

Diagnosis The only Alaska species of shark with a strong double lateral keel on the caudal peduncle, first dorsal-fin base almost directly above pectoral-fin base, and teeth not serrate.

Dentition Teeth large and bladelike, with one pair of lateral cusps and no serrations.

Coloration Bluish gray to brown dorsally; white ventrally.

Body Shape Stout, powerful, with conical snout; caudal fin nearly homocercal, with prominent double lateral keel; second dorsal and anal fins very small.

Reproduction Viviparous (oophagous).

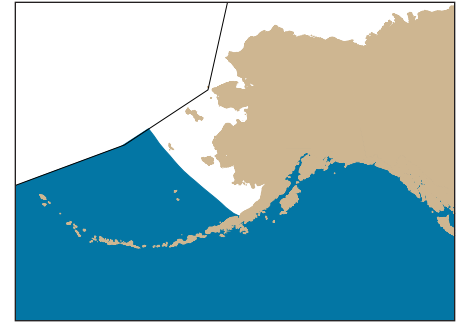
Maximum Length 3.1 m.

Range Bering Sea to Mexico in the eastern Pacific; to Korea in the western Pacific.

Depth Pelagic, surface to 792 m.

Remarks The salmon shark is a large, highly migratory species. It may be locally abundant in Alaska waters, particularly near high concentrations of prey items such as herring or salmon. A large majority (up to 90% in Prince William Sound) of the salmon sharks encountered in Alaska waters are females.

Similar Species The salmon shark is a robust species most commonly confused with the great white shark. It can be distinguished from the great white shark by its more acutely pointed conical snout, the first dorsal-fin base almost directly above the pectoral-fin base, and by the tooth shape. The secondary lateral keel on the caudal fin of the salmon shark is unique among Alaska sharks.



In Alaska waters, the salmon shark is found in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea.