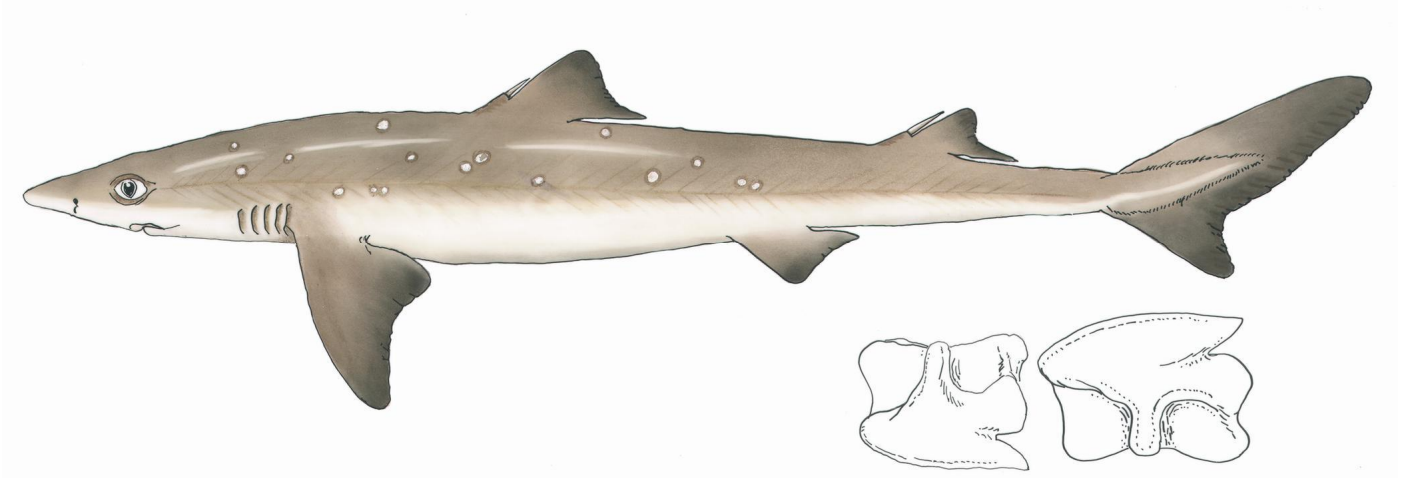


Spiny Dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*)

Family Squalidae, Dogfish sharks



Common names: dogfish, sand shark

Description: Spiny dogfish are gray to slate brown with a pale or white belly. They can be differentiated from other small sharks by a row of small white dots running along their sides. If these dots are faded or absent, which can happen with older dogfish, a distinctive single spine found in front of each of their two dorsal fins can be used as an additional identifying feature. The bodies of these fish are slender and their heads slope to a blunt snout. In size, adult females can reach lengths of 3 1/2 feet and weigh around 8 pounds, while males are normally smaller in size.

Where found: inshore and offshore

Similar Gulf of Maine species: smooth dogfish

Remarks: Spiny dogfish are voracious eaters, preying on a variety of sea creatures, such as squid, shrimp and crabs, along with almost any species of fish that they can swallow. They mostly travel in large schools made of approximately equal size fish. These fish are known to winter in offshore waters and show up in the Gulf of Maine during the late spring or early summer. They are usually found in water depths ranging from surface waters to 600 feet.

Records: MSSAR
IGFA AllTackle World Record

Fish Illustrations by: Roz Davis Designs, Damariscotta, ME (207) 5632286

With permission, the use of these pictures must state the following: Drawings provided courtesy of the Maine Department of Marine Resources Recreational Fisheries program and the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund.