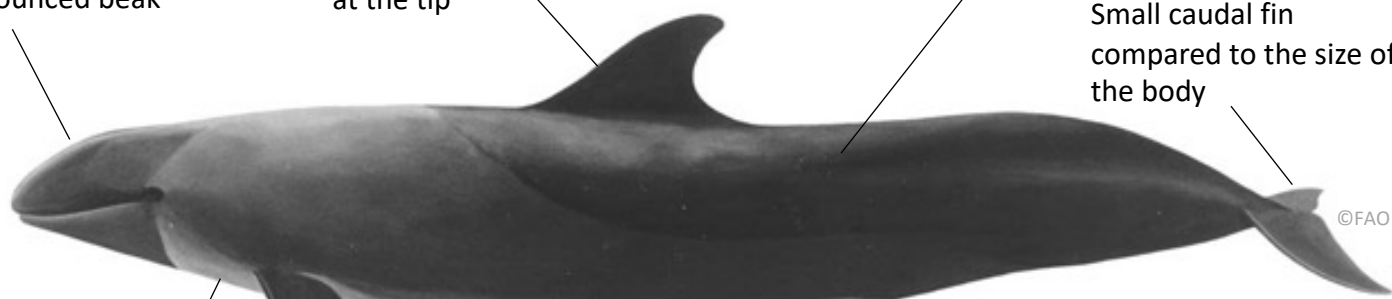


Long, thin and rounded head without a pronounced beak

Erect dorsal fin, usually falciform and rounded at the tip

Dark gray/black body with a darker cape

Small caudal fin compared to the size of the body



Lighter gray spot on the chest between the pectorals

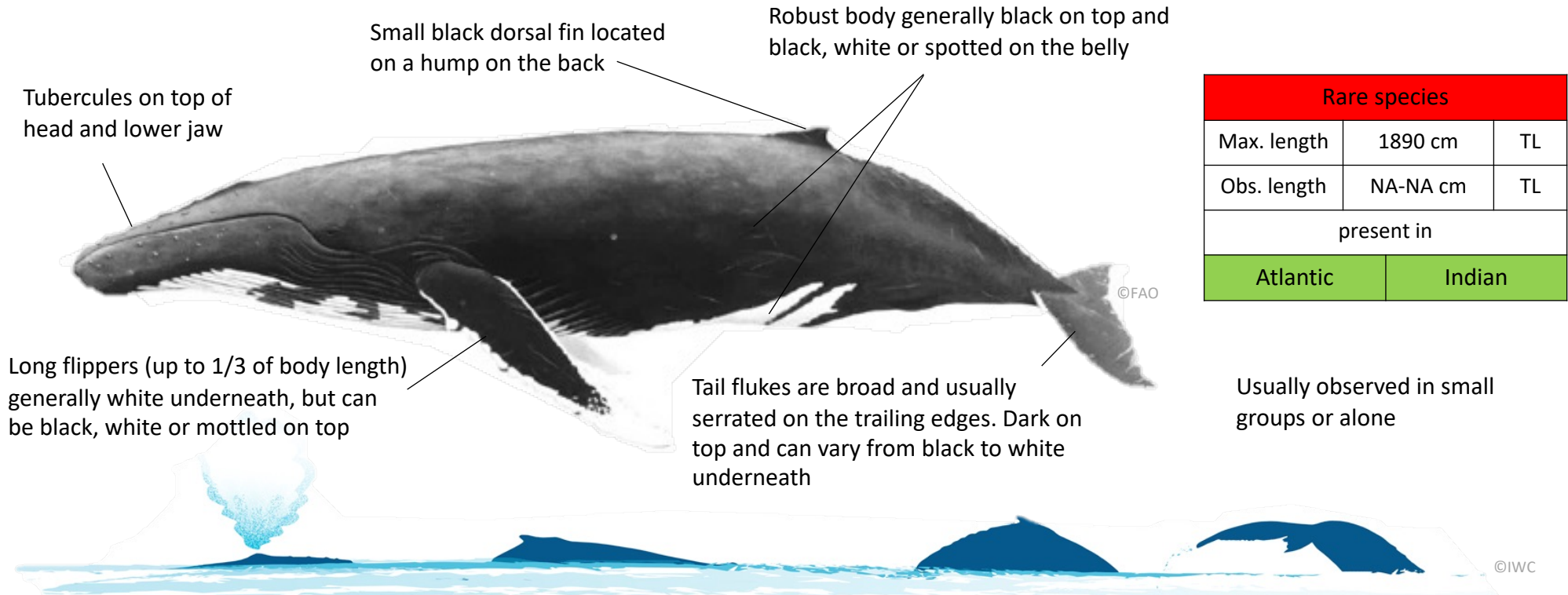
Long pectoral fins strongly bent with a curvature or a pronounced angle giving them a "S" shape

Rare species		
Max. length	600 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



Humpback whale ▶ **Baleine à bosse** ▶ **Rorqual jorobado**

Megaptera novaeangliae



Sperm whale ▶ Cachalot ▶ Cachalote

Physeter macrocephalus

Single blow hole at the front of the head, slightly to the left

Dorsal fin is only a low hump

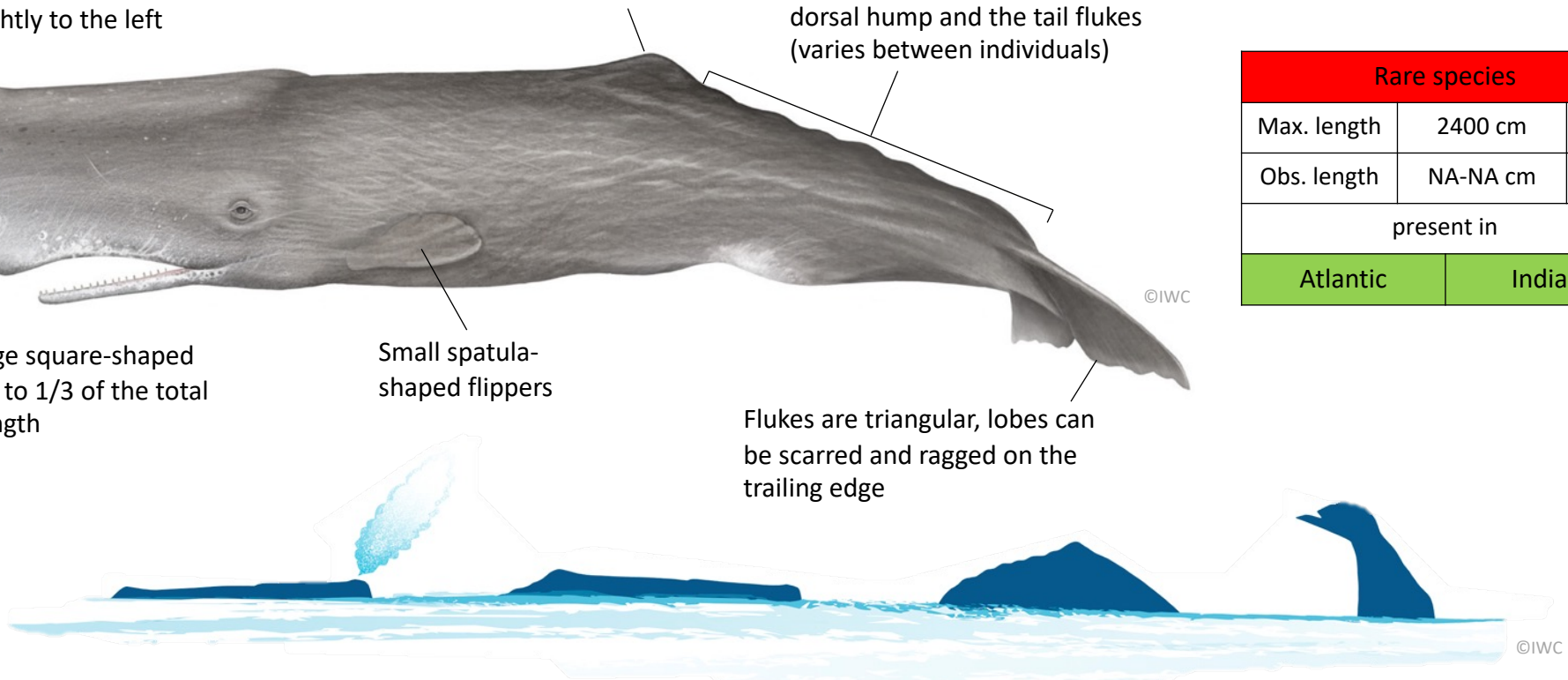
Visible fleshy knobs between the dorsal hump and the tail flukes (varies between individuals)

