

Basking shark

Conservation status: ENDANGERED

Basking sharks are the second largest shark in the world after whale sharks.

Due to their elusive nature, we don't know how many basking sharks there are in the wild. But they play an important role in our waters!

Did you know?

Basking sharks are found in both temperate and tropical waters.

They live in the waters all around the **UK coast**, and are most frequently seen along the south west coast (especially in Wales, Isle of Man and Scotland).



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Key facts

- Basking sharks are estimated to live up to **50** years old
- They **eat plankton**, swimming with their mouths open then filtering out what they don't need
- They can open their mouths up to **1.2m** wide, filtering up to 2 million litres of water per hour!
- They can be **6.7-8.8m** long and weigh around **4.5 tonnes**
- Even though they gulp plankton, they have up to **1,500** teeth
- Basking sharks are sociable and can be seen on their own, in small groups, or groups of hundreds