



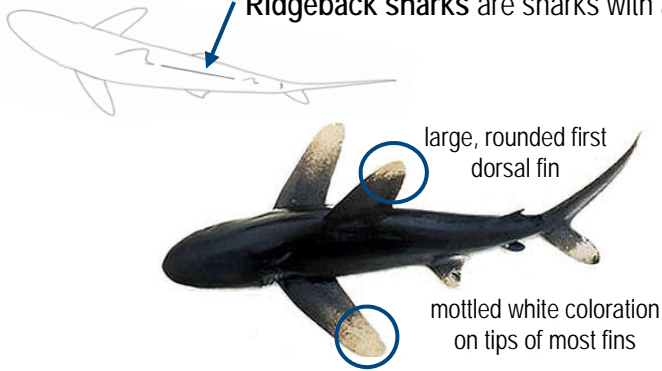
# SHARK IDENTIFICATION

FOR THE RECREATIONAL FISHERY OF THE U.S. ATLANTIC AND GULF OF MEXICO

Prohibited species are underlined in red

All ridgeback sharks are prohibited, except for **oceanic whitetip**, **tiger**, or **smoothhound** sharks

Ridgeback sharks are sharks with an interdorsal ridge (a visible line of raised skin between dorsal fins)



Prohibited ridgeback sharks:

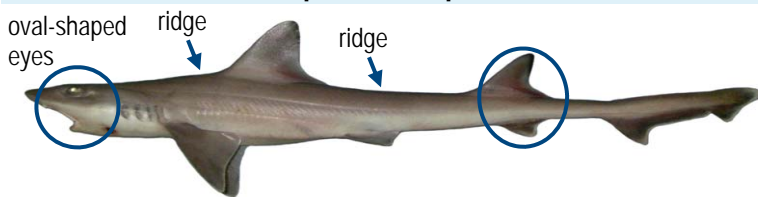
bignose, Caribbean reef, dusky, Galapagos, night, sandbar, and silky sharks



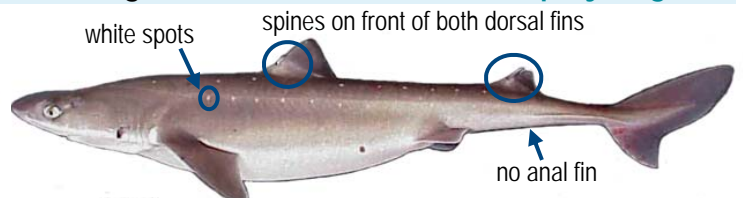
**Oceanic whitetip shark:** young sharks have black mottling on most fins; does not always have interdorsal ridge; max. size 8 ft; offshore  
Cannot be retained if tuna, swordfish, or billfish are onboard

**Tiger shark:** snout length much shorter than mouth width; markings fade with age; max. size 15 feet; coastal and offshore

There is no Federal permit requirement, minimum size, or bag limit for **smoothhound** or **spiny dogfish**



**Smoothhound:** second dorsal fin slightly smaller than first dorsal fin and much larger than anal fin; max. size 5 ft; coastal and offshore

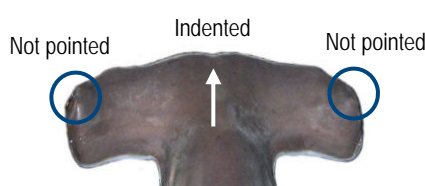


**Spiny dogfish:** max. size 4 ft; coastal and offshore

**Scalloped hammerheads, great hammerheads, and smooth hammerheads cannot be retained if tuna, swordfish or billfish are onboard**



