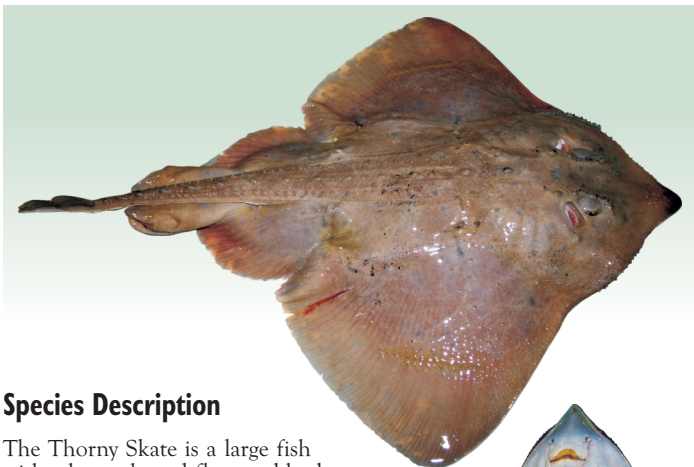


# Thorny Skate

*Amblyraja radiata*




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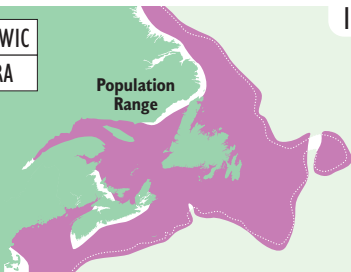
## Species Description

The Thorny Skate is a large fish with a heart-shaped flattened body; a rounded snout; large, flat, disc-like pectoral fins and a long tail with two small dorsal fins at the tip. Adults range in size from 65-110 cm in length. Its upper surface colour is variable (brown to grey and uniform to mottled) and its lower surface is white. It has a large midline row of thorns (11-19) from the tail up to the middle of its back, thorns on its wings and shoulders, and 2-6 thorns on its snout tip. It becomes less thorny with age.



<b>STATUS</b>	Special Concern COSEWIC
	Not Listed SARA

Found across the north Atlantic ocean, with 30-40% of its range in Canada. Widespread year-round throughout the waters of Atlantic Canada, with concentrations in the Grand Banks and eastern Scotian Shelf. Declined by up to 97%.



Population Range

## Interesting Points

- Skate eggs are contained in capsules sometimes called a "mermaid's purse", which often wash up on the beach.
- It takes up to 22 months for young to hatch out of their capsules.

## Threats

- Frequently caught and discarded as bycatch in a number of commercial fisheries.
- Directed fisheries for this species on the Grand Banks.

Learn how you can help on page 136.



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Visible thorns on midline and wings.

## Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

**Contact:** DFO Species at Risk 1-866-891-0771 or [xmarsara@mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:xmarsara@mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

**Info:** Search "Skates and Rays of Atlantic Canada" in your internet browser

**Sighting Reports:** Report tagged skates (pink) in the Bay of Fundy to [trackmyfish.ca](http://trackmyfish.ca) and tagged skates on the Scotian Shelf to [Steven.Campana@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:Steven.Campana@dfo-mpo.gc.ca). Also: [www.ambn.ca](http://www.ambn.ca).