

# WEDGEFISHES

## Family Rhinidae

P.R. Last, W.T. White & B. Séret

Wedgefishes are medium to large, shark-like rays (0.7–3.1 m TL as adults and weighing at least 227 kg) with a variably depressed trunk, weakly formed disc, and a head either thickened and broadly domed, or flattened wedge-shaped or rounded. Pectoral fins are triangular and join the body behind eye level. The nostrils are long and narrow, and usually lie oblique to a small horizontal mouth with rounded to oval teeth that lack distinct cusps. The anterior nasal flaps are poorly developed and do not form a nasal curtain. The spiracles are large with 0–3 skin folds along their hind margin. A robust tail is slightly longer than the disc, and has two upright dorsal fins (the first above the pelvic fins), and a well-developed bilobed caudal fin with a strongly concave posterior margin. Its pelvic fins are moderately sized, angular and are not divided into two lobes. The skin is covered with minute denticles and there is a variably developed series of thorns along the dorsal mid-line, and usually 2–3 short series on each shoulder. Dorsal surface mainly yellowish to greyish brown and white ventrally. Often with rows of white spots or ocelli, and often a black blotch on each pectoral fin (pectoral marking) that is variably surrounded by white spots (marking generally most obvious in young). The undersurface of the snout can have a blackish marking. The family now includes 10 valid species from 3 genera: *Rhina*, *Rhynchobatus* and *Rhynchorhina*. Historically, the genera *Rhina* and *Rhynchobatus* have been either placed together in the Rhinidae or assigned to separate families. However, recent molecular research has provided evidence that they belong to the same family (Rhinidae), including the newly named genus *Rhynchorhina* which is based on an unusual Eastern Atlantic species having a wedge-shaped body with a rounded snout. Wedgefishes are mostly found in warm temperate to tropical inshore continental seas, and rarely occur deeper than 400 m. They are usually marine, but an individual of *Rhina* was caught in freshwater in New Caledonia. Wedgefishes primarily have an Indo–Pacific distribution, with only two species occurring in the Atlantic Ocean. They are strong swimmers, and bottom-dwellers that rest rather than burrow on muddy or sandy bottoms. All species are viviparous (aplacental). They feed on benthic invertebrates and small bottom-dwelling fishes. Most wedgefishes are highly sought after for their meat, and the high value of their large fins on international shark-fin markets has led to overfishing and population declines in some areas. Caught mainly as bycatch by trawls, gill and tangle nets, and longlines. Popular as exhibits in public aquaria around the world.

## KEY TO RHINID GENERA

1. Head angular and wedge-shaped (fig. 2); back with thorns but without ridges of strongly developed thorny tubercles (fig. 2); 2 spiracular folds (fig. 1); Eastern Atlantic and Indo-West Pacific ..... *Rhynchobatus* (8 species; fig. 2, pp. 68–75)

Head broadly rounded (fig. 4) or blunt (fig. 6); mid-line of disc and tail with ridges of large thorns (fig. 4); 0–2 spiracular folds ..... 2

2. Snout broadly rounded (fig. 4); upper jaw with 3 deep concavities (fig. 3); no spiracular folds; Indo-West Pacific ..... *Rhina* (1 species; fig. 4, p. 67)

Snout blunt (fig. 6); upper jaw with one deep concavity (fig. 5); 1–2 spiracular folds; Eastern Atlantic ..... *Rhynchorhina* (1 species; fig. 6, p. 76)

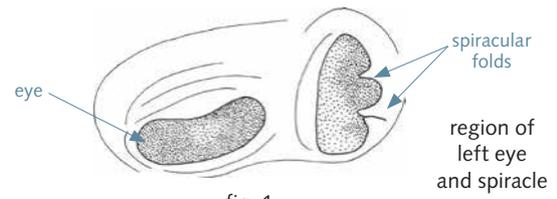


fig. 1

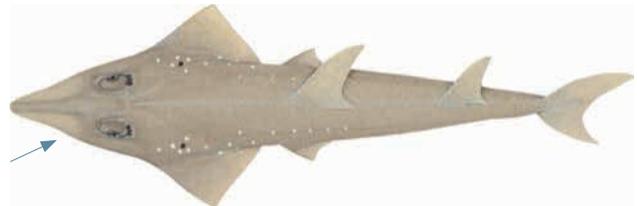


fig. 2

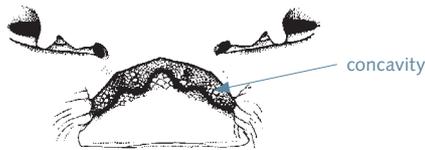


fig. 3

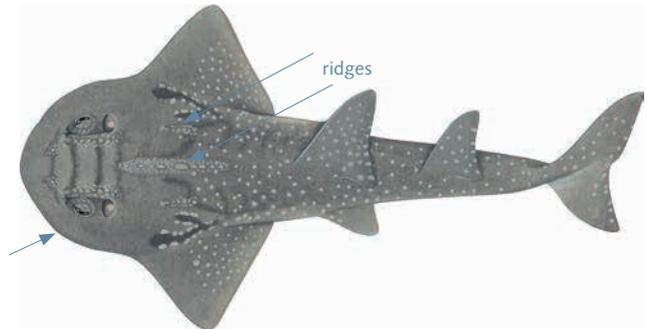


fig. 4

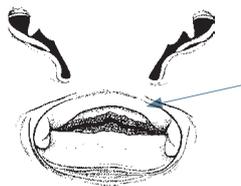


fig. 5

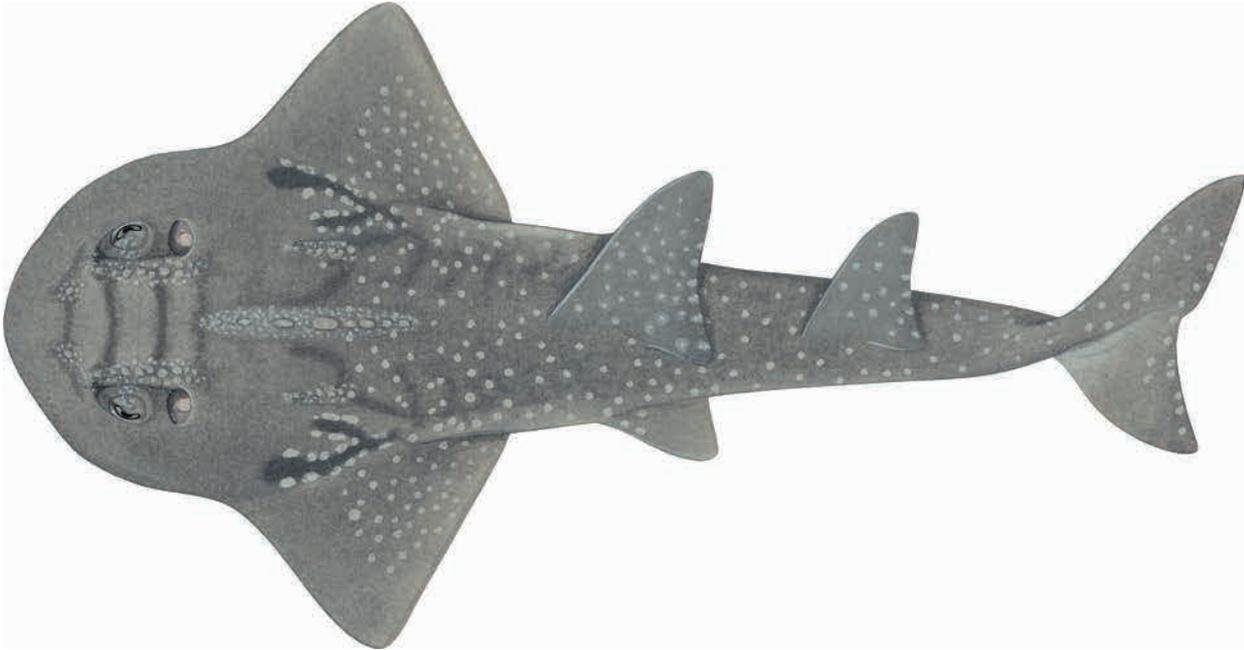
oronasal region



fig. 6

## SHARK RAY

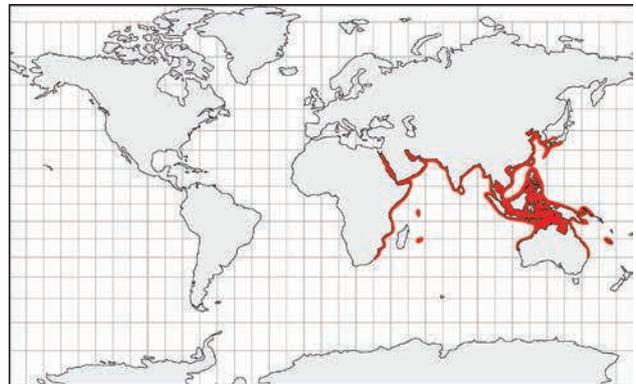
9.1

*Rhina ancylostoma* Bloch & Schneider, 1801

VU

**IDENTIFICATION.** Large, heavy-bodied ray with a shark-like body, head broadly rounded and distinctly demarcated from pectoral fins, no spiracular folds, ridges of large thorns on back, and dark bands between eyes. Body greatly thickened above abdomen; tail much longer than disc and broad based. Snout broadly rounded; deep notch on anterior profile of body at junction of head and pectoral fins. Spiracles large, without folds of any kind. Eyes rather large. Nostrils elongate and almost transverse; width about equal to internasal space. Lower jaw strongly trilobed, lobes recessing into concavities in upper jaw. Dorsal fins very tall and falcate, first larger than second; first dorsal-fin origin over or slightly forward of pelvic-fin origin. Caudal fin lunate, very large, with a distinct lower lobe only slightly shorter than upper lobe; its posterior margin deeply concave. Skin uniformly covered with minute denticles. A series of prominent ridges on mid-line of back, above and forward of eye, and on shoulders; ridges with numerous large thorns; thorns broad based, compressed, triangular, with very sharp tips.

**COLOUR.** Upper surface bluish grey to brownish, covered with large white spots and lines; large white-edged, black pectoral marking in young, often absent in adults; dark transverse bands between eyes and spiracles; margins of pectoral fins and snout paler; dorsal and caudal fins bluish grey to brownish, often with white spots; large adults often brownish with only faint spots and lines. Ventral surfaces pale.



**SIZE.** Attains 270 cm TL. Males mature at 150–175 cm TL, females at ~180 cm TL, size at birth 46–48 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Widespread in Indo–West Pacific; South Africa to New Caledonia, and north to Japan. Demersal, coastal and offshore reefs to depths of at least 70 m. Produces litters of 2–11 pups. Feeds on bony fish (such as croakers), crabs, prawns, bivalves and cephalopods.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Distinctive ray that has been surprisingly confused with angelsharks (*Squatina*). It differs from the False Shark Ray (9.10) in having a broader head, trilobed mouth and more prominent thorny ridges.

## BOTTLENOSE WEDGEFISH

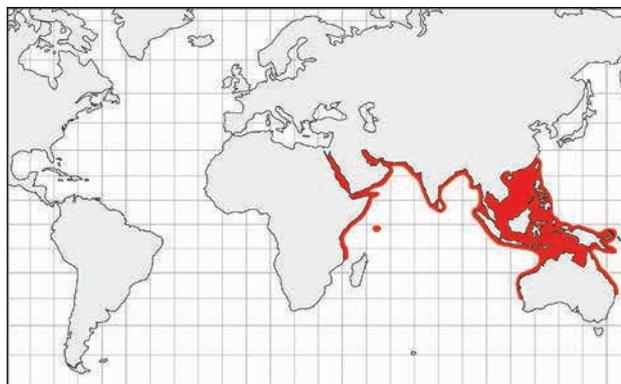
9.2

*Rhynchobatus australiae* Whitley, 1939

VU

**IDENTIFICATION.** Large wedgefish with a bottle-shaped snout, small thorns on back and around eyes but absent from snout, high vertebral count, mainly pale coloration dorsally with a sparse coverage of white spots, and a pectoral marking surrounded by a distinctive pattern of white spots (or entirely dark with an indistinct marking in large individuals). Disc wedge-shaped with centre raised evenly; anterior margin indented slightly near tip and strongly convex beside eye. Snout narrowly angular, length 3.4–4.4 times orbit length. Spiracle with 2 prominent, similar-sized skin folds. Thorns small, short, blunt; present along mid-line, on shoulder (in 2–3 short rows), beside spiracle, and around upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins distinctly falcate in adults; first dorsal fin much larger than second; first dorsal-fin origin slightly behind pelvic-fin origin. Pectoral-fin apices angular. Caudal fin deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 144–164.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface variably pale grey to yellowish brown with a sparse coverage of white spots and a well-defined black pectoral marking in juveniles and subadults, no additional dark spots and markings around eye and spiracle; pectoral marking about subequal to eye when present, surrounded by diagonal row of 3 white spots above and 2 similar spots below, marking often indistinct or absent in adults; pectoral-fin hind margin with multiple rows of small white spots; trunk with 2–4 rows of white spots, commencing just forward of pectoral-fin insertion but not reaching second dorsal fin in young; large adults almost



entirely blackish, white spots and pectoral marking usually not discernible. Ventral surface almost uniformly whitish, often with small dark markings near snout tip.

**SIZE.** Females to ~300 cm TL, males smaller and maturing at ~124 cm TL; birth size unknown.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Indo–West Pacific; Mozambique to eastern Australia. Benthic, coastal inshore to a depth of 60 m or more. Diet consists mainly of bottom-dwelling fishes, crustaceans, and molluscs.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Combination of a bottle-shaped snout, and line of three white spots over the pectoral marking (usually 2 spots below), distinguishes this wedgefish from its relatives. Australian populations have fewer vertebrae than elsewhere.

## ROUGHNOSE WEDGEFISH

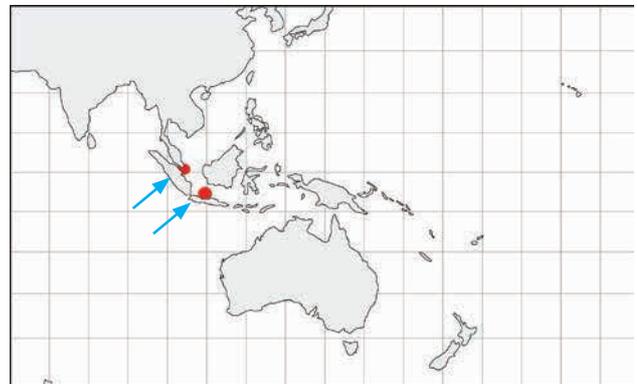
9.3

*Rhynchobatus compagnoi* Last & Kyne, 2016

VU

**IDENTIFICATION.** Small wedgefish with a long bottlenose snout armed with 2 rows of large thorns, low vertebral count, dark dorsally with large white spots in young, and lacking a dark pectoral marking. Disc narrowly wedge-shaped, anterior margin indented slightly near tip and strongly concave behind eye. Snout elongate and narrowly pointed, length 4.8–6.4 times orbit length. Spiracle with 2 skin folds of similar size. Thorns well developed along dorsal mid-line, rudimentary and much less evident on shoulder; absent from spiracle and upper margin of eye, and in 2 rows on rostral ridges of snout. Dorsal fins bluntly rounded in adults; first dorsal fin 1.1–1.4 times taller than second; first dorsal-fin origin well behind origin of pelvic fin. Pectoral-fin short, apices narrowly rounded. Caudal fin concave. Total free vertebral centra 99–106.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface dark greenish brown with prominent pale margin in adults and no pectoral marking; young white-spotted. White spots large (subequal to pupil) extending from central snout to before second dorsal fin; ~4 between eyes and ~4 between dorsal fins; no distinct rows of white spots along tail. Ventral surface uniformly white, underside of snout without dark markings.



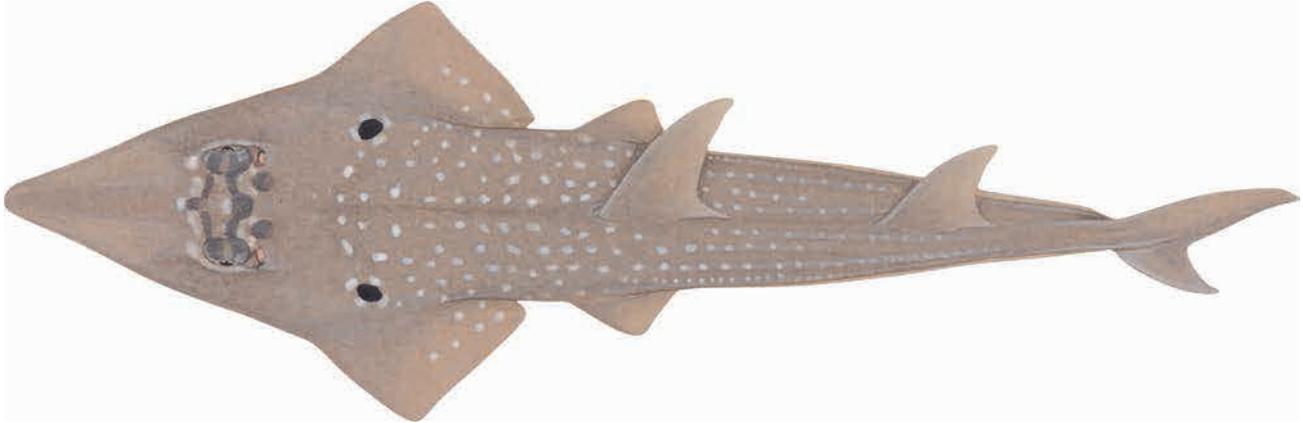
**SIZE.** Attains at least 82 cm TL, males maturing from ~71 cm TL, born at ~14 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Indo–Malay Archipelago. Benthic, poorly known with restricted distribution, probably coastal. Specimens also observed in Indonesian fish markets (Java) likely to have been caught further north. Uncommon in recent landings.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Smallest member of the family, it is also the only wedgefish species to have large thorns on the snout.

## WHITESPOTTED WEDGEFISH

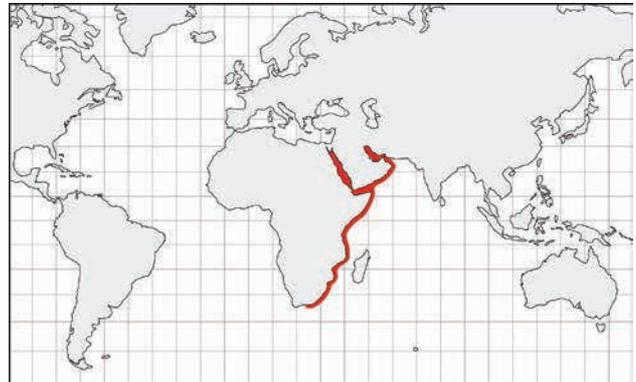
9.4

*Rhynchobatus djiddensis* (Forsskål, 1775)

