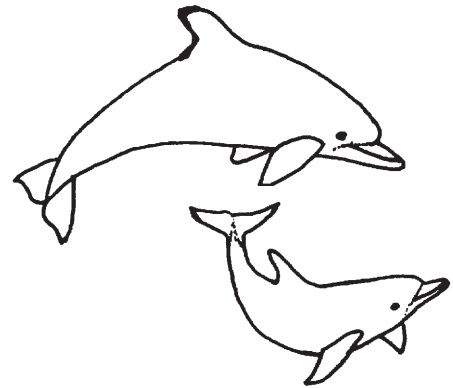
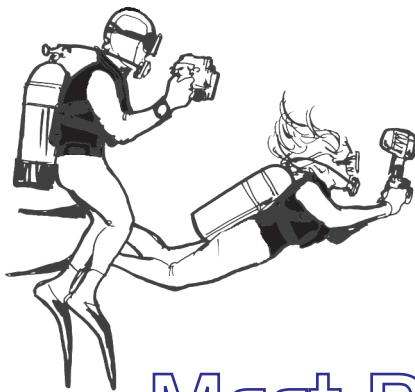


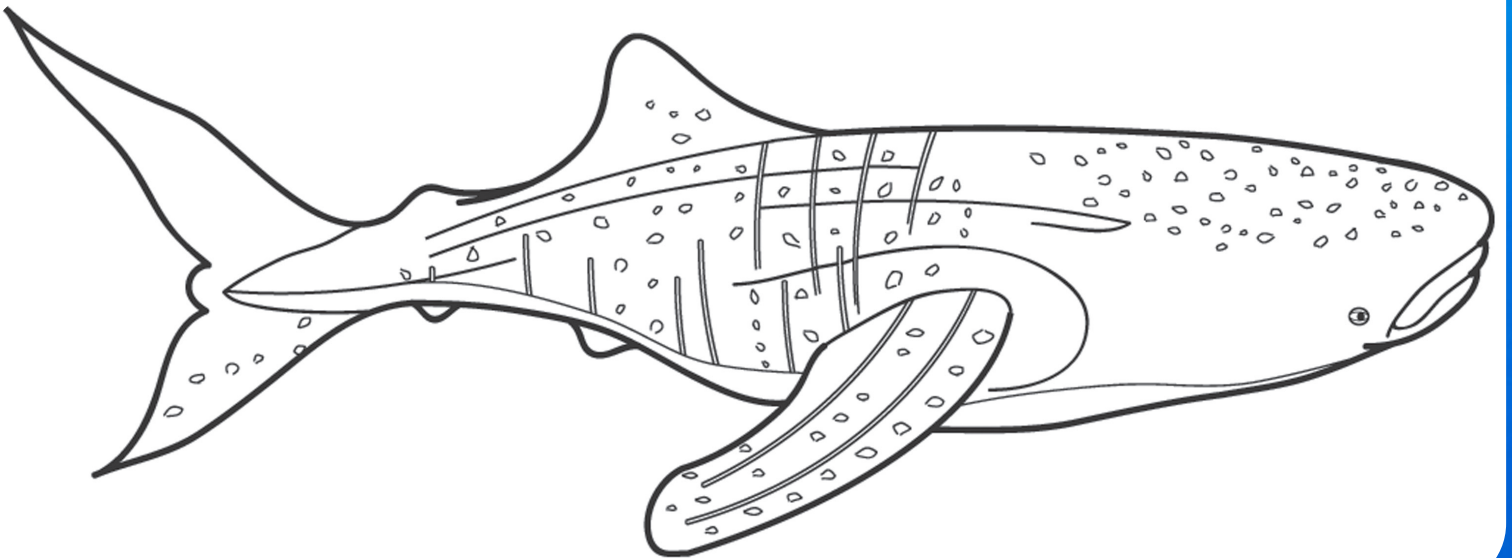


## The Ocean Adventure



# Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

**Kid's Fun Book**



[www.TheOceanAdventure.com](http://www.TheOceanAdventure.com)

# Whale Shark

# *Rhincodon typus*



## ● SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Rhincodon typus* (Smith, 1829)

## ● DISTRIBUTION

Whale sharks live in the open ocean and inhabit all tropical and warm-temperate seas. Its range is generally restricted to about 30° latitude or lower.



## ● BIOLOGY

- Unique cross-flow filtration filter pads for filter feeding.
- Unique eye retraction mechanism for eye protection.
- Only shark with protective denticles on their eyes.
- Solitary, but gather in large aggregations for seasonal feeding events.
- Can breathe without swimming through their spiracles.

## ● SIZE

- Largest fish/shark.
- Max.: 60+ ft., ~40 tons
- Mature Male: 26 - 30 ft., 10 - 25 tons
- Mature Female: ~48 ft., 25 - 30 tons
- Birth: 16-24 in., 1 - 2 lb.

## ● LIFE SPAN

- 80 - 130 yrs.

## ● COMMON NAME

WHALE SHARK, Tiburón ballena (MX), Tofu shark (TW).

## ● IDENTIFICATION

- Dark grey upper body with pale spots and stripes
- Wide, flat head
- Mouth in front of body
- Large, wide mouth almost as wide as body
- Small eyes near each corner of mouth
- 300 rows of tiny, teeth (~size of grain of rice)
- 20 filter pads inside mouth for filter feeding
- Three prominent ridges along side of body
- Two spiracles, one behind each eye
- Two dorsal fins
- One anal fin

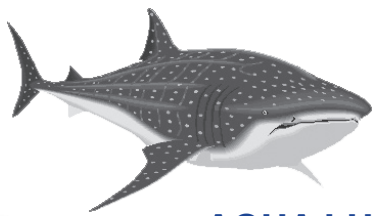
## ● REPRODUCTION

- Breeding starts at ~25 yrs. old.
- Males internally fertilize females.
- Gestation period - UNKNOWN.
- *Ovoviviparity*: eggs hatch in mother, pups born alive.
- Number of young from each breeding: 300+
- Not all pups born at once. Birthing period last a year.
- Pups can feed on their own as soon as they are born.

## ● DIET

- Non-predatory filter feeder.
- Two feeding methods
  1. Passive ram filtration feeding
  2. Active suction feeding
- Feeds on small fish and plankton including copepods, krill, fish and coral eggs and larvae.

Conservation Status: **Endangered**



## THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

### Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

#### AQUA LUNG® Scuba Diving Equipment Checklist



✓ **MASK** - This lets us see clearly underwater.



✓ **FINS** - These paddle-like shoes give us more power for swimming underwater.



✓ **SNORKEL** - A special tube we breathe through while swimming on the surface.



✓ **WET SUIT** - This rubber suit is worn to help keep us warm underwater and to protect us from getting cut or scratched. (A wet suit is positively buoyant.)



✓ **WEIGHT BELT** - A special belt that holds the lead weights we need to go underwater. (A weight belt is negatively buoyant.)



✓ **BUOYANCY COMPENSATOR (BC)** - An inflatable vest we wear that lets us become weightless underwater. (A BC lets us become neutrally buoyant.)



✓ **AIR TANK** - A metal container that safely holds the air we breathe underwater.



✓ **REGULATOR** - This is what we connect to the *air tank* to breathe from underwater.



✓ **PRESSURE GAUGE** - This is connected to the *regulator* and shows us how much air is left in our *air tank*.



✓ **DIVING COMPUTER** - This special, water-proof computer tells us how deep we are, how long we have been underwater, and when we must go back up to the surface.



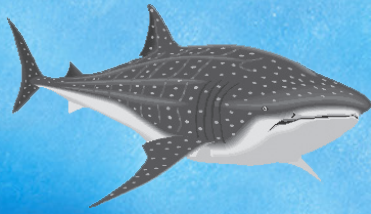
✓ **DIVE KNIFE** - This is not a weapon, but a tool we use underwater for prying, cutting, digging, pounding, measuring, etc.



✓ **COMPASS** - We wear this to help us find our way underwater.



✓ **VIDEO CAMERA & UNDERWATER HOUSING** - A waterproof case for using the video camera underwater.



## THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

### Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

#### The Whale Shark

Sharks have been swimming in the oceans since before the dinosaurs lived. Sharks have even been living in the oceans before any land animals lived.

