GEORGIA AQUARIUM ANIMAL FACT SHEET

Giant Guitarfish

Rhynchobatus djiddensis

Range/Habitat

- The giant guitarfish is found in the tropical western Indian Ocean from the Red Sea to South Africa.
- It occurs in inshore marine waters and shallow estuaries to depths of about 165 feet (50 m).

Physical Characteristics

- The giant guitarfish has a flattened body with a triangular head and pointed snout. Both its first and second dorsal fin are tall.
- It is colored olive-green above and white below, with large black eyespots on the base of the pectoral fins, a distinctive black cross between the eyes and rows of small white spots on the upper body.
- Its mouths is small and contains flattened, pavement-like teeth.
- It can reach 10 feet (3.1 m) in length and 500 lbs. (227 kg). Females are larger than males.

Diet/Feeding

- This species feeds on crabs, lobsters, bivalves, small fishes and small squid.
- It will swim into intertidal areas at high tide to forage.

Conservation Status

- The giant guitarfish is listed as “vulnerable” on the IUCN Red List.

Additional Information

- The giant guitarfish has a body that resembles that of a shark. However, it is a member of the ray family.
- This species is ovoviviparous (i.e., fertilization of eggs occurs internally and the young develop within the female and are born fully formed).
- The female gives birth in summer to four to ten live young, each typically about 1.4 to 2.0 feet (43 - 60 cm) long.
- The fins of this guitarfish are sought after in Asian markets. Its flesh is considered to have excellent flavor.

Source

ww.fishbase.net
http://www.eol.org/pages/204357
http://www.discoverlife.org/20/q?search=Rhynchobatus+djiddensis&b=FB5503