VU

**IDENTIFICATION.** Large wedgefish with a bottle-shaped snout, small thorns on back and around eyes but absent from snout, high vertebral count, dense pattern of white spots and rings extending forward of pectoral markings on mid-disc, pectoral marking present in young, and distinctive mask-like markings between orbits. Disc wedge-shaped with centre raised evenly; anterior margin double concave, indented slightly near tip and weakly convex beside eye. Snout rather angular, length 3.6–4.7 times orbit length. Spiracle with 2 short, similar-sized skin folds. Thorns prominent, in a continuous row along mid-line of body; paired rows on each shoulder, in a long broken inner row and a very short outer row; beside spiracle, and around front and upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins falcate in large adults; first dorsal fin slightly larger than second; first dorsal-fin origin behind pelvic-fin origin. Pectoral-fin apices bluntly angular. Caudal fin deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 174–183.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface pale brownish to dark greyish to greenish brown, covered with variable pattern of white spots and rings that extend well forward on body; white markings in rows in young, largest individuals marbled with markings covering most of upper surface; obvious dark mask-like interorbital bars with white margins in young, bars persisting but narrowing in adults; snout edges whitish, much paler than mid-snout; black pectoral marking large and surrounded by white spots in juveniles, marking consisting of a dusky ring or absent in adults.



Dorsal fins paler, usually plain yellowish. Undersurface white.

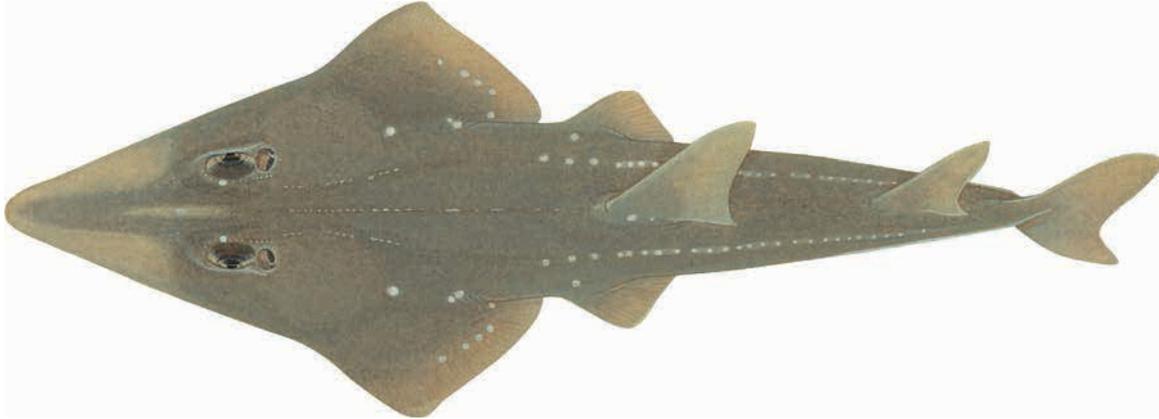
**SIZE.** Females to 310 cm TL, but typically smaller to ~175 cm TL, males maturing at ~150 cm TL; born at ~60 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Western Indian Ocean; South Africa to Oman. Benthic, coastal and continental shelf to 70 m depths, typically shallower than 35 m. Slow-growing and producing ~4 pups in each litter. Diet consists mainly of crabs, bivalve molluscs and bony fishes.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Co-occurs in parts of its range with the Bottlenose (9.2) and Smoothnose Wedgefishes (9.6). It can be distinguished from these rays by prominent black bars between the orbits, ring-like colour pattern of adults, and a particularly high vertebral count.

