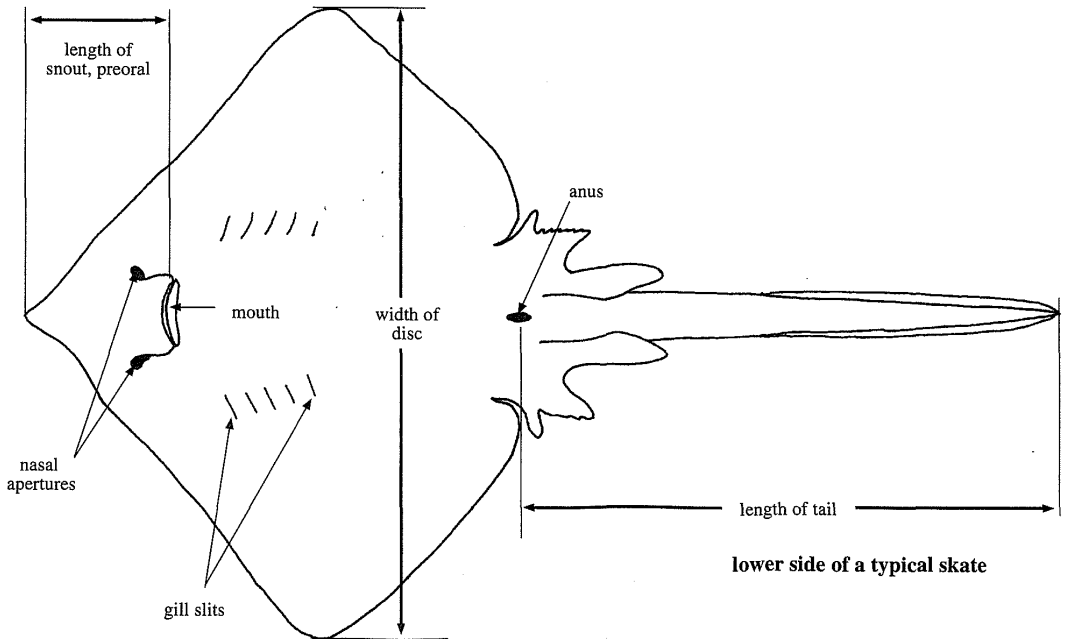
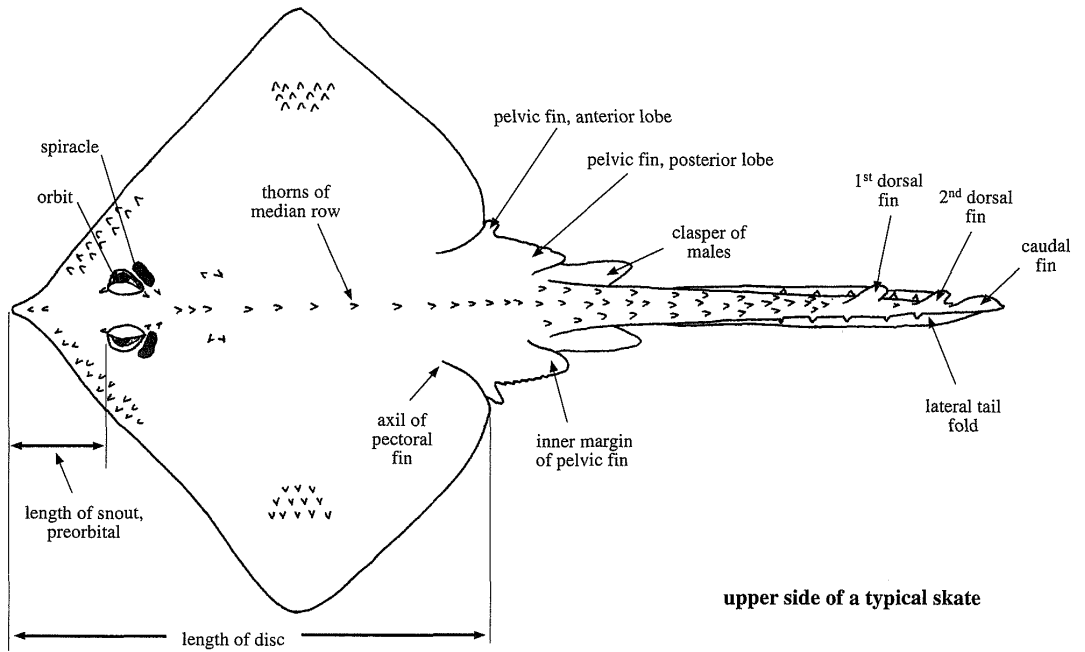


BATOID FISHES

The purpose of this guide is to ensure correct identification of all batoid fishes recorded from the area. Families in the guide are arranged by order using the classification adopted by Eschmeyer (1990) which best reflects current use. Page numbers refer to the species identification guide. All features utilized in the guide apply only to the species which occur in the area. It should be noted that the taxonomy of batoid fishes is in a confused state, and many families are in urgent need of revision.

TECHNICAL TERMS AND MEASUREMENTS



GUIDE TO ORDERS AND FAMILIES

Order PRISTIFORMES - Sawfishes

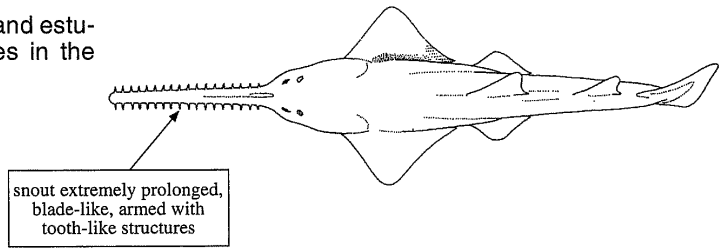
Shark-like batoids with saw-like elongated snouts with a row of strong lateral teeth on each side.

PRISTIDAE

Page 71

Sawfishes

To 730 cm. Coastal marine waters and estuaries; bottom dwelling. Two species in the area.



Order TORPEDINIFORMES - Electric Rays and Numbfishes

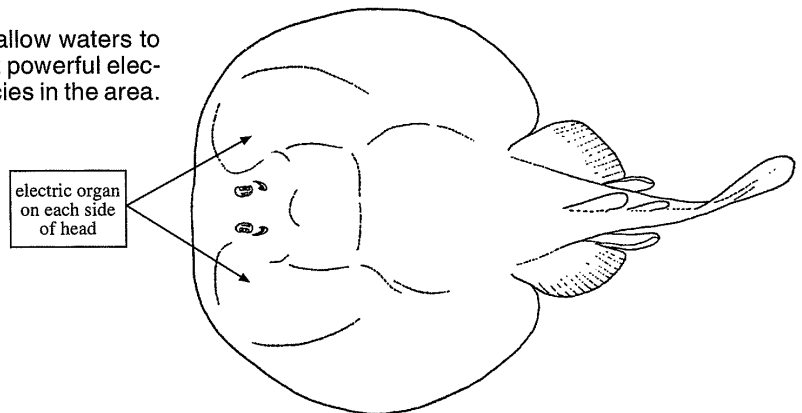
Pectoral fins greatly expanded and fused with head and trunk, forming a large oval disc. A pair of electric organs in front of disc usually visible through the skin as a pattern of hexagonal markings.

TORPEDINIDAE

Page 71

Electric rays

To 70 cm. Demersal, from shallow waters to depths of 120 m. Possesses 2 powerful electric organs. Probably two species in the area.

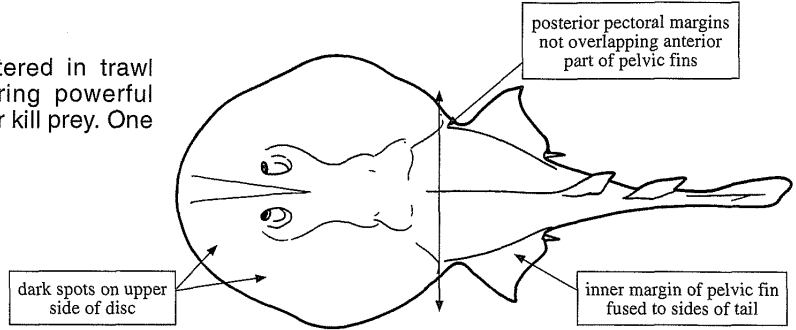


NARCINIDAE

Page 72

Numbfishes

To at least 30 cm. Encountered in trawl catches; capable of delivering powerful shocks with which they stun or kill prey. One species in the area.



Order RAJIFORMES - Skates and Guitarfishes

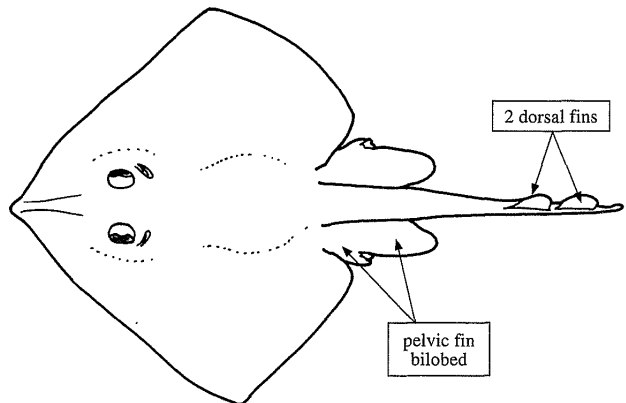
Thick-bodied or greatly flattened batoids with pectoral fins expanded and fused with head and trunk; snout angular or broadly rounded.

RAJIDAE

Page 72

Skates

Probably to about 50 cm. Known from shallow water. One species in the area.