Very large square-shaped head up to 1/3 of the total body length

Small spatula-shaped flippers

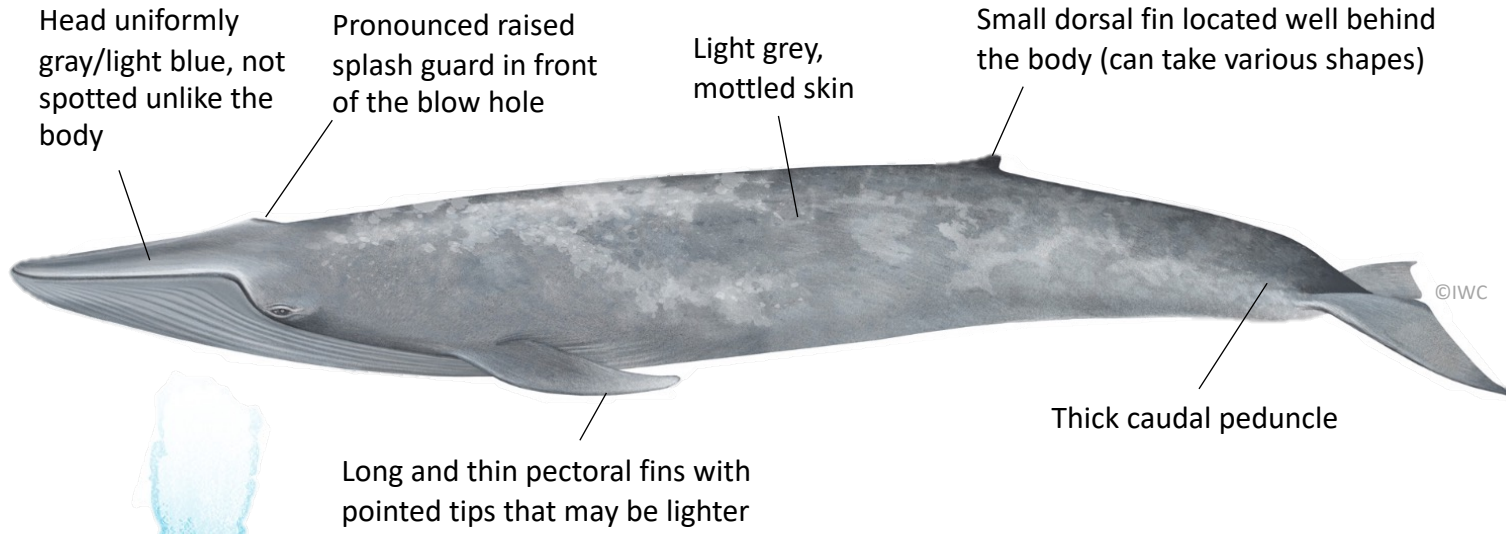
Flukes are triangular, lobes can be scarred and ragged on the trailing edge

Rare species		
Max. length	2400 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

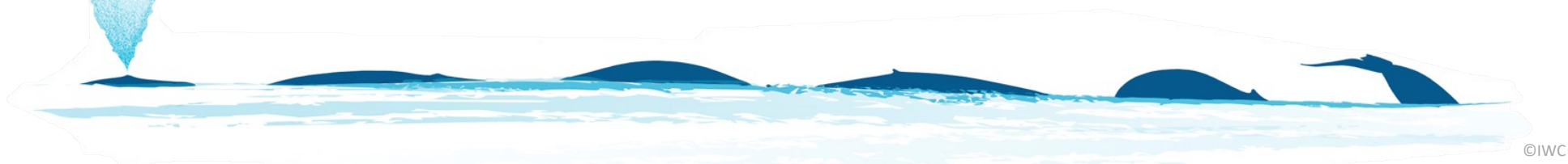


Blue whale ▶ Rorqual bleu ▶ Ballena azul

Balaenoptera musculus



Rare species		
Max. length	3300 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian



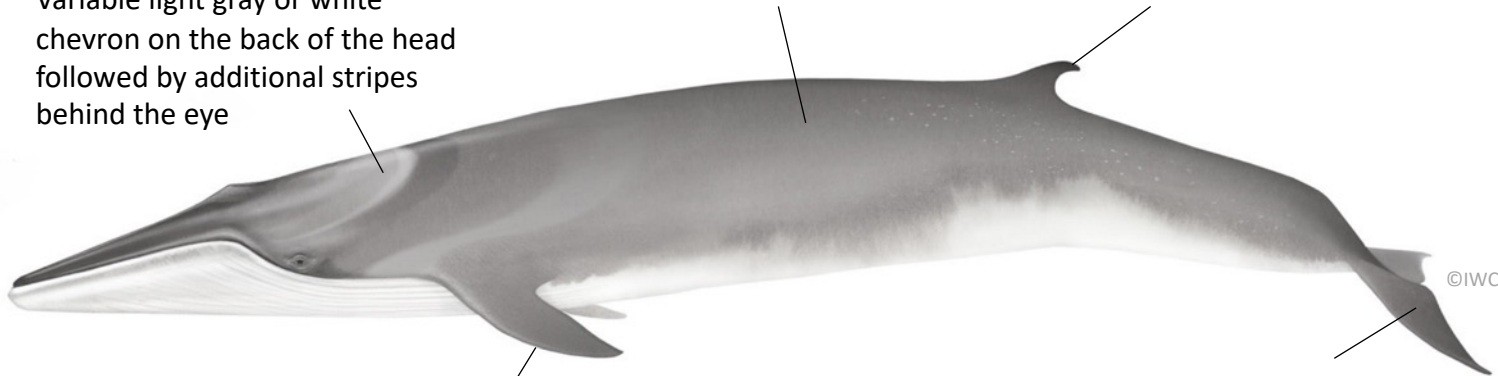
Fin whale ▶ Rorqual comun ▶ Rorcual común

Balaenoptera physalus

Variable light gray or white chevron on the back of the head followed by additional stripes behind the eye

Body is dark or silvery grey to brownish black, usually with very little scarring or mottling

Small curved and pointed dorsal fin that slopes backward

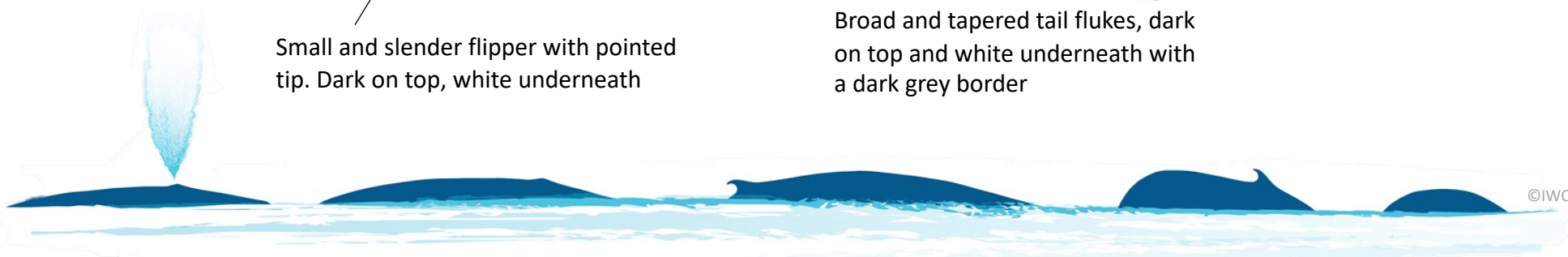


©IWC

Rare species		
Max. length	2700 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Small and slender flipper with pointed tip. Dark on top, white underneath