## TAIWANESE WEDGEFISH

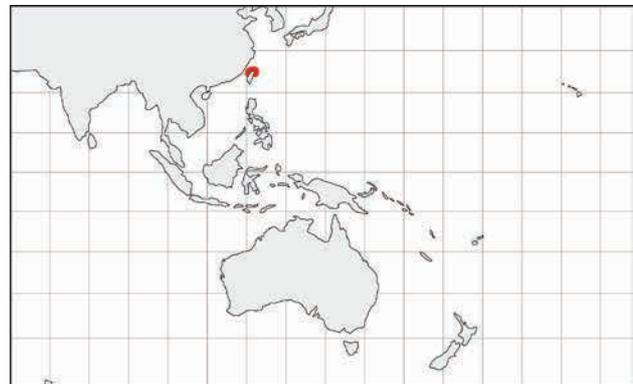
9.5

*Rhynchobatus immaculatus* Last, Ho & Chen, 2013

NE

**IDENTIFICATION.** Medium-sized wedgefish with a broad snout, small thorns of varying sizes on back and around eyes but absent from snout, very high vertebral count, and a greenish brown coloration dorsally, lacking a pectoral marking, and having a distinctive pattern of white spots coalescing to form a white stripe on tail. Disc wedge-shaped, anterior margin slightly convex beside orbit, otherwise almost straight. Snout broadly angular, length 4–4.5 times orbit length. Spiracle with 2 skin folds, outer fold slightly taller than inner fold. Thorns small, short, blunt; present along mid-line, on shoulder (in 2 short discontinuous rows), beside spiracle, and around upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins bluntly pointed in adults; first dorsal fin 1.1–1.3 times taller than second; first dorsal-fin origin just forward of mid-base of pelvic fin. Pectoral-fin apices broadly angular. Caudal fin deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 165–170.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface greenish brown, yellowish beside rostral cartilage on snout and along hind margins of pectoral and pelvic fins; no pectoral marking, instead with 1–3 small, fuzzy-edged white spots; a few similar white spots near pectoral-fin insertion, near bases of dorsal fins and single spot over pelvic-fin insertion; row of small white spots on flank originating over origin of pelvic fin, then coalescing beneath first dorsal fin to form a narrow white stripe; stripe extending along dorsolateral surface of each side of tail to anterior part of caudal peduncle; dorsal and caudal fins yellowish brown, paler than body; orbit white with a broad black bar on upper surface; suborbit pale; interorbit with a few white spots on each side near orbit and with or without



a dark medium blotch. Ventral surface white; anterior half of snout either side of rostral shaft with black semicircular patch.

**SIZE.** Attains at least 99 cm TL, but probably larger to between 120–150 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** North-West Pacific; off Taiwan. Benthic, recently discovered and not well known, but apparently lives in shallow water on the continental shelf. Diet probably consists of bottom-dwelling crustaceans and fishes.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Similar to the Roughnose Wedgefish (9.3), another small species from nearby parts of the North-West Pacific, but the Taiwanese Wedgefish lacks spines on its snout (*vs.* having well-developed spines on a much narrower snout). Both species lack a pectoral marking, which exists in all other wedgefishes at lengths less than 1 m.

## SMOOTHNOSE WEDGEFISH

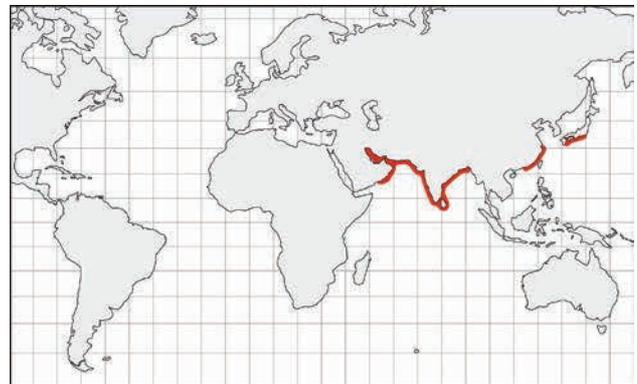
9.6

*Rhynchobatus laevis* (Bloch & Schneider, 1801)

VU

**IDENTIFICATION.** A large wedgefish with a broad snout, small rounded thorns on back and around eyes but absent from snout, low vertebral count, prominent pectoral marking usually surrounded by 4–5 white spots, lacking dark interorbital markings, ventral snout tip usually black, and upper body with multiple rows of white spots posterior to level of pectoral marking. Disc obtusely wedge-shaped, anterior margin slightly convex beside orbit, otherwise almost straight. Snout short, length 3.2–4.4 times orbit length; broad and bluntly angular in young, narrower in adults. Spiracle with 2 short skin folds, outer fold slightly taller than inner fold. Thorns small, blunt; present along dorsal mid-line, on shoulder (in a discontinuous mid-lateral row), beside spiracle, and around upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins weakly falcate, tips narrowly pointed in adults; first dorsal fin 1.2–1.5 times taller than second; first dorsal-fin origin over or slightly forward of origin of pelvic fin. Pectoral-fin apices angular. Caudal fin short, very deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 135–144.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface greyish in young, sometimes brownish in adults, with 4–5 rows of white spots along each side beneath first dorsal fin; predorsal spots not reaching forward of mid-line between pectoral markings, spots coalesced to form white stripes on posterior tail; sides of snout pale or pinkish; pectoral marking large, often ocellated, closely surrounded by 4–7 small white spots; orbital membrane often with curved black markings; preorbit with oblique whitish bar. Ventral surface uniformly white; a large black blotch usually covering anterior half of snout.



**SIZE.** Uncertain (due to misidentification), possibly well in excess of 200 cm TL and up to 240 kg; males mature at ~130 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Indo–West Pacific; Oman to Japan, primarily in Indian Ocean. Benthic, mainly near the coast in shallow bays and off river mouths. Poorly known, but probably feeds on bottom-dwelling crustaceans and fishes.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Closely related to the Eyebrow Wedgefish (9.8), but has a more westerly distribution in the Indo–Pacific. These species differ genetically and the Smoothnose Wedgefish has a more densely spotted colour pattern.

