



Sharks, Skates, and Rays of the Gulf of Mexico: A Field Guide

Glenn R. Parsons

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The goblin shark is arguably one of the ugliest fish in the sea. The cookie cutter shark lives in the deep Gulf and glows in the dark. It feeds by attaching itself to a sperm whale and gnawing hunks of flesh. Often misidentified as a shark, the smalltooth sawfish is really more closely related to the stingrays and skates and may be in danger of disappearing in Gulf environs. The twenty to thirty teeth on each side of its snout work well for rooting up food from the sandy bottom or slashing through schools of prey. But the teeth tangle easily in commercial fishing nets.

In *Sharks, Skates, and Rays of the Gulf of Mexico: A Field Guide*, fascinating rarities such as these and all the commonly sighted species await the naturalist, commercial or recreational fisher, outdoor enthusiast, or beach-goer. This guidebook covers almost all the species of sharks and rays that cruise Gulf waters from the abundant, shallow-dwelling finetooth shark and the frightening electric ray to the deep-dwelling goblin fish. Color photography, line drawings, and easily understood keys developed exclusively for this book help the reader quickly identify species. In addition to general information on reproduction, sensory systems, feeding, and other aspects of marine biology, there is practical information on how to reduce the risk of shark attack, how to prevent and treat stingray wounds, and how to safely catch, handle, and release a shark.

Personal and anecdotal information gathered from twenty-five years of shark research as well as significant facts and figures make Parson's book the ideal companion for anyone scouting the Gulf for its most exciting denizens.

Glenn R. Parsons is a professor of biology at the University of Mississippi. He has contributed to such books as *Shark Nursery Grounds* and *The Reproduction and Development of Sharks, Skates, and Rays*. His work has appeared in such periodicals as *Mid-South Hunting and Fishing News*, *Marine Biology*, and *Journal of Experimental Zoology*.

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