

Marine Fish – Basking Sharks

description

The Pacific population of the basking shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*) is listed as Endangered under the Species at Risk Act. It is the second largest fish in the world and yet is a filter feeder. It is the only species in its family, *Cetorhinidae*, and has a fossil lineage that is 29 to 35 million years old. Prior to 1970, basking sharks were regularly found in numerous locations along British Columbia's coast. However, they were subject to a directed fishery for liver oil (1941-1947) and an eradication program (1945-1970). Historic records suggest a widely spread minimum population of 750 individuals; over the time period of two to three generations (66 to 99 years), basking sharks have all but disappeared from the areas where they were historically abundant.

No specific locations have been identified for reproduction, pupping or rearing in the Canadian Pacific, although some other shark species are known to mate in northern areas and pup in southern areas. Feeding locations have been associated with oceanographic fronts, which vary both temporally and spatially, as well as around headlands, islands and bays with strong tidal flow (McFarlane *et al.* 2009). The species migrate seasonally spending spring and summer in Canadian waters and winter in California, where the population is also well below historic numbers. They spend much of their time near the surface, although there is recent evidence that basking sharks may also use deepwater habitats greater than 1000 metres.

This map illustrates both areas of historical abundance (Figure 1 in reference document) and more recent captures and sightings of basking sharks (Figure 2 in reference document).



PHOTO: SAM BEEBE

data sources

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Figure 1 and 2 in reference document listed below

data resolution

- Areas of historical abundance and recent captures and sightings were digitised from the reference document (Figures 1 and 2) and are not highly accurate.

date compiled

- 2009

reviewers

- Not reviewed.

reviewer comments

- None provided.

caveats of use

- Recommended date of expiry for use of these data in a marine planning context: None provided.

map, feature data and metadata access

- Visit www.bcmca.ca/data for more information.

references




- Fisheries and Oceans Canada - McFarlane, S., J. King, K. Leask and L.B. Christensen. *Assessment of information used to develop a Recovery Potential Assessment for basking shark Cetorhinus maximus (Pacific Population) in Canada*. DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2008/071. vi + 98 p. 2009. www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/CSAS/Csas/Publications/ResDocs-DocRech/2008/2008_071_e.pdf

BCMCA Atlas

Marine Fish

Basking Sharks

Legend

-  Areas of Historical Abundance of Basking Sharks
-  Captures and Sightings of Basking Sharks (1997 - 2008)
-  97 Sightings of Basking Sharks Reported in 1992

Data Sources:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

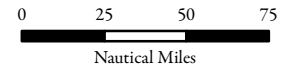
Base Data:

ESRI Base Data, GeoBase, GeoBC, NOAA, Natural Resources Canada, USGS, Washington State Government

Thematic Data:

For more information on data sources and methods please refer to the facing page to this map

Projection: BC Albers NAD83



1:4,250,000 *

* Written scales are approximate and are based on a 11 x 17 inch paper size.

Prepared for:



Map template by Caslys Consulting Ltd.

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