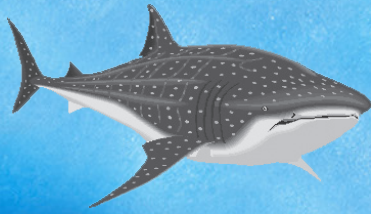
Scientists have found more than 500 different kinds of sharks. Nobody is really sure exactly how many different kinds of sharks there are, because the oceans have not yet been fully explored. There are probably more sharks waiting to be discovered.

The largest shark is the Whale Shark. Whale sharks have been found over 60 feet long! Because sharks are fish the whale shark is also largest fish in the ocean. The whale shark is not a whale. It is called a "whale" shark because it is as big as a whale! Even though the whale sharks are the largest sharks they eat some of the smallest animals, just as big whales do.

Whale sharks are gentle plankton filter feeders. Whale sharks swim slowly through the oceans sucking up tiny planktonic animals and plants. The plankton that whale sharks eat may include tiny fish, krill, coral eggs, fish eggs, algae and other tiny plants.

To capture their tiny prey whale sharks don't have baleen, as some whales do. Instead, whale sharks have special filter pads in their mouths. These filter pads work much like baleen does for whales. The filter pads sift out the tiny plankton as the seawater passes through the whale shark's mouth and out its gills.

Whale sharks live in warm oceans and seas around the world. These slow-swimming animals are rarely seen, except when they migrate to special areas to feed at certain times of the year. One good place to see migrating whale sharks feeding is in the Caribbean Sea, along the Belize Barrier Reef at Gladden Spit. Each year dozens of whale sharks come here to feed on clouds of eggs laid by schooling snappers.



## THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

### Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

#### The Whale Shark

..... have been swimming in the oceans since before the dinosaurs lived. Sharks have even been living in the oceans before any land animals lived.

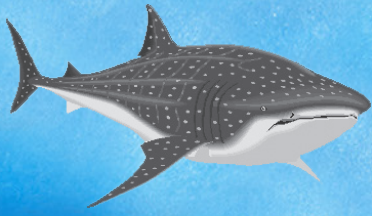
Scientists have found more than ... different kinds of sharks. Nobody is really sure exactly how many different kinds of sharks there are, because the oceans have not yet been fully explored. There are probably more sharks waiting to be discovered.

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Whale sharks are gentle plankton ..... Whale sharks swim slowly through the oceans sucking up tiny planktonic animals and plants. The plankton that whale sharks eat may include tiny fish, krill, coral eggs, fish eggs, algae and other tiny plants.

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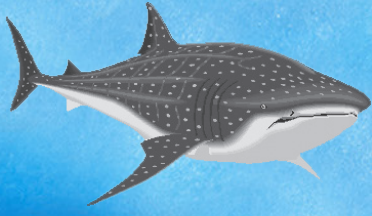


## THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

### Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

#### The Whale Shark

- \_\_\_\_\_ have been around since before the dinosaurs lived.  
A) people  
B) birds  
C) sharks  
D) elephants
- There are more than \_\_\_\_ different kinds of sharks.  
A) 5,000  
B) 500  
C) 50,000  
D) 500,000
- The whale shark is the \_\_\_\_\_ shark on the planet .  
A) largest  
B) oldest  
C) scariest  
D) smartest
- The whale shark is the largest \_\_\_\_\_ in the ocean .  
A) fish  
B) animal  
C) mammal  
D) whale
- Whale sharks eat some of the \_\_\_\_\_ animals.  
A) tallest  
B) largest  
C) endangered  
D) smallest
- Whale sharks are \_\_\_\_\_ .  
A) dangerous animals  
B) meat eaters  
C) extinct animals  
D) filter feeders
- Whale sharks use \_\_\_\_\_ to filter food from seawater.  
A) their baleen  
B) their teeth  
C) filter pads  
D) their mouths
- Whale sharks swim in \_\_\_\_\_ oceans and seas .  
A) warm  
B) deep  
C) cold  
D) dark
- Whale sharks are \_\_\_\_\_ .  
A) deep-swimming  
B) slow-swimming  
C) fast-swimming  
D) shallow-swimming
- Whale sharks \_\_\_\_\_ to their special feeding areas.  
A) migrate  
B) jump  
C) leap  
D) hop