## AFRICAN WEDGEFISH

9.7

*Rhynchobatus luebberti* Ehrenbaum, 1915

EN

**IDENTIFICATION.** Large wedgefish with a bottle-shaped snout, prominent rows of thorns on rostral ridges, posteriorly positioned first dorsal fin, high vertebral count, dense pattern of white spots, and pectoral marking weak or absent. Disc wedge-shaped with its centre raised; anterior margin indented slightly near tip and distinctly concave beside eye. Snout broadly angular, elongate, length 3.8–5.4 times orbit length. Spiracle with 2 prominent, similar-sized skin folds. Thorns small, short, present along mid-line and extending back to second dorsal fin; parallel rows of snout thorns along edge of rostral cartilage; 2 short thorn rows on each shoulder, innermost row longer than orbit, outermost row much shorter; similar thorns beside spiracle and around upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins weakly falcate; first dorsal fin slightly larger than second; first dorsal-fin origin well behind pelvic-fin origin. Pectoral-fin apices angular. Caudal fin deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 172–176.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface variably pale greyish brown to greenish brown, densely covered with numerous, often dark-edged, white spots in irregular rows over most of body behind spiracles; black pectoral marking small in young, often accompanied medially by a pair of large black blotches on shoulders; pectoral marking usually absent in adults; faint dark interorbital bars in young, upper membrane of orbit dark, fins similar to body colour. Ventral surface almost uniformly whitish, usually with broad transverse black blotch on snout.



**SIZE.** To ~300 cm TL, maturity size unknown but born at 79–85 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Eastern Atlantic; Congo to Mauritania. Benthic, coastal marine and inshore to at least 35 m depth. Diet probably consists mainly of small bony fish and invertebrates. Produces litters of 2–5 pups.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Closely related to the Whitespotted Wedgefish (9.4), which it resembles in appearance and colour, and both species have dark markings between the orbits in juveniles. However, the African Wedgefish's paired rows of rostral thorns on the snout are unique within the genus.

## EYEBROW WEDGEFISH

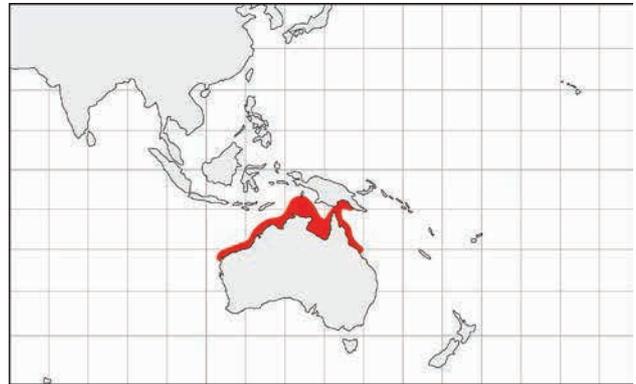
9.8

*Rhynchobatus palpebratus* Compagno & Last, 2008

NT

**IDENTIFICATION.** A large wedgefish with a broad snout, small variable-sized thorns on back and around eyes but absent from snout, low vertebral count, prominent pectoral marking usually surrounded by 4 white spots, dark eyebrow markings on orbital membrane, and white spots absent from the posterior tail of adults. Disc obtusely wedge-shaped, anterior margin slightly convex beside orbit, otherwise almost straight. Snout broadly angular, long, length 3.6–4.1 times interorbital width. Spiracle with 2 skin folds, outer fold slightly taller than inner fold. Thorns very small, partly embedded, pearl-shaped; along mid-line, in a short mid-lateral row (occasionally with a single thorn more laterally) on each shoulder, beside spiracle, and along upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins narrowly pointed in adults; first dorsal fin 1.3–1.4 times taller than second; first dorsal-fin origin over origin of pelvic fin. Pectoral-fin apices angular. Caudal fin short, very deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 130–147.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface dark yellowish to greyish; pectoral marking large, sharp edged, usually surrounded by 4 (occasionally 3) equally spaced white spots; orbital membrane with 2 curved black markings; spiracle, and front and back of orbit white; preorbit with oblique white bar, directed medially; sometimes with black spot near spiracle; with 2–4 rows of white spots commencing just forward of pectoral-fin insertion and sometime reaching free tip of second dorsal fin; tail beyond pelvic fins without spots but often with white stripe in adults. Ventral surface uniformly white; sometimes with black blotches on snout.



**SIZE.** To at least 262 cm TL; males sexually mature at 103 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Eastern Indian Ocean and South-West Pacific; northern Australia and Papua New Guinea. Benthic, poorly known, lives in shallow water on the continental shelf. Probably feeds on bottom-dwelling crustaceans and fishes.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Very similar to the Smoothnose Wedgefish (9.6), which is more widespread in the Indo–West Pacific, but differs in its DNA, and has a more densely spotted upper surface. It is also similar to the Broadnose Wedgefish (9.9) but has a slightly narrower snout, higher vertebral count, slightly smaller mid-dorsal thorns, and the posterior tail lacks rows of white spots in adults.

