Skates and Rays

I.D. guide

These species have a no retention policy in some sea areas. Refer to your local fisheries office for details. If applicable, catches of these species should not be retained on board and should be promptly released unharmed.

Common Skate
Blue, Grey, Skate
Scientific name: Dipturus batis
Description: Slate grey/blue on underside
Caught size: 200cm+ max length
FAO Code: RJB

Undulate Ray
Painted
Scientific name: Raja undulata
Description: Dark bands edged with white spots
Caught size: 100cm max length
FAO Code: RJU

Black Skate
Norwegian Skate
Scientific name: Dipturus nidarosensis
Description: Distinctly black underbelly
Caught size: 200cm max length
FAO Code: JAD

White Skate
Scientific name: Rostroraja alba
Description: Dark margins along pectoral and pelvic fins
Caught size: 230cm max length
FAO Code: RJJA

Blonde Ray
Roker
Scientific name: Raja brachyura
Description: Numerous spots that extend to the very edge of body
Caught size: 125cm max length
FAO Code: RJH

Spotted Ray
Roker
Scientific name: Raja montagui
Description: Numerous black spots that don't quite extend to the edge of wings
Caught size: 75cm max length
FAO Code: RJM

FAO Code: RJA
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**Starry Ray**
- Scientific name: *Amblyraja radiata*
- Description: Brownish grey with scattered irregular black blotches and some faint pale cream spots
- Caught size: 60cm max length

**Thornback Ray**
- Scientific name: *Raja clavata*
- Description: Series of dark and light bands down the tail
- Caught size: 110cm max length

**Small-eyed Ray**
- Scientific name: *Raja microocellata*
- Description: Pattern of light blotches and undulating stripes on body
- Caught size: 90cm max length

**Cuckoo Ray**
- Scientific name: *Leucoraja naevus*
- Description: Distinctive black and cream eye spots on each wing
- Caught size: 75cm max length

**Sandy Ray**
- Scientific name: *Leucoraja circularis*
- Description: 4-6 small creamy spots with black edging on each wing
- Caught size: 120cm max length

**Shagreen Ray**
- Scientific name: *Leucoraja fullonica*
- Description: Ash grey to brown with tiny dark spots
- Caught size: 120cm max length

If the skate or ray you caught does not match one of these shown in this guide, please contact the Shark Trust by telephone on 0870 128 3045 or by email through their website. The species illustrated here are the most commonly caught in fishing grounds around the British Isles. Other species may be encountered in the extremes of these areas.