**Scalloped hammerhead:** max. size 11 ft; coastal and offshore

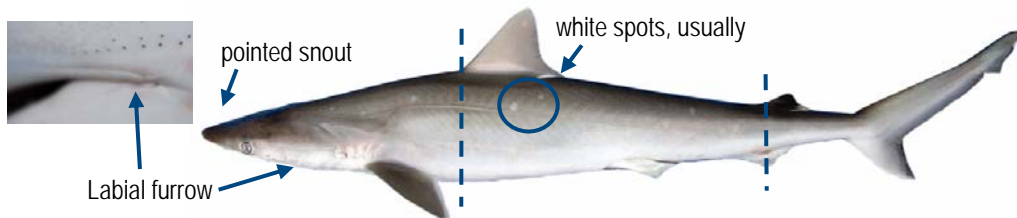


**Great hammerhead:** max. size 15 ft; coastal and offshore



**Smooth hammerhead:** max. size 12 ft; coastal and offshore

There is no minimum size for **Atlantic sharpnose sharks** or **bonnetheads**



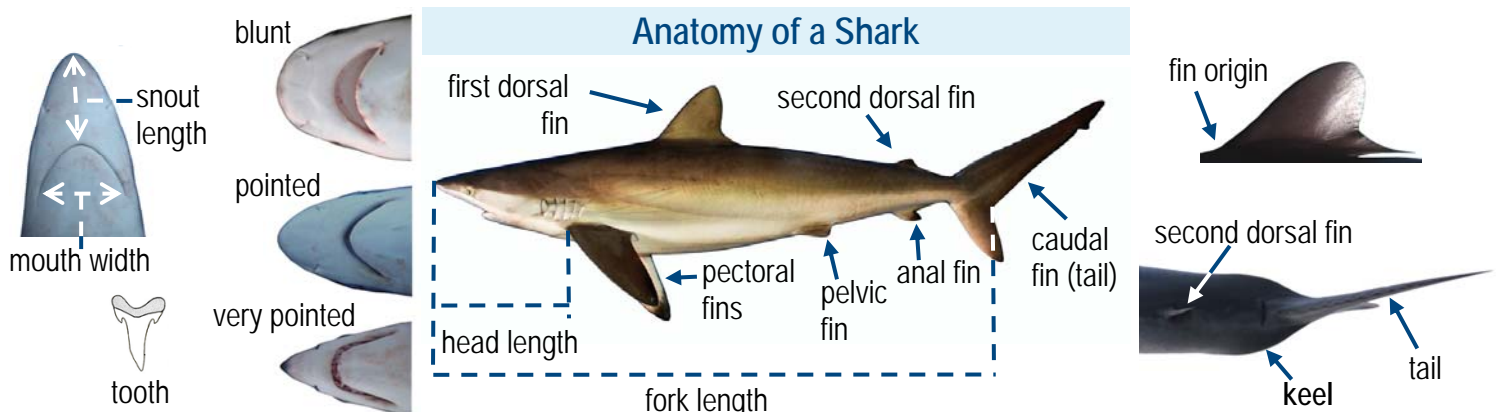
**Atlantic sharpnose shark:** max. size 3 ft; coastal and offshore; similar species: smalltail sharks have very reduced labial furrows and Caribbean sharpnose sharks lack white spots



**Bonnethead:** small, black spots on body; max. size 4 ft; mostly coastal

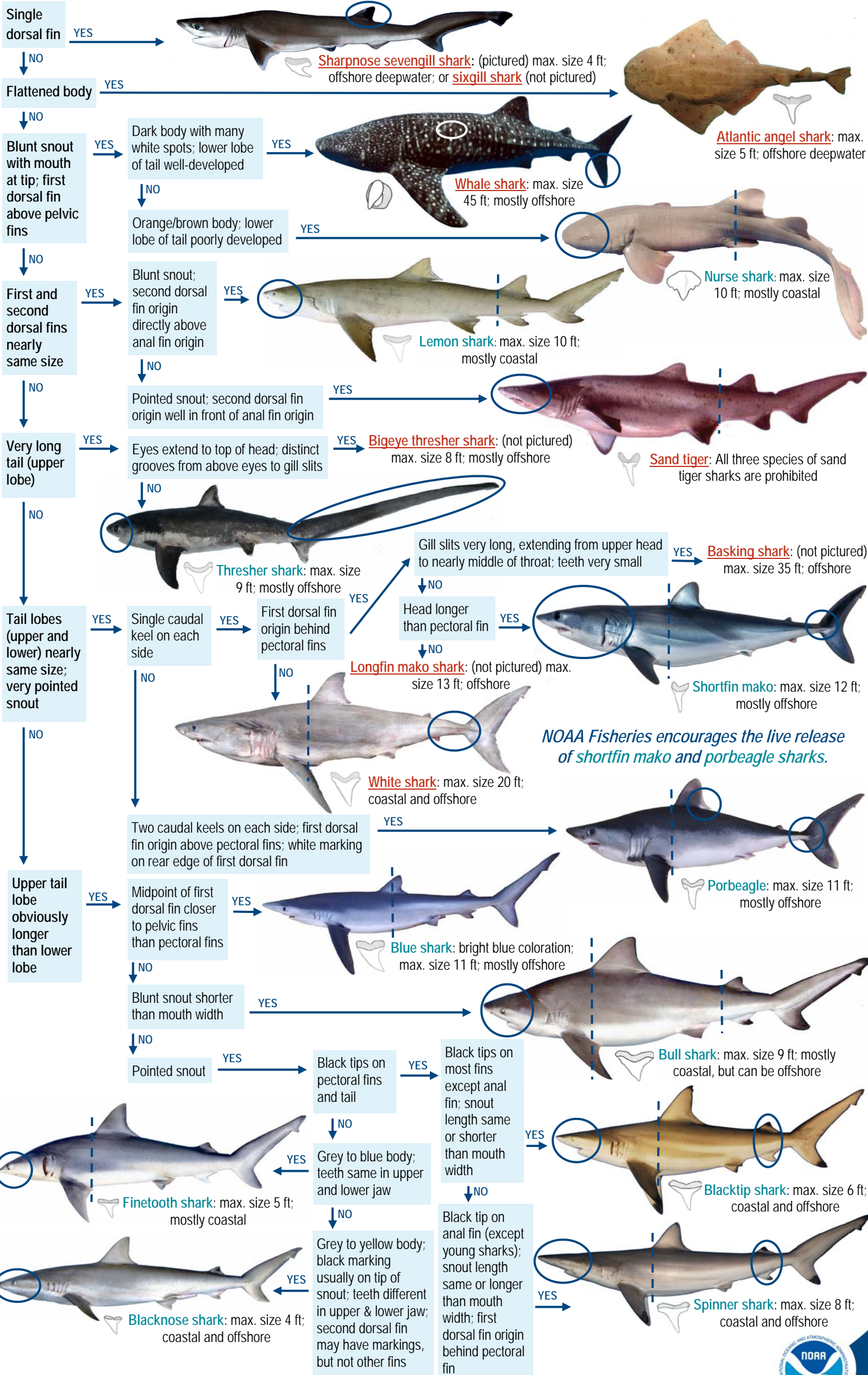
Authorized Species	Minimum Size (fork length)	Bag Limit (per trip)
Atlantic sharpnose shark	None	1 per person
Bonnethead	None	1 per person
Hammerheads (great, scalloped, and smooth)	78 inches	1 per vessel (hammerhead OR other shark)
Other sharks	54 inches	

## Anatomy of a Shark



All sharks within a species are not identical; however, these are common characteristics for the majority of individuals. Young sharks can vary in appearance from adults. Maximum sizes are approximate.

# Use this key to identify non-ridgeback sharks



*If you don't know, let it go*

All species that may be retained are shown on this placard | Prohibited species are underlined in red

