

"**Dance on a shark's fin**" writes poet Nikos Kavvadias creating dreamy nautical images, while in cinema, "**Jaws**" stir our deepest atavistic fears.



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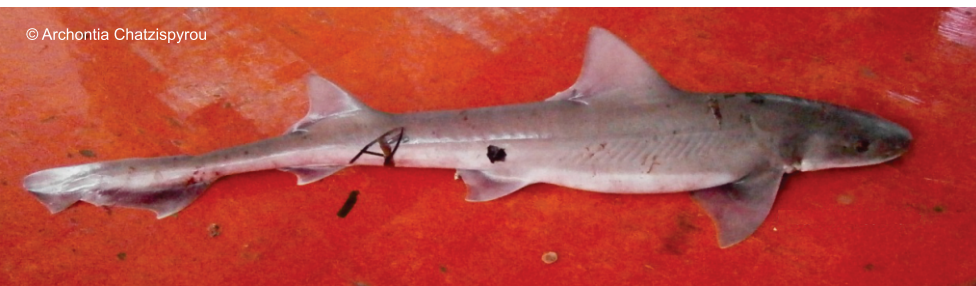
Sharks are like us: they are smart, they are slow to mature, their pregnancy lasts long and they live for many years. Sharks are impressive, they are vulnerable, yet they are top predators. Most are dangerous only to fish, but to some species even humans can become prey. Dionysios Solomos, in the poem *Porphyras* describes a shark attack on an English soldier on Corfu, in July 1847. "The tiger of the sea.... easily shred the deep blue and came out; and he careened towards the white neck... towards the wide chest and the blond head»!

Sharks are fascinating animals. Back in the 4th century BC, Aristotle devoted an entire chapter of his *History of Animals* to the breeding of sharks. Stories of the strange reproductive strategy of these animals have been repeated over the centuries, but the mystery has only recently been solved.

Depending on the species, sharks are oviparous (laying eggs), viviparous (give birth to developed young) or ovoviviparous (the eggs hatch in the shark's body and the young are born fully developed). Aristotle had observed such births and described them insightfully, while other ancient writers interpreted them in an imaginative way.



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Overall, 39 species of sharks live in the Greek seas. They are not targeted by Greek fishing vessels, but when caught, they are sold as bycatch. Although most of them are edible, they are not normally consumed. Only the smooth hound, a small shark, is allowed to be sold under the brand name *Galeos*.



Taste preferences, however, change from place to place and through time. In other parts of the world, shark meat is considered a delicacy, while sharks and closely related species were often found in the fish markets of the ancient world.

So, when we eat *galeos* with garlic mashed potato at home or a fish tavern, we put shark on our plate!

### ***Galeos* with garlic mashed potato (skordalia)**

Cut, salt and flour the smooth hound and then fry it in plenty of hot olive oil until golden all around. For the garlic mashed potatoes, boil the potatoes and skin them. Mash them together with 1-2 cloves of garlic and add oil, salt and a little vinegar.



<https://www.askitikon.eu/syntages/psarika/6556/galeos-me-skordalia-5558/>

### **Shark common names in Greek**

Ζύγαινα, Κεντρώνι, Κοκκάλης, Σαπουνάς ή Προσκυντής, Δροσίτης ή Γαθέος, Κοκκαγκαθίτης, Σκυμνοσκυλόψαρο, Λάμια, Αθωπίας μεγαλόματος, Καρχαρίας αθεπού, Κοντόφτερος, Λευκός, Γκριζός, Μελανόστομος, Γαλάζιος, Λαίμαργος, Επταβράγχιος, Μεγαλόματος εξαβράγχιος, Μαυροαγκαθίτης, Επταβράγχιος βραχύουρος, Μελανόακρος, Μακροχέρης, Σκοτεινόχρωμος, Σταχτοκαρχαρίας, Ταυροκαρχαρίας, Αγριοκαρχαρίας, Πριονοδοτοκαρχαρίας, Ρυγχοκαρχαρίας, Σκυλοψαράκι, Γατοψαράκι, Αχινόγατος, Αγγελόψαρο, Ματορίνα, Ακανθορίνα.

### **Ancient Greek shark names**

Αετός, Ακανθίας, Αθώπηξ, Άμια, Αστερίας, Δαρτά, Γαθέος, Καρχαρίας, Κεντρίτης, Κεντρόφρυς, Κέστρα, Κύων, Λάμια, Λάμνα, Λείος, Λεόβατος, Νάρκη, Νεβρύας, Νοτιδιανός, Ποικίλος, Ρίνη, Σκύλα, Σκύλιον, Σκύμνος, Τρώκτης, Βασιλίσκος, Βατίς, Βους, Ζύγαινα.