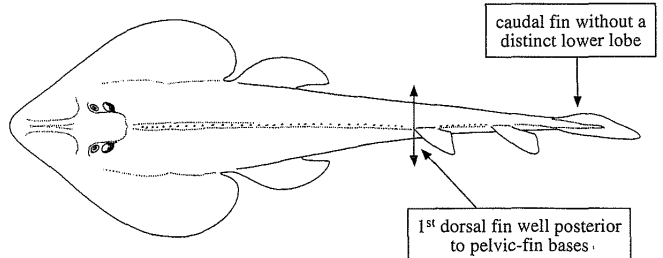


RHINOBATIDAE

Page 73

Guitarfishes

To 310 cm. Three species in the area.



Order MYLIOBATIFORMES - Stingrays, Whiprays, Butterfly, Eagle, Devil, and Fantail Rays

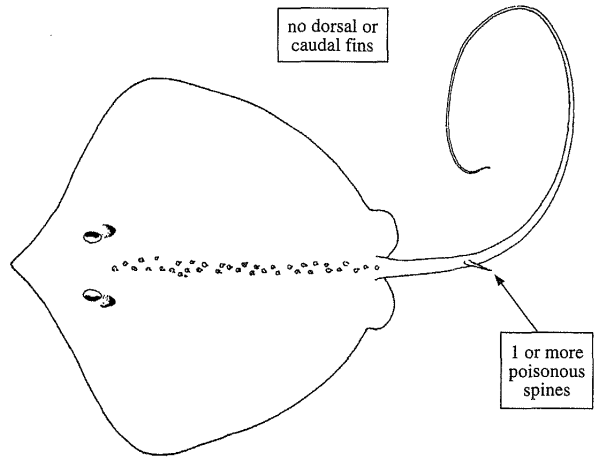
Flattened batoids with pectoral fins expanded and fused with head and trunk to form a disc; 5 or 6 gill slits; tail fairly thick and elongate, usually with a stinging spine near base; caudal fin small or absent.

DASYATIDAE

Page 74

Stingrays, whiprays and fantail rays

To 180 cm (disc width). Benthic, in shallow coastal waters. Six species occur in the area.

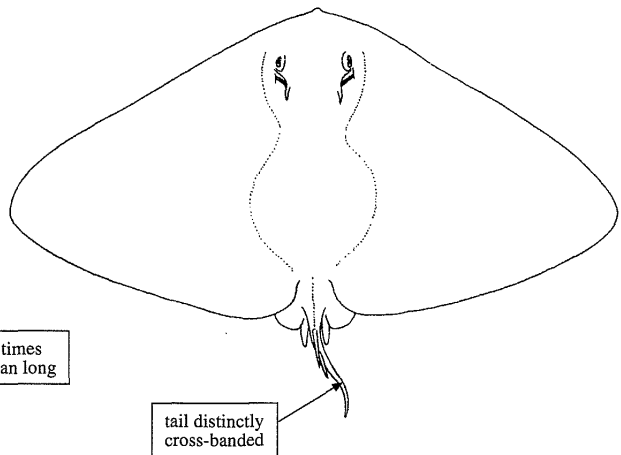


GYMNURIDAE

Page 76

Butterfly rays

To 100 cm (disc width). Benthic, inshore sandy bottoms, and offshore banks. A single species known from the area.

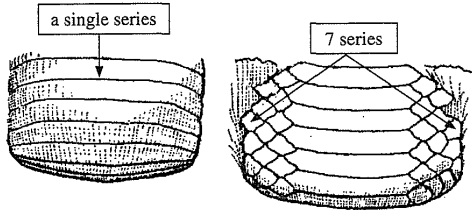


MYLIOBATIDAE

Page 76

Eagle rays

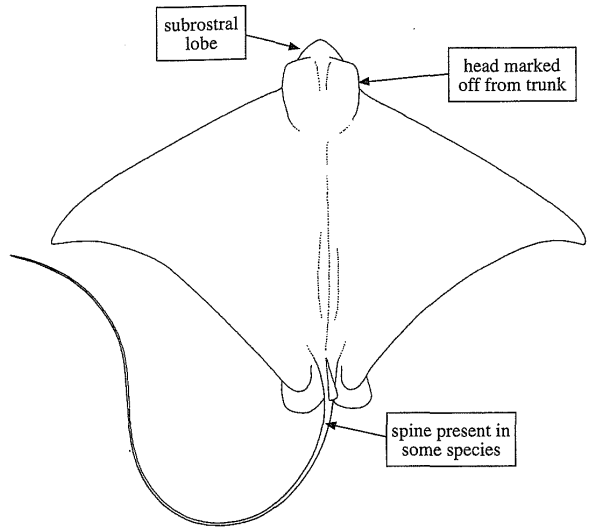
To at least 230 cm disc width. Benthic, but often swim above the bottom; mainly inshore coastal waters. Three species occur in the area.



Aetobatus

Aetomylaeus, Myliobatis

arrangement of teeth in upper jaw

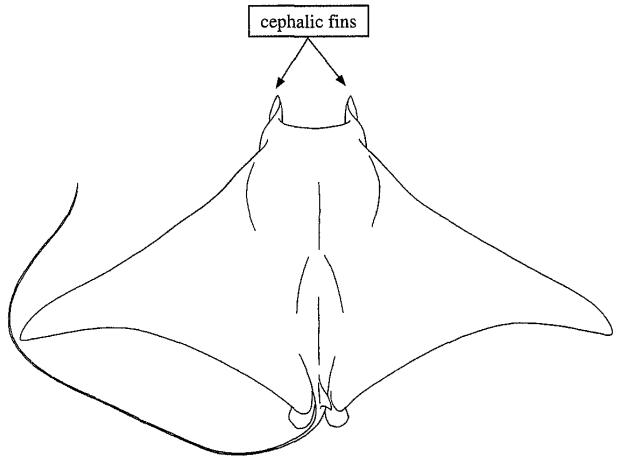


MOBULIDAE

Page 77

Devil rays

To 180 cm (disc width). Pelagic, often coming close inshore and near coral reefs. Plankton feeders, the horn-like cephalic fins are used to direct small planktonic and fish prey into the mouth. Good eating, but uncommon and caught only incidentally in hook-and-line and trawling operations. A single species recorded from the area.



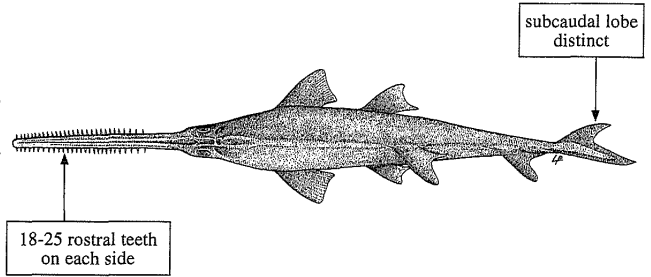
PRISTIDAE - Sawfishes

Anoxypristis cuspidata (Latham, 1794)

Common names: En - Knifetooth sawfish;
Ar - Busayyaf بوسياف

Size: Reaches at least 350 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs inshore in shallow water, over muddy and sandy bottoms. Ovoviviparous; feeds on small bottom-dwelling organisms. Caught in bottom trawls; of little importance to fisheries.

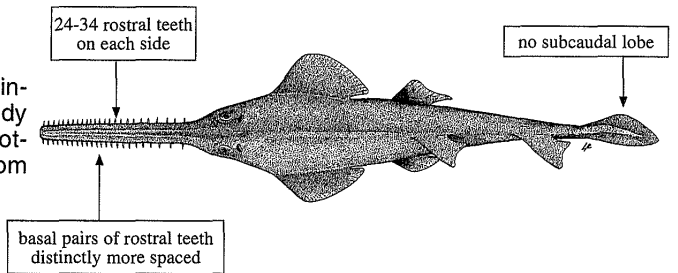


Pristis zijsron Bleeker, 1851

Common names: En - Green sawfish;
Ar - Busayyaf بوسياف

Size: Commonly to 500 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs inshore in shallow water, over muddy and sandy bottoms. Ovoviviparous; feeds on small bottom-dwelling organisms. Caught in bottom trawls; of little importance to fisheries.



PRISTIDAE

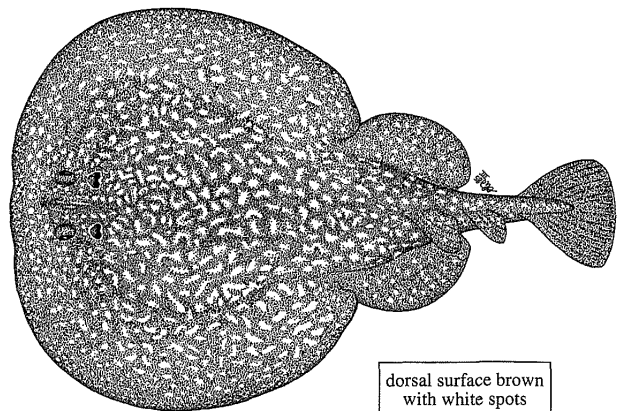
TORPEDINIDAE - Electric rays

Torpedo panthera Olfers, 1831

Common names: En - Panther electric ray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

Size: Reaches at least 35 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs in inshore areas over soft bottom; often buried in sand; frequently close to coral reefs. Feeds on bottom-living invertebrates and fishes. Occasionally caught in bottom trawls; no interest to fisheries.



Torpedo sinuspersici Olfers, 1831

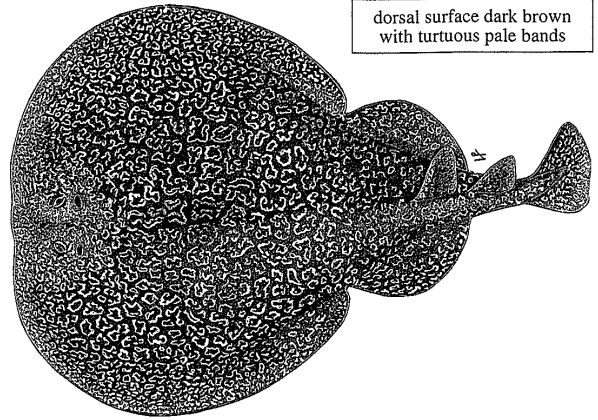
TORPEDINIDAE

Synonyms/misidentifications: *Torpedo marmorata* Risso, 1810.

Common names: En - Marbled electric ray;
Ar - Lukhma لكمة

Size: Maximum about 70 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs in inshore areas over soft bottom; often buried in sand; frequently close to coral reefs. Feeds on bottom-living invertebrates and fishes. Occasionally caught in bottom trawls; no interest to fisheries.



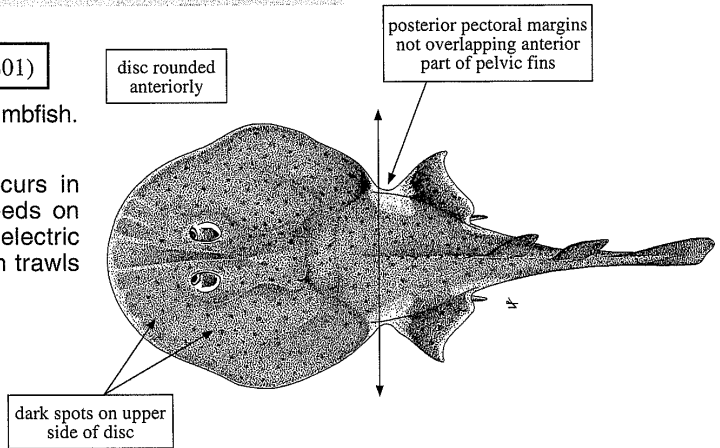
NARCINIDAE - Numbfishes

Narcine timlei (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)

Common names: En - Blackspotted numbfish.

Size: Reaches at least 30 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs in coastal waters over soft bottoms. Feeds on bottom-living organisms; possesses electric organs. Occasionally caught in bottom trawls or gill nets; no importance to fisheries.



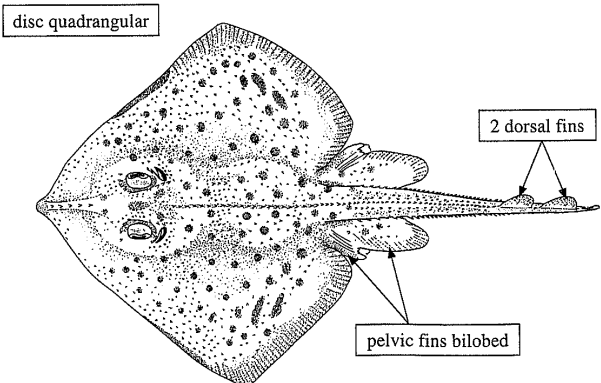
RAJIDAE - Skates

Raja pita Fricke and Al-Hassan, 1995

Common names: En - Pita skate.

Size: Only known specimen about 46 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs in shallow water over soft substrate. No importance to fisheries.



RHINOBATIDAE - Guitarfishes

Rhina ancylostoma Bloch and Schneider 1801

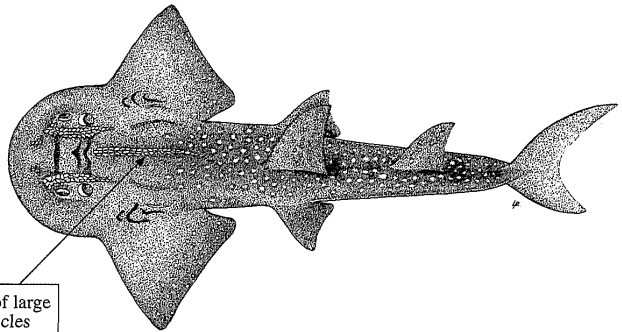
disc rounded anteriorly

Common names: En - Bowmouth guitarfish;
Ar - Hariri هريري

Size: Maximum to 270 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Lives on sandy and muddy bottoms in shallow coastal waters. Feeds on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Caught by bottom trawls and gill nets. Presently of minor commercial importance.

middorsal series of large thorn-like denticles



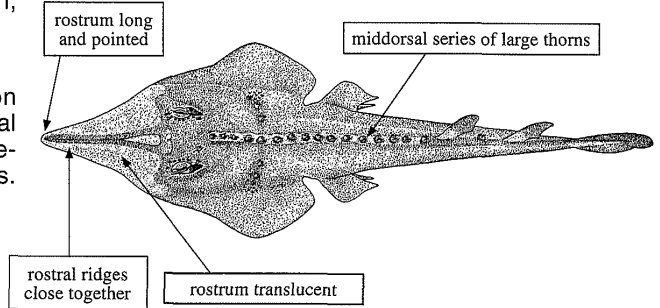
Rhinobatos granulatus Cuvier, 1829

RHINOBATIDAE

Common names: En - Sharpnose guitarfish;
Ar - Hariri هريري

Size: Maximum to 215 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Lives on sandy and muddy bottoms in shallow coastal waters. Feeds on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Caught by bottom trawls and gill nets. Presently of minor commercial importance.



Rhynchobatus djiddensis (Forsskål, 1775)

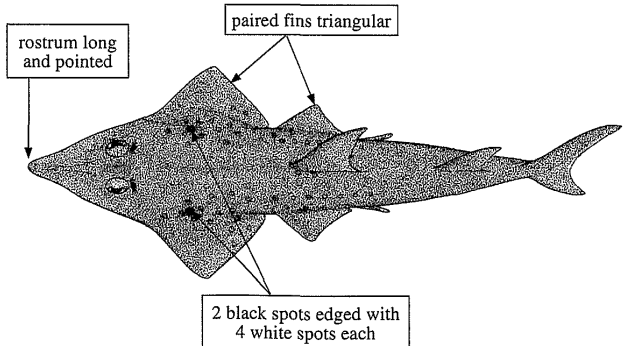
(Plate I, 1)

RHINOBATIDAE

Common names: En - Giant guitarfish;
Ar - Hariri هريري

Size: Maximum to 305 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Lives on sandy and muddy bottoms in shallow coastal waters. Feeds on bottom-dwelling invertebrates. Caught by bottom trawls and gill nets. Presently of minor commercial importance.



DASYATIDAE - Stingrays, whiprays, and fantail rays

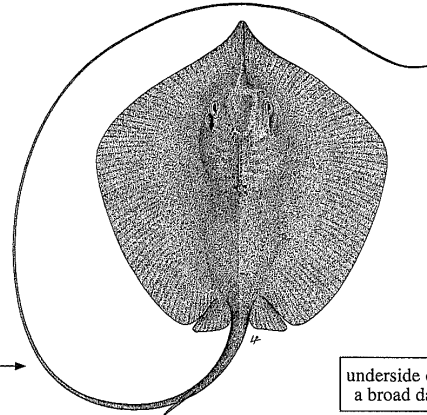
Himantura bleekeri (Blyth, 1800)

Common names: En - Bleeker's whipray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

Size: Reaches a disc width of more than 100 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found in shallow waters, including lagoons. Ovoviviparous; feeds on bottom-living invertebrates; tail spines may inflict painful wounds. Caught as bycatch in trawls; of very little interest to fisheries.

tail several times longer than disc



underside of disc with a broad dark margin

Himantura gerrardi (Gray, 1851)

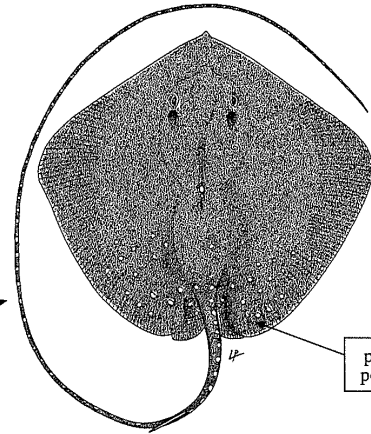
DASYATIDAE

Common names: En - White-spotted whipray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 90 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found in shallow waters, including lagoons. Ovoviviparous; feeds on bottom-living invertebrates; tail spines may inflict painful wounds. Caught as bycatch in trawls; of very little interest to fisheries.

tail with black and white rings



pale spots posteriorly

Himantura imbricata (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)

DASYATIDAE

Common names: En - Scaly whipray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

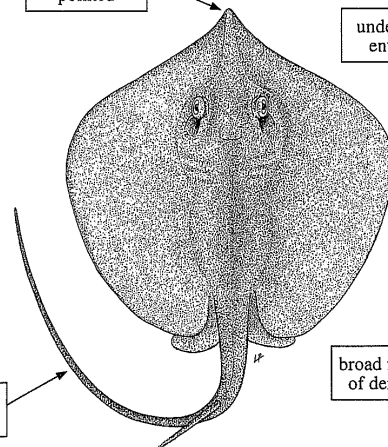
Size: Reaches a disc width of 25 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found in shallow waters, including lagoons. Ovoviviparous; feeds on bottom-living invertebrates; tail spines may inflict painful wounds. Caught as bycatch in trawls; of very little interest to fisheries.

snout acutely pointed

underside of disc entirely white

tail hardly longer than disc



broad middorsal zone of dermal denticles

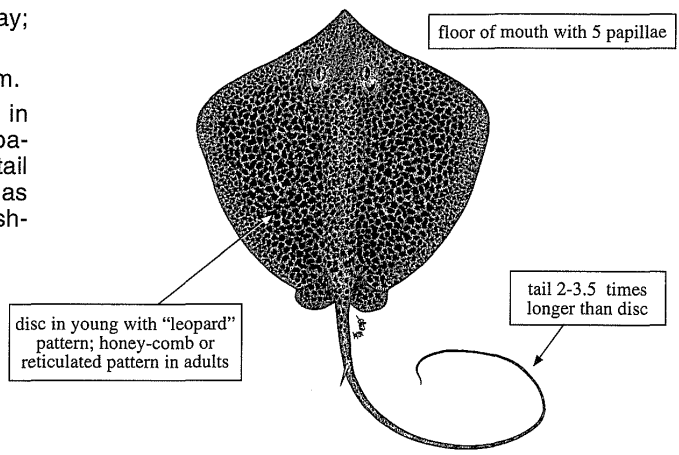
Himantura uarnak (Forsskål, 1775)

