



# MarLIN

## Marine Information Network

Information on the species and habitats around the coasts and sea of the British Isles

## Spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*)

MarLIN – Marine Life Information Network  
Marine Evidence-based Sensitivity Assessment (MarESA) Review

Morvan Barnes

2008-03-25

A report from:

The Marine Life Information Network, Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom.

**Please note.** This MarESA report is a dated version of the online review. Please refer to the website for the most up-to-date version [<https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/68>]. All terms and the MarESA methodology are outlined on the website (<https://www.marlin.ac.uk>)

This review can be cited as:

Barnes, M.K.S. 2008. *Squalus acanthias* Spiny dogfish. In Tyler-Walters H. and Hiscock K. (eds) *Marine Life Information Network: Biology and Sensitivity Key Information Reviews*, [on-line]. Plymouth: Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom. DOI <https://dx.doi.org/10.17031/marlin.sp.68.1>



The information (TEXT ONLY) provided by the Marine Life Information Network (MarLIN) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 UK: England & Wales License. Note that images and other media featured on this page are each governed by their own terms and conditions and they may or may not be available for reuse. Permissions beyond the scope of this license are available [here](#). Based on a work at [www.marlin.ac.uk](http://www.marlin.ac.uk)

(page left blank)



See online review for  
distribution map

Distribution data supplied by the Ocean  
Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). To  
interrogate UK data visit the NBN Atlas.

**Researched by** Morvan Barnes

**Refereed by** Admin

**Authority** Linnaeus, 1758

**Other common  
names** -

**Synonyms** -

## Summary

### Description

The spiny dogfish or spurdog *Squalus acanthias* is a small member of the dogfish family reaching up to 1.6 m in length. It has a grey to brown dorsal colouring and a much paler belly. It can easily be distinguished from similar species by conspicuous white spots covering the entire body. It has two dorsal fins each with large spines. The caudal fin outline is smooth.

### Recorded distribution in Britain and Ireland

Widely distributed throught the British and Irish coastal waters.

### Global distribution

-

### Habitat

The spiny dogfish is a benthopelagic species occuring both inshore and offshore of the upper continental shelf. Tolerant of a wide range of salinities.

## ↓ Depth range

-

## 🔍 Identifying features

- Small dogfish up to 1.6 m in length.
- Grey-brown upper body, paler lower body.
- Entire body covered in white spots.
- Two dorsal fins each with ungrooved large spines.
- The first dorsal spine originates behind the pectoral rear tips.
- Lateral keels on the caudal peduncle and upper precaudal pit.
- Anal fin and notch on the caudal fin are absent.

## 🏛️ Additional information

One of the most abundant shark species in the world, *Squalus acanthias* is a well studied species and has been the subject of many studies focusing on heavy metal pollution and sensitivity to pollution studies (McMillan & Morse, 1999).

## ✓ Listed by



## 🔗 Further information sources

Search on:



## Bibliography

- Compagno, L.J.V., 1984. FAO species catalogue. Vol. 4. Sharks of the world. An annotated and illustrated catalogue of shark species known to date. Part 1 - Hexanchiformes to Lamniformes. *FAO Fisheries Synopsies*, **125**, 1-249
- Fahy, E., 1988. Recent developments in the Irish fisheries for spurdog, *Squalus acanthias* (L.). *ICES Council Meeting Papers*, C.M.1988/H:6
- Froese, R. & Pauly, D., 2007. Fishbase. A global information system on fishes. [On-line] <http://www.fishbase.org>, 2008-02-18
- Henderson, A.C., Flannery, K. & Dunne, J., 2002. Growth and reproduction in spiny dogfish *Squalus acanthias* L. (Elasmobranchii: Squalidae), from the west coast of Ireland. *Sarsia*, **87**, 350-361
- Howson, C.M. & Picton, B.E., 1997. *The species directory of the marine fauna and flora of the British Isles and surrounding seas*. Belfast: Ulster Museum. [Ulster Museum publication, no. 276.]
- McMillan, D.G. & Morse, W.W., 1999. Essential Fish Habitat Source Document: Spiny Dogfish, *Squalus acanthias*, Life History and Habitat Characteristics. NOAA Technical Memorandum, NMFS-NE-150
- Picton, B.E. & Costello, M.J., 1998. *BioMar* biotope viewer: a guide to marine habitats, fauna and flora of Britain and Ireland. [CD-ROM] *Environmental Sciences Unit, Trinity College, Dublin*.
- Vince, M.R., 1991. Stock identity in spurdog (*Squalus acanthias* L.) around the British Isles. *Fisheries Research*, **12**, 341-354

## Datasets

- Centre for Environmental Data and Recording, 2018. Ulster Museum Marine Surveys of Northern Ireland Coastal Waters. Occurrence dataset <https://www.nmni.com/CEDaR/CEDaR-Centre-for-Environmental-Data-and-Recording.aspx> accessed via NBNAtlas.org on 2018-09-25.
- Environmental Records Information Centre North East, 2018. ERIC NE Combined dataset to 2017. Occurrence dataset: <http://www.ericnortheast.org.uk/home.html> accessed via NBNAtlas.org on 2018-09-38
- Fenwick, 2018. Aphotomarine. Occurrence dataset <http://www.aphotomarine.com/index.html> Accessed via NBNAtlas.org on 2018-10-01
- Isle of Wight Local Records Centre, 2017. IOW Natural History & Archaeological Society Marine Records. Occurrence dataset: <https://doi.org/10.15468/7axhcw> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-09-27.
- NBN (National Biodiversity Network) Atlas. Available from: <https://www.nbnatlas.org>.
- OBIS (Ocean Biogeographic Information System), 2019. Global map of species distribution using gridded data. Available from: Ocean Biogeographic Information System. [www.iobis.org](http://www.iobis.org). Accessed: 2019-03-12
- Scottish Shark Tagging Programme, 2018. Capture Mark Recapture Data for Scottish Elasmobranchs: 2009-2018. Occurrence dataset: <https://doi.org/10.15468/znol4z> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-10-02.