



Photo credit: Heidi Thoricht



# Shark Fishing in Florida

## January 13, 2015

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**  
Division of Marine Fisheries Management



# Importance of Sharks

- Vital role in marine ecosystems
  - Apex predators
  - Keystone species
- Economic value
  - Recreation
  - Commercial/food
- Florida's coastal waters are Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)
  - Pregnant females enter state waters to pup at known times of year
  - Critical nursery habitat is often found in shallow state waters

Reef Shark



Photo credit: Heidi Thoricht

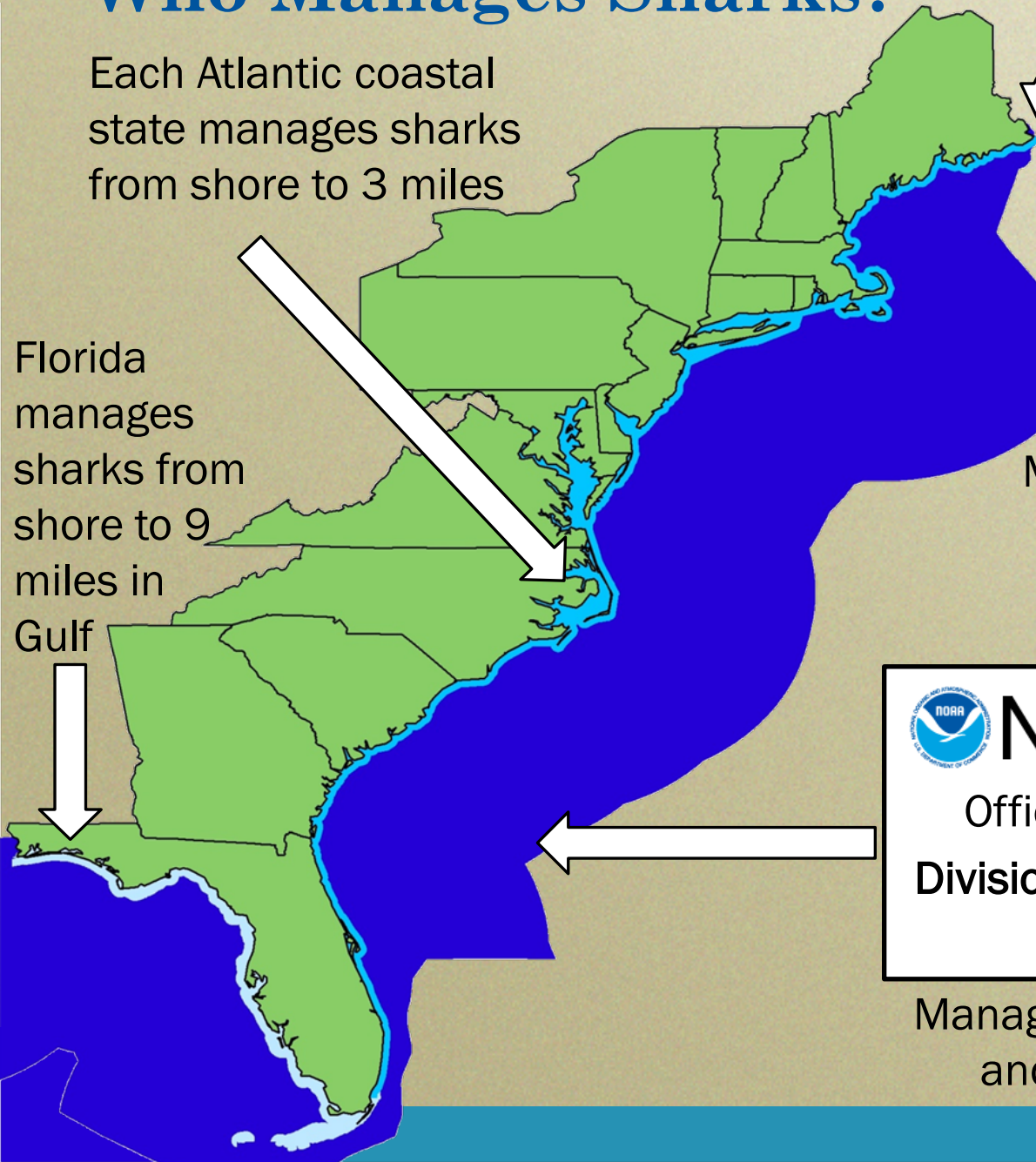




# Who Manages Sharks?

Each Atlantic coastal state manages sharks from shore to 3 miles

Florida manages sharks from shore to 9 miles in Gulf



Manages interstate fisheries from shore to 3 miles on Atlantic Coast



**NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE**  
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Office of Sustainable Fisheries  
**Division of Highly Migratory Species (HMS)**

Manages tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks in federal waters



# Shark Fishing from Shore

- Allowed in Florida with a recreational saltwater fishing license
- Public perception that fishing from shore alters shark behavior in nearshore waters
- Fear among the public that fishing from shore could increase the likelihood of shark attacks
- Land based anglers chum from shore and fishing piers when targeting other species, including baitfish and snappers
  - Shark anglers report they rarely chum, as it is ineffective due to current and wave action
- 2011 received request from county government to look at shore based regulations
  - No evidence showing an increase in shark attacks associated with fishing from shore
  - Ultimately, Commission did not take action





# Shark Fishing in Florida

- Economically important in Florida
  - Exciting sport, drawing participants worldwide
  - Opportunities for shark fishing that can't be found elsewhere
- Commission values access to our shared resources for all user groups
- Commission recognizes the public's perception regarding safety issues
- Using non-regulatory approach to educate anglers and the public on "Shark-Smart Fishing"

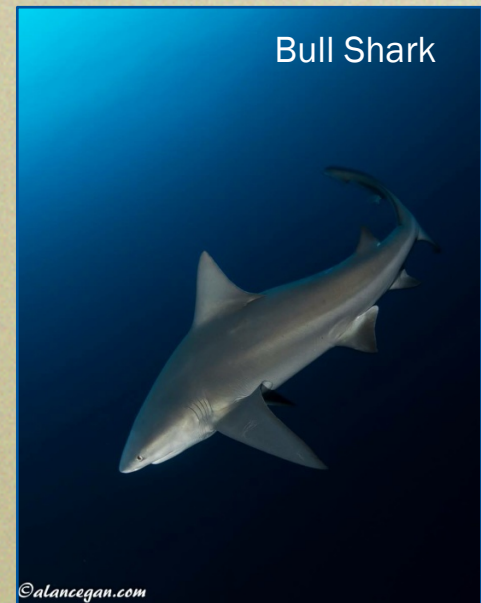




# Shark-Smart Fishing

*Goal: Maximize public safety – Use common sense, be respectful!*

- If swimmers or surfers are present, do not fish for sharks
- If fishers are present, do not swim or surf
- Anglers should avoid fishing near swimmers
- Anglers should not chum near swimmers
- If fishing from a pier or bridge:
  - Do not bring a large shark onto a pier or bridge
  - Cut the line as close to the shark as possible





# Shark-Smart Fishing

*Goal: Minimize shark mortality*

- Use proper tackle
- Minimize fight and handling time
- Keep sharks in the water
- Minimize release time and avoid excessive picture posing
- Use a dehooking device when possible