DASYATIDAE

Common names: En - Reticulated whipray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 150 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found in shallow waters, including lagoons. Ovoviviparous; feeds on bottom-living invertebrates; tail spines may inflict painful wounds. Caught as bycatch in trawls; of very little interest to fisheries.



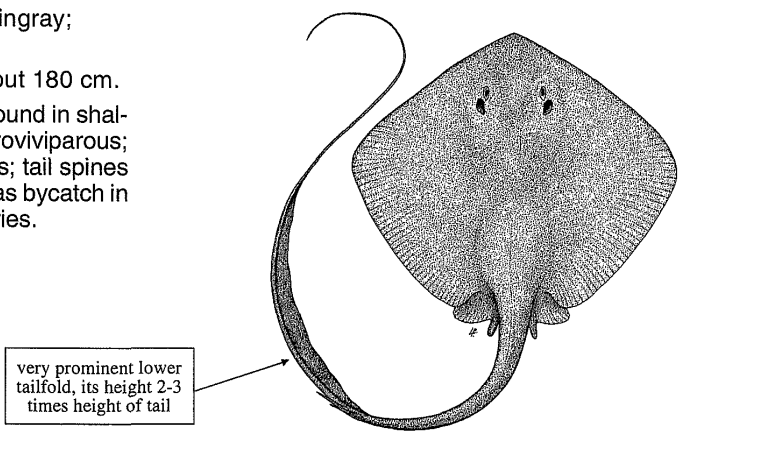
Pastinachus sephen (Forsskål, 1775)

DASYATIDAE

Common names: En - Cowtail stingray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 180 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found in shallow waters, including lagoons. Ovoviviparous; feeds on bottom-living invertebrates; tail spines may inflict painful wounds. Caught as bycatch in trawls; of very little interest to fisheries.



Taeniura meyeni Müller and Henle, 1841

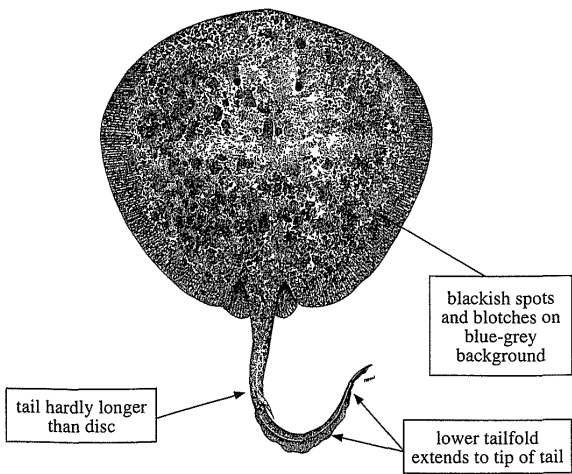
DASYATIDAE

Synonyms/misidentifications: *Taeniura melanospilus* Bleeker, 1853.

Common names: En - Blotched fantail ray;
Ar - Lukhma لخمه

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 80 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Found in shallow waters, including lagoons. Ovoviviparous; feeds on bottom-living invertebrates; tail spines may inflict painful wounds. Caught as bycatch in trawls; of very little interest to fisheries.



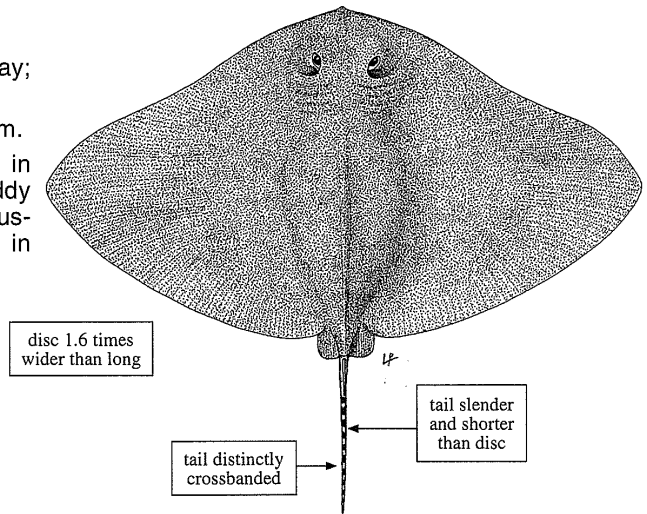
GYMNURIDAE - Butterfly rays

Gymnura poecilura (Shaw, 1804)

Common names: En - Longtail butterfly ray;
Ar - Lukhma لحمه

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 100 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Occurs in shallow coastal waters on sandy and muddy bottoms. Ovoviviparous; feeds mainly on crustaceans and clams. Caught as bycatch in trawls; no importance to fisheries.