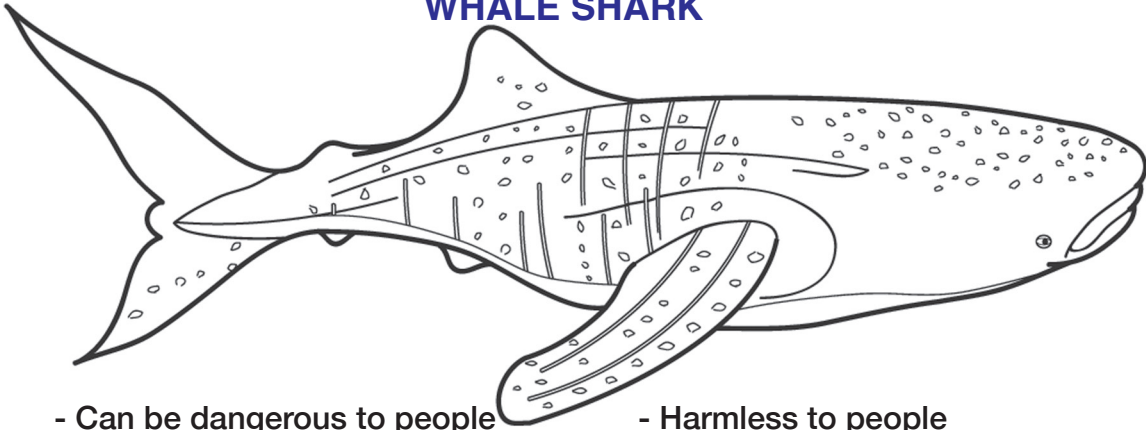
## THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

### Meet *Dory's* Best Friend - the Whale Shark

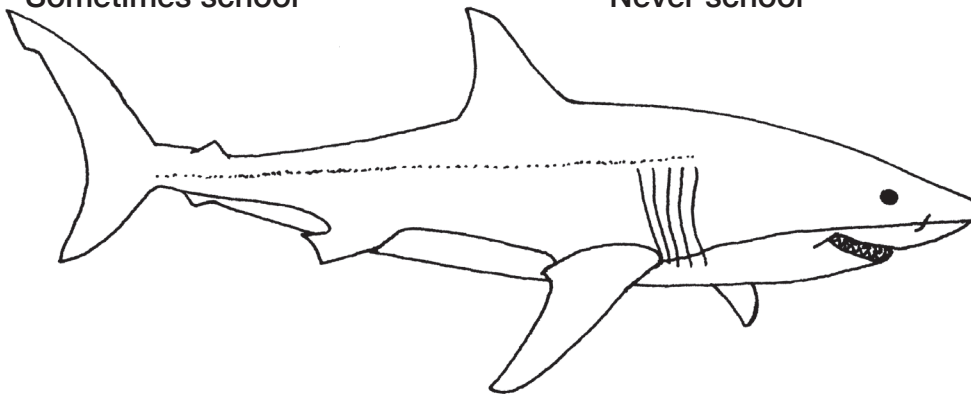
#### Whale Sharks & Great White Sharks

Draw a line connecting the words to the correct shark described.

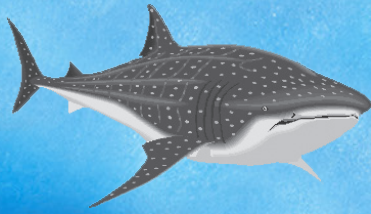
##### WHALE SHARK



- Can be dangerous to people
- Have big sharp teeth
- Use teeth to catch food
- Flattened head
- Mouth under body
- Bite their prey
- Have pretty spots and bars
- Eat plankton
- Mainly in warm tropical seas
- Sometimes school
- Harmless to people
- Have tiny pointed teeth
- Use gill rakers to catch food
- Pointed head
- Mouth in front of head
- Suck up their prey
- Don't have pretty colors
- Eat seals and sea lions
- Mainly in cool oceans
- Never school



##### GREAT WHITE SHARK



# THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

## Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

### WORD SEARCH

Circle the word. All words are across or down.

After all the words are found the letters left over reveal the **mystery word**.

