

South Africa's Shark Season

Air	C	30	32	30	28	26	25	24	22	18	24	26	28
	F	86	90	86	82	79	77	75	71	64	75	79	82
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Water	C	25	26	25	25	24	23	23	22	21	21	23	24
	F	77	79	77	77	75	73	73	71	70	70	73	75

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	Black Tip Shark (Carcharhinus Limbatus)											


Average size: 5 ft / 1.5 m
 Maximum size: 9 ft / 2.7 m
 Color: grey, white belly & anal fin, subtle white band along the side; black tips on fins tend to fade with age.
 Note: species different from Black Tip Reef Shark.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	Copper Shark (Carcharhinus Brachyurus)											

Average size: 9 ft / 2.7 m
 Maximum size: 11 ft / 3.3 m
 Color: grey to bronze above, brighter on the sides.
 Note: a.k.a. **Bronze Whaler**; often confused with the Dusky Shark.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	Guitarfish (Rhynchobatus)											

Average size: 7 ft / 2.1 m
 Maximum size:
 Bowmouth Guitarfish: 7.8 ft / 2.4 m (photo)
 Giant Guitarfish: 10 ft / 3 m
 Color: olive-green above with rows of small white spots, white below. Note: we encounter both Bowmouth and Giant Guitarfish, a.k.a. Giant Guitar Shark.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	Great Hammerhead (Sphyrna Mokarran)											

Average size: 11.5 ft / 3.5 m
 Maximum size: 20 ft / 6 m
 Color: grey-brown, pale below
 Note: known to use its head to pin a fleeing ray to the

bottom; can sometimes be seen on Protea Banks where they come single or in small hunting packs.



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Sandtiger Shark (Carcharias Taurus)

Average size: 8.3 ft / 2.5 m
 Maximum size: 10.5 ft / 3.2 m
 Color: light brown, bronze-coloured back, white belly.
 Note: a.k.a. **Ragged-Tooth Shark** or **Raggie**; known to surface and swallow air to regulate its buoyancy; often found in large groups.



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Scalloped Hammerhead (Sphyrna Lewini)

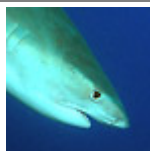
Average size: 9 ft / 2.7 m
 Maximum size: 13.8 ft / 4.2 m
 Color: olive bronze, light brown, white belly
 Note: tends to form large schools at certain times; can make use of the earth's magnetic field during migration.



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Thresher Shark (Alopias)




Average size: 10 ft / 3 m
 Maximum size: 11 ft / 3.3 m
 Color: grey above with silvery lustre.
 Note: uses its upper caudal lobe, which is nearly as long as rest of shark, to stun its prey before feeding.



J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D

Tiger Shark (Galeocerdo Cuvier)

Average size: 10 ft / 3 m
 Maximum size: 18 ft / 5.5 m
 Color: dark grey, white belly
 Note: spots fade into stripes as they mature; Galeocerdo means *cunning*.




	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Whale Shark (Rhincodon Typus)												
<p>Average size: 33 ft / 10 m Maximum size: 45 ft / 13.6 m (unconfirmed reports claim 59 ft / 17.8 m) Color: grey with random white dots above, cream below. Note: the world's biggest fish can sometimes be seen on Protea Banks in South Africa's warm summer months; may live up to 100 to 150 years.</p>												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
White Shark (Carcharodon Carcharias)												
<p>Average size: 15 ft / 4.5 m Maximum size: 20 ft / 6 m Color: grey or blue grey above, white below Note: no specific season, rarely seen; may use 20 to 30,000 teeth in a lifetime.</p>												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Zambezi or Bull Shark (Carcharhinus Leucas)												
<p>Average size male: 7 ft / 2.1 m Average size female: 11 ft / 3.3 m Color: dark grey, white belly Note: females need fresh water rivers to give birth to their offspring.</p>												

Sources:

<http://www.sharkinfo.ch> / Dr. Erich K. Ritter

<http://www.sharks.com>

Other species

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bottlenose Dolphin (<i>Tursiops Truncatus</i>)												
<p>Average size: 9 ft / 2.7 m Maximum size: 12 ft / 3.7 m Color: varies but generally grey with lighter sides. Note: called Bottlenose because of its short beak; we predominantly encounter this species and during the Sardine Run several hundreds of Common Dolphins (<i>Delphinus Delphis</i>).</p>												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Humpback Whale (<i>Megaptera Novaeangliae</i>)												
<p>Size males: 40-48 ft / 12.2-14.6 m Maximum size: 45-50 ft / 13.7-15.2 m Color: black above, mottled black and white below Note: encountered on virtually every trip to Protea Banks and back; we always make an effort to carefully follow them; Humpback Whales sing long and complex songs.</p>												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Manta Ray (<i>Manta Birostris</i>)												
<p>Average size: 12 ft / 3.6 m (wing-span) Maximum size: 25 ft / 7.6 m (wing-span) Color: commonly black above, white below Note: a.k.a. Devilfish; can sometimes be seen on Protea Banks in South Africa's warm summer months.</p>												