

Diagnosis The only Alaska species of shark with large, triangular, serrate teeth and a nearly homocercal caudal fin.

Dentition Teeth large, triangular, serrate.

Coloration Pale brown to gray or even nearly black dorsally; white ventrally.

Body Shape Large, robust, powerful; caudal fin nearly homocercal, with prominent single lateral keel; second dorsal and anal fins very small.

Reproduction Viviparous (oophagous).

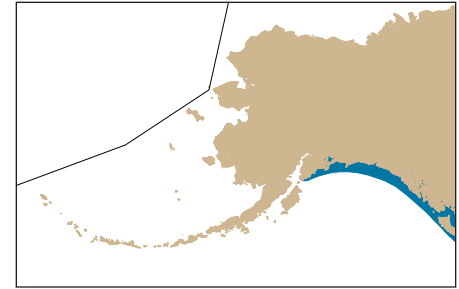
Maximum Length 6.4 m or more.

Range Worldwide in temperate seas; northern Gulf of Alaska.

Depth Pelagic, surface to 1,280 m.

Remarks According to Compagno (1984), the distribution of the great white shark extends to the western end of the Kenai Peninsula. Several sightings have been reported in Southeast Alaska over the past 50 years, but this species apparently only ventures into Alaska waters during years of abnormally high sea surface temperatures.

Similar Species The great white shark is most commonly confused with the salmon shark in Alaska, as both are robust, strong swimmers with a similar body shape. The great white shark can be distinguished from the salmon shark by its more blunt, rounded snout, the pectoral-fin base entirely in front of the first dorsal-fin base, and by tooth shape.



In Alaska waters, the great white shark is found in the Gulf of Alaska.