Great Hammerhead Shark





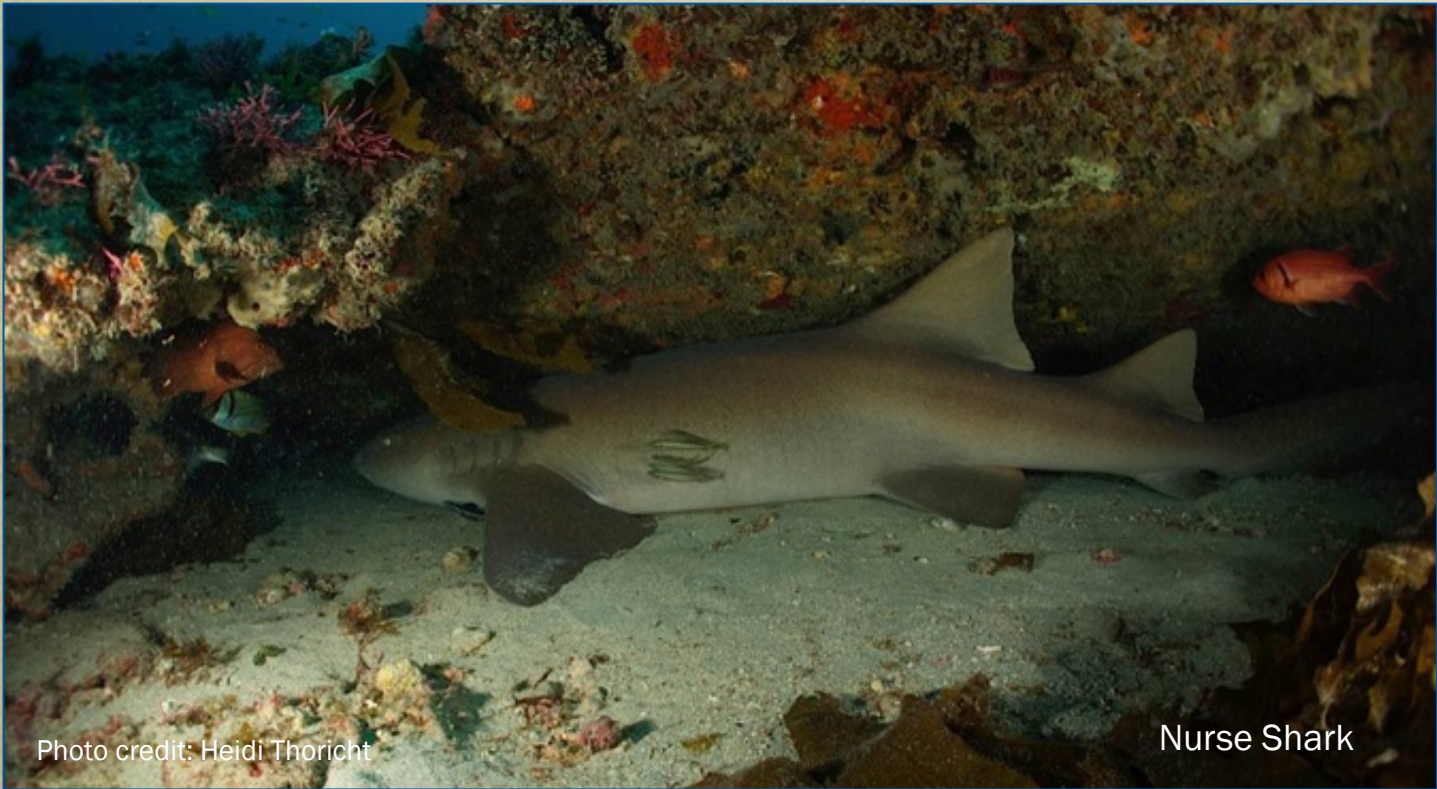


Photo credit: Heidi Thoricht

Nurse Shark





# FWC Prohibited Shark Species

## Pelagic Species

Bigeye sixgill shark  
Bigeye thresher shark  
Longfin mako shark  
Sevengill shark  
Sixgill shark

## Others

Spiny dogfish  
Manta ray  
Spotted eagle ray  
Smalltooth sawfish  
Largetooth sawfish

## Small Coastal Species

Atlantic angel shark  
Smalltail shark  
Caribbean sharpnose shark



White Shark

## Zooplanktivores

Basking shark  
Whale shark

## Large Coastal Species

Galapagos shark  
White shark  
Sand tiger shark  
Narrowtooth shark  
Bigeye sand tiger  
Bignose shark  
Caribbean reef shark  
Dusky shark  
Night shark  
Lemon shark  
Sandbar shark  
Silky shark  
Great hammerhead  
Scalloped hammerhead  
Smooth hammerhead  
Tiger shark





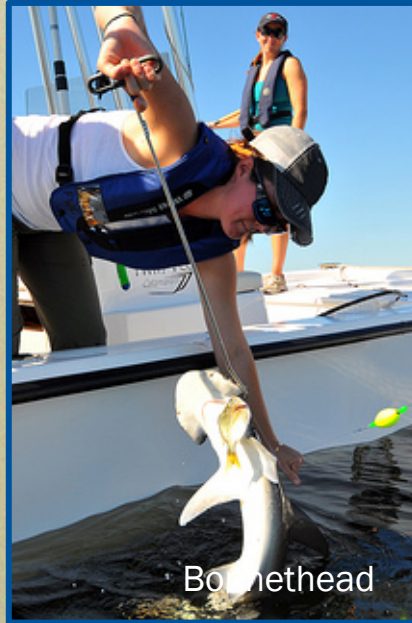
# FWC Managed Shark Species

## Pelagic species:

Porbeagle shark  
Shortfin mako  
Blue shark  
Oceanic whitetip  
shark  
Thresher shark

## Other

Smooth dogfish



Bonnethead

## Small coastal species:

Bonnethead  
Atlantic sharpnose  
shark  
Blacknose shark  
Finetooth shark

## Large coastal species:

Nurse shark  
Blacktip shark  
Bull shark  
Spinner shark



Bull Shark