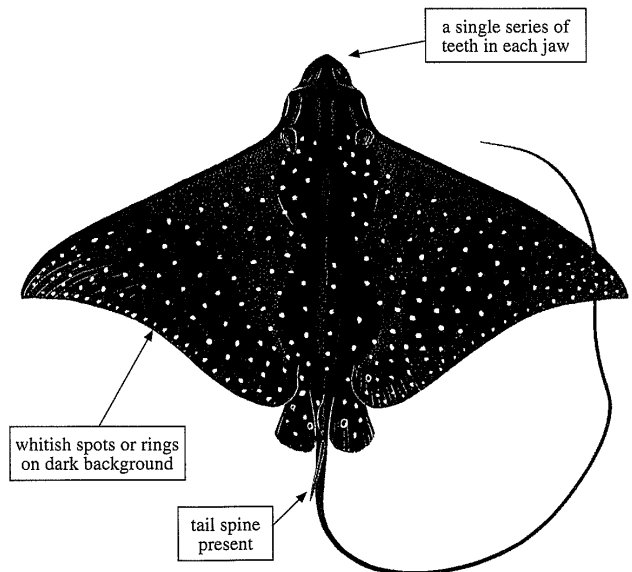
MYLIOBATIDAE - Eagle rays

Aetobatus narinari (Euphrasen, 1790)

Common names: En - Spotted eagle ray;
Ar - Thuwar 'amir ثور عامر

Size: Reaches a width of 230 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Inhabits open waters. Active swimmer, travelling long distances; ovoviviparous; feeds on crustaceans and molluscs. Caught in drift nets and gillnets; no importance to fisheries.



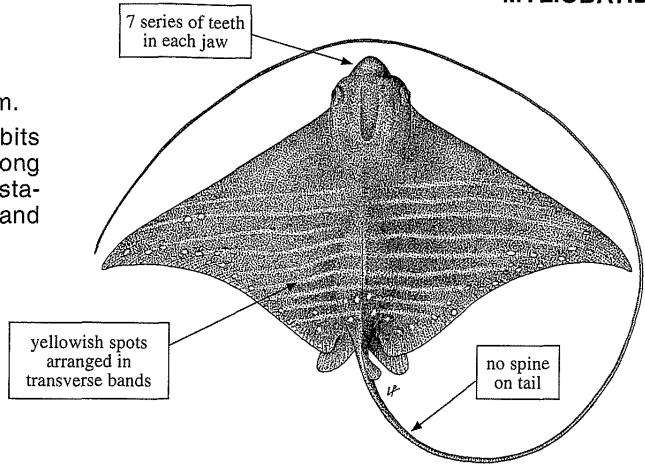
Aetomylaeus maculatus (Gray, 1834)

MYLIOBATIDAE

Common names: En - Mottled eagle ray;
Ar - Thuwar 'amir ثور عامر

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 60 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Inhabits open waters. Active swimmer, travelling long distances; ovoviviparous; feeds on crustaceans and molluscs. Caught in drift nets and gillnets; no importance to fisheries.



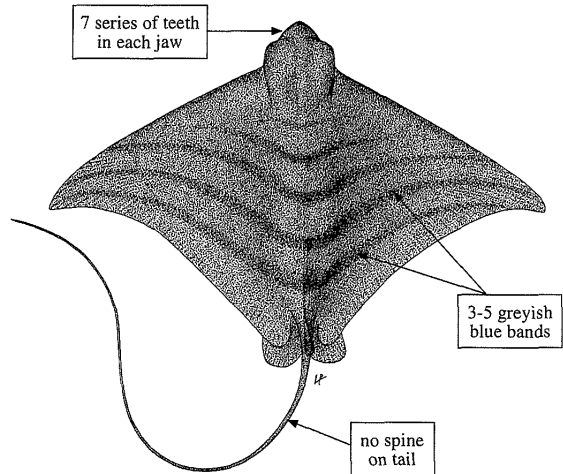
Aetomylaeus nichofii (Bloch and Schneider, 1801)

MYLIOBATIDAE

Common names: En - Banded eagle ray;
Ar - Thuwar 'amir ثور عامر

Size: Reaches a disc width of about 60 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Inhabits open waters. Active swimmer, travelling long distances; ovoviviparous; feeds on crustaceans and molluscs. Caught in drift nets and gillnets; no importance to fisheries.



MOBULIDAE - Devil rays

Mobula diabolus (Shaw, 1804)

Common names: En - Devil ray.

Size: Reaches a width of 180 cm.

Habitat, biology, and fisheries: Inhabits open waters, pelagic. Active swimmer, travelling long distances; ovoviviparous; feeds on planktonic crustaceans. Caught in drift nets; no importance to fisheries.

