



## FACT SHEET

### Spotted Eagle Ray

*Aetobatus narinari*

**Family:** Myliobatidae

**Other common names:** White-spotted eagle ray, Spikkel-arendrog

#### Description

A large, diamond-shaped ray with a distinctive duckbill-like snout. Upper surface is dark blue-black to brown with numerous small white spots or rings. White underneath. The whip-like tail may be 2.5 times as long as the body armed with up to five serrated spines (stings).

#### Distribution

Widespread across the Indo-Pacific and eastern and western Atlantic in tropical and warm-temperate waters. In southern African waters found south to Knysna.

#### Habitat

Found inshore in tropical shallow waters, often near reefs. Often seen singly or in groups swimming in midwater to depths of 60 m.

#### Feeding

Their diet includes bivalves such as mussels, crustaceans and octopus.

#### Movement

Only three tagged spotted eagle rays have been recaptured in South African waters but all three showed large movements of between 200-600 km suggesting that this species is nomadic.

## Reproduction

They reach maturity at 100-150 cm disc width and an age of 4-6 years. They are ovoviviparous and produce 1-4 young after a gestation period of about 12 months.

## Age and growth

They can reach a size of at least 230 cm disc width and a weight of 98 kg, although larger specimens have been reported. They have not been aged.

## Current status

Not assessed in South Africa. They have been evaluated as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List (2016).  
South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) List:  
Not assessed.



## Capture

Occasionally hooked by shore anglers but these powerful fish are seldom landed. About 16 individuals are caught in the KwaZulu-Natal shark nets each year but most are released alive. Elsewhere this species is caught in a range of different types of fishing gear from gillnets to harpoons.

## Current recreational fishing regulations

**Daily bag limit:** 1 per person per day  
**Minimum size limit:** None  
**Closed Season:** None  
**Other regulations:** None  
**Marine protected areas (MPAs):** This species is unlikely to benefit from protection within no-take areas because of their nomadic movement behaviour.

## Reference

Information from the ORI Fish App. [www.saambr.org.za](http://www.saambr.org.za)



INCORPORATING