## BROADNOSE WEDGEFISH

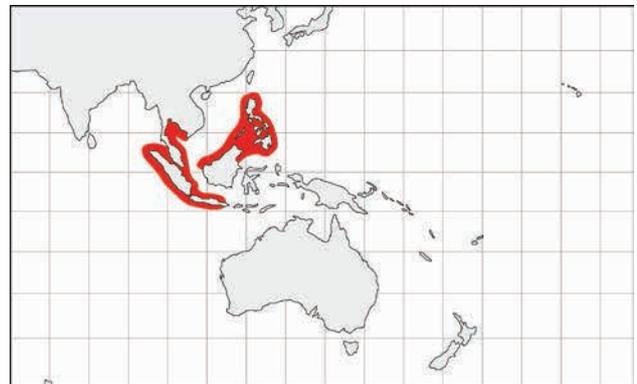
9.9

*Rhynchobatus springeri* Compagno & Last, 2010

VU

**IDENTIFICATION.** A robust, large wedgefish with a broad snout, prominent rows of small thorns on back and around eyes but absent from snout, low vertebral count, pectoral marking surrounded by 3–4 white spots, usually with dark eyebrow-like markings on orbit, and up to 3 rows of white spots along tail in adults. Disc broadly wedge-shaped, anterior margin slightly convex beside orbit, otherwise almost straight. Snout bluntly angular, short, length 3.3–3.6 times orbit length. Spiracle with 2 skin folds, outer fold slightly taller than inner fold. Thorns blunt, most obvious in young; present along mid-line, and a few on shoulder (in 2 short discontinuous rows), beside spiracle, and around upper margin of eye. Dorsal fins bluntly pointed in adults; first dorsal fin 1.3–1.5 times taller than second; first dorsal-fin origin over origin of pelvic fin. Pectoral-fin apices broadly angular. Caudal fin short, deeply concave. Total free vertebral centra 113–126.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface pale greyish green to greyish brown; pectoral marking small to medium-sized and present in adults, surrounded by 3–4 white spots (outermost pair closer together than inner pair); orbital membrane with two curved black markings, anterior marking abutted anteriorly by white blotch, posterior marking larger; preorbit with narrow oblique white bar, directed medially; sometimes with black spot near spiracle; adults with rows of dark-edged white spots over most of trunk and tail; spots in 3–4 rows beneath first dorsal fin and in 3 closely spaced rows to



caudal-fin base (partly coalescing to form a pale stripe). Ventral surface white; no black patches on snout.

**SIZE.** Attaining at least 213 cm TL; males mature at around 115 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** Indo–Malay Archipelago. Benthic, poorly known. Most likely lives in turbid brackish coastal and estuarine waters, rather than the open sea. Diet unknown, but probably similar to other wedgefishes.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Most similar to the Eyebrow Wedgefish (9.8), but has a slightly broader snout, lower vertebral count, slightly larger mid-dorsal thorns, and a more strongly spotted tail in adults.

## FALSE SHARK RAY

9.10

*Rhynchorhina mauritaniensis* Séret & Naylor, 2016

NE

**IDENTIFICATION.** Large wedgefish with a thick shark-like body and blunt snout, prominent thorn patches on ridges above eyes and spiracles, on shoulder and along mid-line of back, upper surface covered with very dense pattern of white spots, pectoral marking present only in young, and large black blotch on ventral snout tip. Heavy-bodied, trunk thick; head somewhat flattened, snout tip quadrangular to very broadly rounded (rather than long and pointed). Large spiracles with 1–2 folds. Nostrils very broad, oblique, inner part curved, their length much greater than internasal space. Small thorns at snout tip and on rostral ridges; row of thorns above orbit and spiracle, 1–2 rows on shoulders and on mid-line on back and between dorsal fins. Dorsal fins large and falcate; first dorsal fin over pelvic-fin insertion; interdorsal space long, about twice length of first dorsal-fin base. Pelvic fins small, triangular.

**COLOUR.** Dorsal surface greyish to greenish brown, covered with numerous white, dark-rimmed spots (sometimes with dark centres); spots in irregular rows on trunk and pectoral fins, no white spots on head; dark pectoral marking present in young, usually absent in adults; no distinct dark marking on interorbital space. Ventral surface white, posterior margins of pectoral and pelvic fins greyish; large transverse black blotch or cluster of dark spots on snout tip.



**SIZE.** Attains at least 224 cm TL.

**HABITAT AND BIOLOGY.** North-East Atlantic, off Mauritania. Benthic, range probably very restricted, known from a few specimens caught in shallow water on a sandy shoal known as 'Banc d'Arguin'.

**SIMILAR SPECIES.** Unusual wedgefish with a unique flattened, quadrangular to broadly rounded snout. Its coloration resembles a sympatric *Rhynchobatus* species, the African Wedgefish (9.7) and its general appearance is somewhat similar to the Shark Ray (9.1).

Last P.R., White W.T., Séret Bernard.

Wedgefishes : family Rhinidae.

In : Last P.R. (ed.), White W.T. (ed.), de Carvalho M.R. (ed.), Séret Bernard (ed.), Stehmann M.F.W. (ed.), Naylor G.J.P. (ed.), Marshall L. (ill.). Rays of the world.

Clayton South : CSIRO, 2016, p. 65-76.

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