



Grey nurse shark—A new understanding of a critically endangered population (QLD)

Funding

\$50,000

Project

This project will use cutting-edge genetics to understand the population size, structure and trajectory of the critically-endangered east coast grey nurse shark (*Carcharias taurus*), a high-priority action in its recently released recovery plan.

Grey nurse sharks migrate up and down the east coast of Australia, from Narooma in southern NSW to central Queensland. They are slow but strong swimmers and thought to be more active at night. Growing to a maximum of three metres, they historically have been hunted for their fins, flesh and oil. They have also been targeted for their fierce appearance, despite the docile and non-aggressive nature of these ‘labradors of the sea’.

This funding will be used to map the genome of grey nurse sharks and advance the use of close-kin genetics to understand the interactions and family trees of the species. By understanding the parent-offspring and sibling relationships, it is possible to estimate population age, size and trends as well as the proportion of males/females and juveniles/adults. This information will be vital in better understanding the species and mapping the success of current and future recovery efforts.



Photo credit: Justin Gilligan

Partners

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