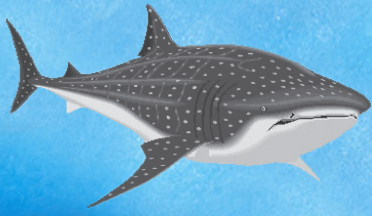
G G D L F A C M O O N C R G B  
 I L O W I E A G L E R A Y S A  
 L A L H S M R M S S S R B C R  
 L D P A H I I A N L C T E U R  
 F D H L E G B N A O H I L B I  
 I E I E G R B A P W O L I A E  
 L N N S G A E T P L O A Z D R  
 T S S H S T A E E Y L G E I R  
 E P M A R I N E R E S E R V E  
 R I E R D O R S A L F I N I E  
 S T S K T N P L A N K T O N F  
 S F I L T E R F E E D I N G T

**Mystery Word:** The \_\_\_\_\_ fish in the world is a whale shark.

#### Words used in The Belize Whale Shark Expedition Word Search

marine reserve	whale shark	migration	dolphins	Belize
Gladden Spit	Caribbean	dorsal fin	cartilage	moom
filter feeding	gill filters	manatees	snapper	skin
scuba diving	eagle rays	fish eggs	schools	
barrier reef	Placencia	plankton	slowly	





# THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

## Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE

#### Across:

1. Shark skin has been used as \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Whale sharks are \_\_\_\_\_ to humans.
8. A shark can sense a swimming fish with its \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Sharks can feel the \_\_\_\_\_ that is given off by all living animals.
13. The \_\_\_\_\_ of 40-foot long whale shark is over five feet wide!
15. Plankton, fish and whale sharks are part of the ocean food \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Whale sharks \_\_\_\_\_ live in warm oceans and seas around the world.
18. Whale sharks have large, flattened \_\_\_\_\_.
19. A shark uses gills to \_\_\_\_\_ underwater.
20. Sharks have eyes made for \_\_\_\_\_ in the dark.

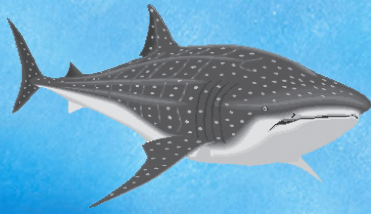
#### Down:

2. Using their fins like wings sharks swim through the water like an \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Whale sharks swim \_\_\_\_\_ than most other sharks in the sea.
4. A shark's \_\_\_\_\_ is mainly used for detecting smells.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ sharks have a skeleton made of cartilage.
7. A whale shark's spots and bars are used to \_\_\_\_\_ each whale shark.
9. A whale shark has over three-thousand \_\_\_\_\_ in its mouth.
10. Whale sharks sometimes swim in \_\_\_\_\_.
12. As with other animals, sharks can be \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Whale sharks have tiny, \_\_\_\_\_ teeth.
15. Sharks have an excellent sense of \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Words used in The Belize Whale Shark Expedition

#### Crossword Puzzle

food chain	harmless	pointed	hearing	seeing
lateral line	airplane	schools	mouth	only
sandpaper	identify	trained	heads	only
electricity	breathe	slower	brain	



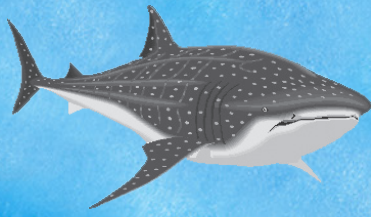
# THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

**CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

The crossword puzzle grid consists of 20 numbered starting points for words:

- 1: 10 letters, top row, starting at column 2.
- 2: 1 letter, top row, starting at column 3.
- 3: 10 letters, top row, starting at column 10.
- 4: 1 letter, second row, starting at column 8.
- 5: 10 letters, third row, starting at column 2.
- 6: 1 letter, third row, starting at column 6.
- 7: 1 letter, fourth row, starting at column 1.
- 8: 10 letters, fourth row, starting at column 3.
- 9: 1 letter, fifth row, starting at column 4.
- 10: 1 letter, fifth row, starting at column 8.
- 11: 1 letter, sixth row, starting at column 2.
- 12: 1 letter, sixth row, starting at column 5.
- 13: 1 letter, seventh row, starting at column 2.
- 14: 1 letter, seventh row, starting at column 6.
- 15: 1 letter, seventh row, starting at column 9.
- 16: 1 letter, eighth row, starting at column 1.
- 17: 1 letter, eighth row, starting at column 2.
- 18: 1 letter, eighth row, starting at column 5.
- 19: 10 letters, ninth row, starting at column 2.
- 20: 10 letters, tenth row, starting at column 5.

