



Parts of a Whale Shark



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The whale shark is targeted by commercial and artisan fisheries. This has put them in the list of endangered species.

Although the worldwide population is unknown, the reduction in sightings have put them in a vulnerable situation.

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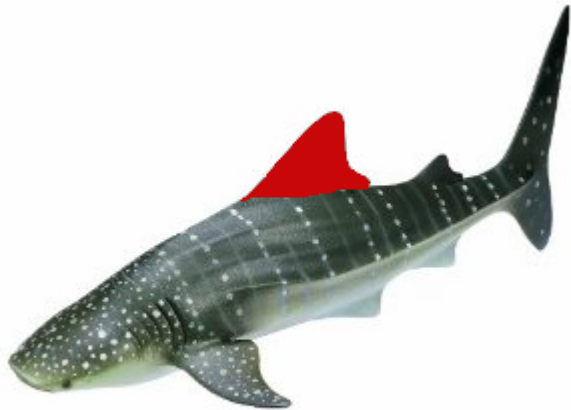
Parts of a Whale Shark



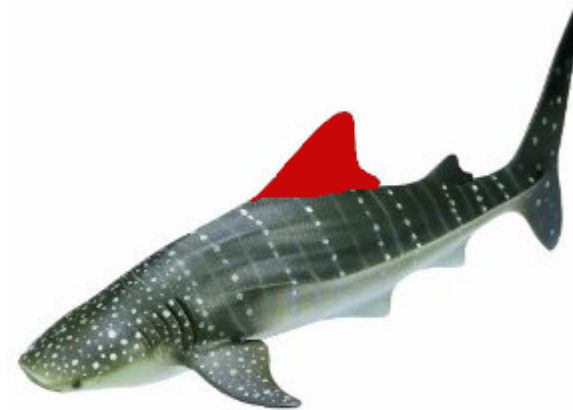
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1st dorsal fin



1st dorsal fin



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Located along the upper back, these fins provide stability for the fish keeping it upright.

1st dorsal fin

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1st dorsal fin

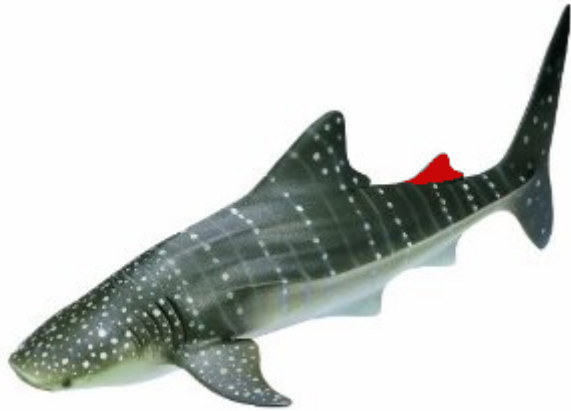


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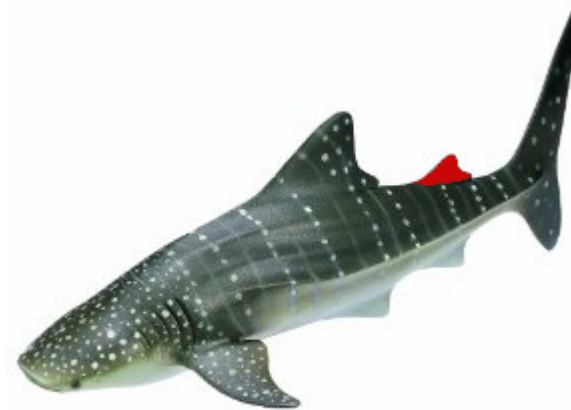
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2nd dorsal fin



2nd dorsal fin



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Located along the upper back, these fins provide stability for the fish keeping it upright.

2nd dorsal fin

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2nd dorsal fin



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mouth



mouth



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This is a 1.5m wide body part which the Whale Shark uses to filter feed.

