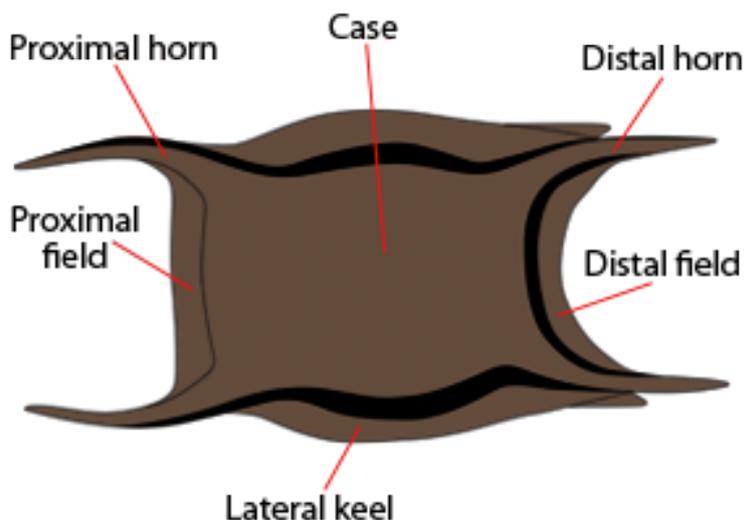


Eggcase Identification Key

Use this key to help you identify which eggcases you have found on your Great Eggcase Hunt. If you have any problems identifying your eggcase then email us at enquiries@sharktrust.org.

Diagram of an Eggcase



1a Eggcase is goblet shaped and (if not broken) has curly tendrils on either end.

Yes > Go to 2



1b Eggcase is flattened, squarer in shape and (if not broken) has a horn on each of the four corners.

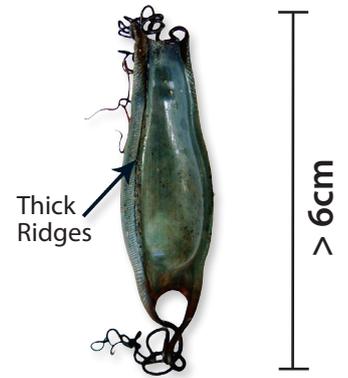
Yes > Go to 3



2a

This eggcase is much larger and sturdier compared to 2b and has thick ridges along the sides of the capsule. Approximate capsule length 9cm (excluding horns).

Yes = Nursehound/Bull Huss (*Scyliorhinus stellaris*)



2b

Colour should not be used as a distinguishing feature as it is highly variable for catshark eggcases and can be brown, black or yellow. Approximate capsule length 4cm (excluding horns).

Yes = Smallspotted Catshark/Lesser Spotted Dogfish (*Scyliorhinus canicula*)



3a

Keels are present on the eggcase.

Yes > Go to 4



3b

There are no keels present.

No > Go to 9



4a

Eggcase capsule is greater than 12cm.

Yes > Go to 5



4b

Eggcase capsule is less than 12cm.

Yes > Go to 6

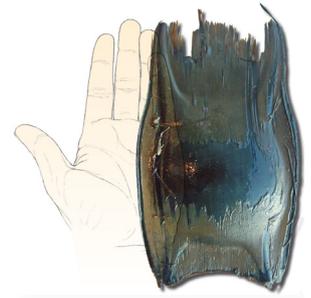


5a

Proximal field is long and usually ragged. Eggcase can be covered in a fibrous bark-like substance that easily peels away. Approximate capsule length 12-18cm.

Yes = **Common Skate** (*Dipturus batis*)

NB - This species is found primarily along the NW coast of Scotland.



5b

Proximal field is small and neat. Horns are much more prominent. Eggcase is very rigid and sturdy. Approximate capsule length 12-18cm.

Yes = **White Skate** (*Rostroraja alba*)

NB - This species is found primarily in the Celtic Sea.



6a

Eggcase is very small and has a 'washboard' texture on one side of the capsule body. Approximate capsule length 3.5cm.

Yes = **Starry Skate** (*Amblyraja radiata*)

NB - This is a deep-water species and eggcase findings are rare. If you think you have found this eggcase please be sure to submit photos for verification.



6b

Capsule body is smooth. Striations may or may not be present and should not be confused with the 'washboard' texture.

Yes > Go to 7



7a

Capsule tapers (from proximal to distal). If proximal horns are intact, they are long and filamentous whereas distal horns are short and hooked. Approximate capsule length 7.5cm.

Yes = **Small-eyed Ray** (*Raja microocellata*)



7b

Capsule is square/rectangular in shape.

Yes > Go to 8



8a

Once soaked, eggcase (including horns) almost fills an adult's hand. Approximate capsule length 9cm.

Yes = **Blonde Ray** (*Raja brachyura*)



8b

Eggcase (including horns) fills an adult's palm. Approximate capsule length 6.5cm.

Yes = **Thornback Ray** (*Raja clavata*)



9a

Eggcase is small, delicate and the capsule is rounded. If horns are intact, they are very long and curve inwards. Approximate capsule length 5cm.

Yes = **Cuckoo Ray** (*Leucoraja naevus*)

NB - This is a deep-water species and eggcase findings are rare. If you think you have found this eggcase please submit photos for verification.



9b

Eggcase is stouter, larger and less rounded in its appearance.

Yes > Go to 10



10a

Eggcase is larger in comparison to 10b and has very rough edges. The proximal horns splay outwards from the capsule. Approximate capsule length 6cm.

Yes = **Undulate Ray** (*Raja undulata*)

NB - This species is more commonly found along the south coast of the UK and is often confused with the Spotted Ray.



10b

Eggcase is smaller in comparison to 10a with defined, smoother edges. Approximate capsule length 5cm.

Yes = **Spotted Ray** (*Raja montagui*)

NB - This species has a nationwide distribution and is often confused with the Undulate Ray.



Image © Rachel Coppock.

Congratulations - you have just successfully identified your eggcase!

You can now submit your record using the Shark Trust **online recording form**.

If you're having any difficulties identifying your eggcase then take a look at our **identification troubleshooter**, or get in touch with us at: **enquiries@sharktrust.org**.

Thank you for supporting the Great Eggcase Hunt Project.