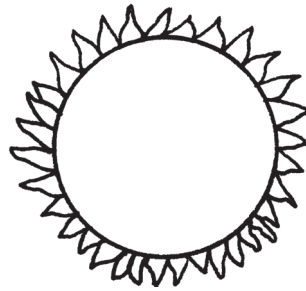


# THE OCEAN ADVENTURE

## Meet Dory's Best Friend - the Whale Shark

### A Belize Whale Shark Food Web

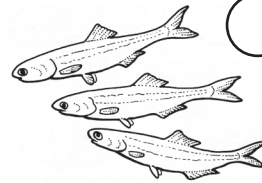
Ocean animals depend on the sun, plants, and other animals to live. Some animals eat plants and some eat other animals. Place this ocean food web in the correct order by writing in the circle the number in the correct order it should appear. Start with the sun and label it number 1.



Sun



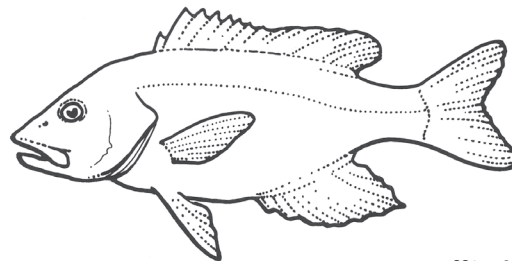
Phytoplankton



Small Fish



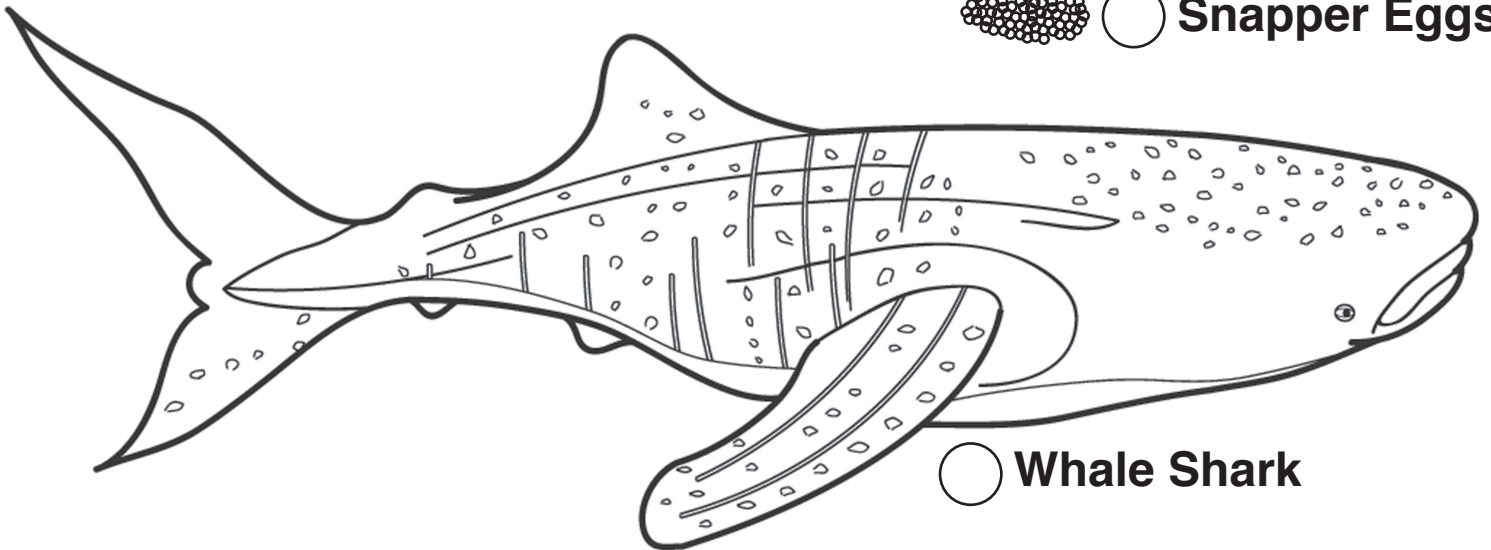
Zooplankton



Snapper



Snapper Eggs



Whale Shark