

Galapagos Shark

Carcharhinus galapagensis

Description:

The Galapagos Shark is counter shaded. It is dark grey on the top and a light grey to white on the bottom. This is a camouflage pattern that helps the shark to look like the bright surface above from below, and also to look like the dark bottom below when seen from above. They are about 10 feet on average, but have been known to reach 12 feet, and have a black edge on the back of their caudal fin (tail).

Habitat:

Galapagos Sharks are found mainly in tropical seas. They are a warm water shark and although they are a pelagic shark can be found in near islands. They are found in depths between 15 and 200 feet, and are mainly seen in schools.

Diet:

Galapagos sharks are benthic feeders, eating prey taken from the ocean floor. Their diet includes bottom-dwelling squid, fish, and octopus.

Reproduction:

Female sharks give birth to anywhere between 6 and 16 pups. When they are born, the pups are about 22-32 inches (57-80 cm) long. When they are very young, these pups stay in shallow waters away from adult Galapagos sharks, thus avoiding cannibalism (being eaten by other members of their species).



At first glance, this shark looks just like the Grey Reef Shark, having similar colors, markings, and profiles. The Galapagos Shark has a more slender body and a slightly more rounded dorsal fin. Female Galapagos Sharks are often seen with deep mating scars caused by males biting their gills, fins and flanks in a dominance display. Like the Grey Reef Shark, the Galapagos Shark also has a threat display that is used to warn off predators or competitors looking for food or territory.