It can contain up to 300 rows of tiny teeth.

mouth

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It can contain up to 300 rows of tiny teeth.

mouth



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caudal fin



caudal fin



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This is also known as the “tail fin” and it is attached to the caudal peduncle, a narrow part at the rear of the Whale Shark’s body.

caudal fin

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caudal fin



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eye



eye



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The Whale Shark has two of these organs of sight that are located towards the front of the shark's wide, flat head.

Most fish, including the Whale Shark are short sighted.

eye

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eye



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gills



gills



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The Whale Shark has five pairs of these respiratory organs located near the it's head.

They are used to "breathe" by extracting oxygen from the water.

gills

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They are used to "breathe" by extracting oxygen from the water.

gills

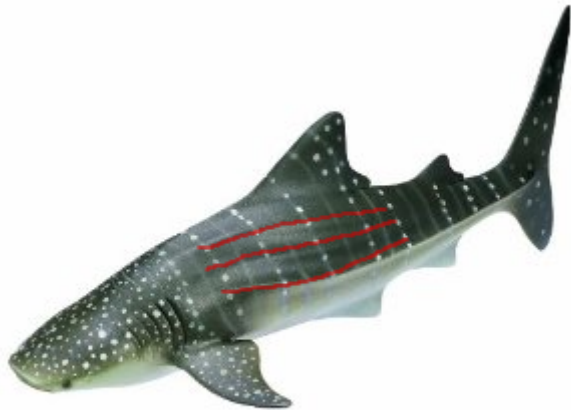


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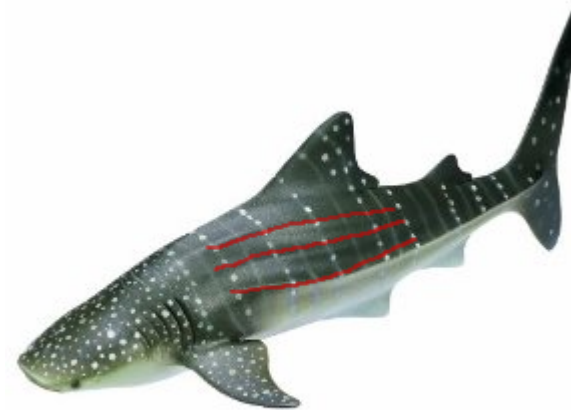
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lateral ridges



lateral ridges



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The Whale Shark has 3 of these prominent ridges running down each side of it's body.

lateral ridges

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lateral ridges

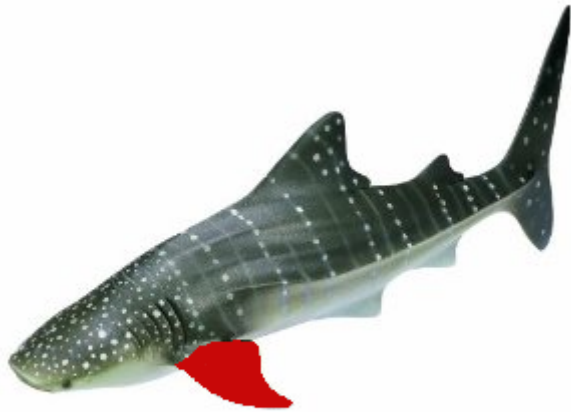


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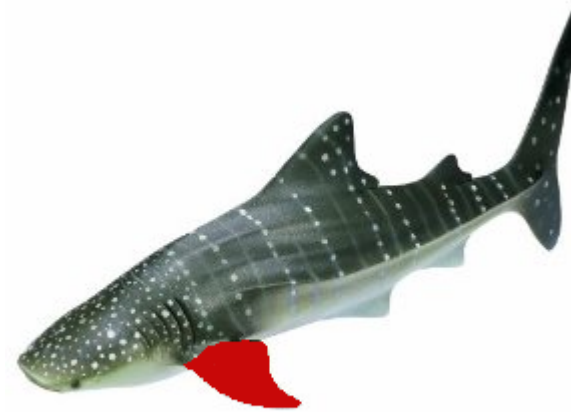
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pectoral fin



pectoral fin



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These ventral fins along the bottom of the fish assist in steering and manoeuvrability.