Broad and tapered tail flukes, dark on top and white underneath with a dark grey border



©IWC



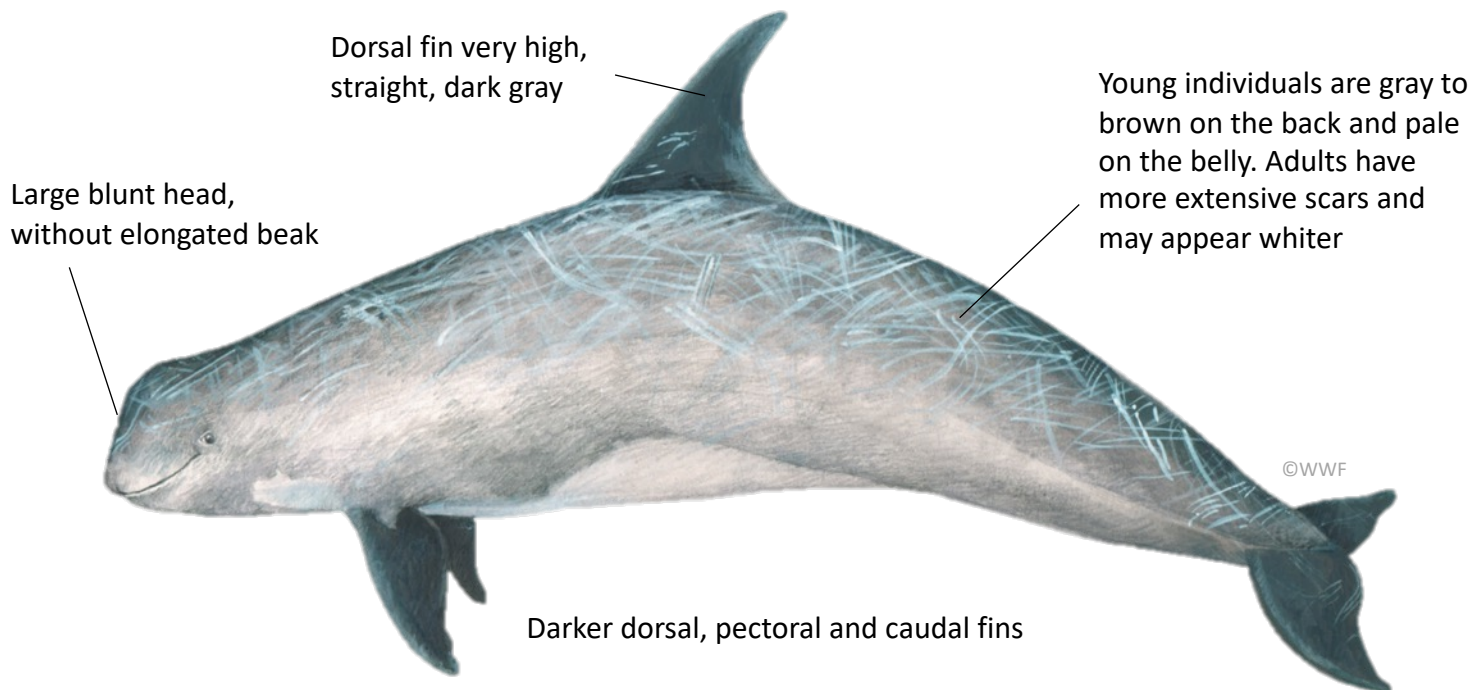
©IRD



©IWC



©INPN



Rare species		
Max. length	380 cm	TL
Obs. length	NA-NA cm	TL
present in		
Atlantic		Indian

Usually in groups of 10 to 40 individuals, but occasionally in larger groups, often mixed with other odontocetes



This Identification guide for species caught in tropical fisheries has been funded by the European Union (FEAMPA) and IRD. It has been elaborated by Philippe S. Sabarros (philippe.sabarros@ird.fr), Flore Moussy and Esther Mollier, on the basis of different guides produced by

FAO,
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