They are also used to assist in reverse motion and allow the fish to swim backward.

pectoral fin

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They are also used to assist in reverse motion and allow the fish to swim backward.

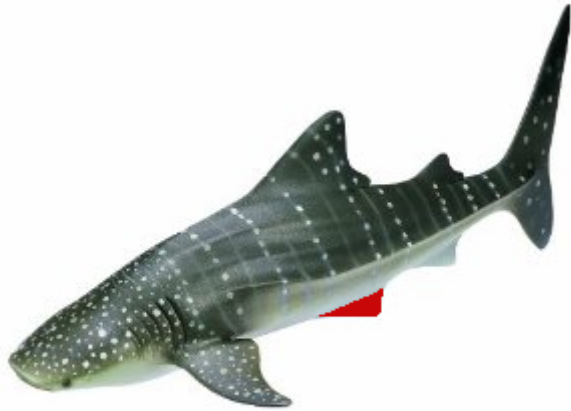
pectoral fin



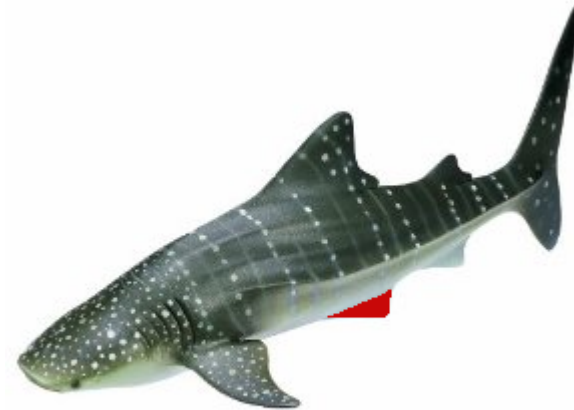
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pelvic fin



pelvic fin



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These hind fins are attached to the pelvic girdle and correspond to the hind limbs of higher vertebrates.

pelvic fin

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pelvic fin

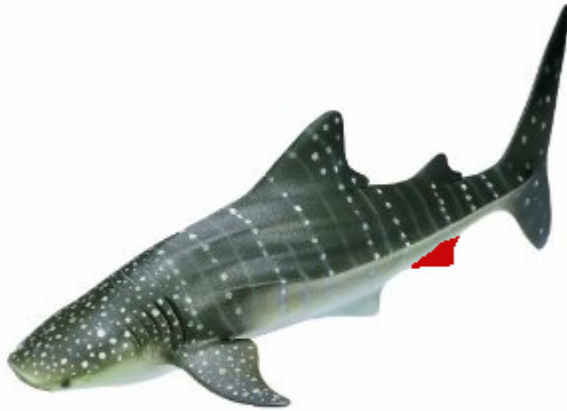


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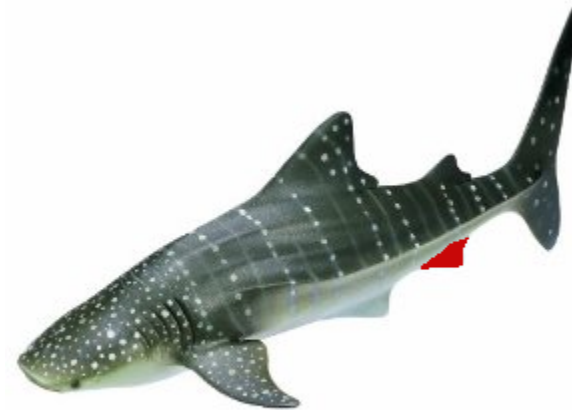
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anal fin



anal fin



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These median ventral unpaired fins are situated between the anus and the tail fin.

They help to maintain stable equilibrium

anal fin

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anal fin



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