

# Top Tips for Eggcase Hunting

## When is the best time to go eggcase hunting?

You can find shark and skate eggcases throughout the year. The best time to look is after stormy weather when lots of seaweed and debris has been thrown up on the beach.

## Where is the best place to look?

You can go hunting on both rocky shores and sandy beaches. The best place to look for eggcases is within the strandline - the seaweed washed up at the top of the shore. They are well camouflaged so keep your eyes peeled!

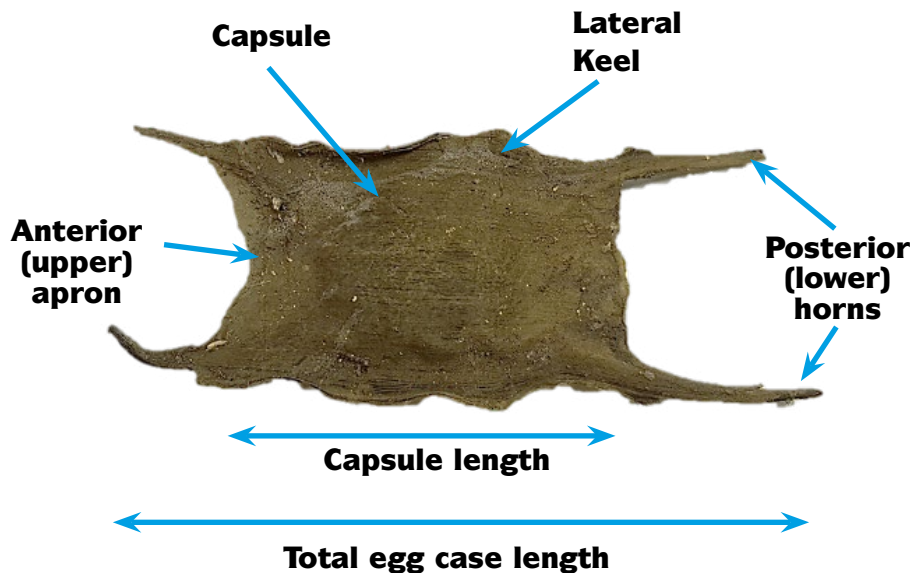
## How do I identify my eggcase finds?

First step is to measure the length of the eggcase capsule, then using this ID key, follow the questions to identify your eggcase. Sometimes eggcases are easier to identify once they have been soaked - put them in water for a couple of hours to rehydrate them.

## How do I record my eggcase finds?

Submit your records to the Sea Deep website. If you're unsure of what eggcase you have found, send us a picture of the eggcase beside a ruler or a coin so we can help you identify it.

[www.seadeepni.org/submiteggcaserecords](http://www.seadeepni.org/submiteggcaserecords)



# Eggcase ID Guide

## Catshark Eggcases

### Q1. Is your eggcase a tubular shape?

Yes. Go to Q2  
No. Go to Q5

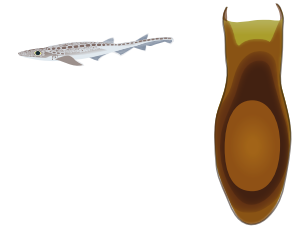
### Q2. Does your eggcase have small upper horns?

No. Go to Q3

**Yes! You've found a Blackmouth Catshark eggcase.**

*Galeus melastomus*

This small tubular eggcase, 5-7cm in capsule length, has small upper horns.



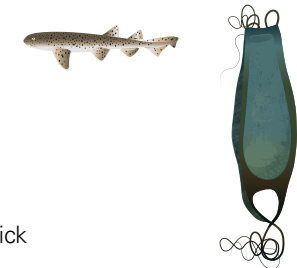
### Q3. Is your eggcase capsule >8cm with curly tendrils and thick walls?

No. Go to Q4

**Yes! You've found a Bull Huss eggcase.**

*Scyliorhinus stellaris*

This is a moderately large eggcase with capsule length 8-10cm, excluding the thick curly tendrils extending from each corner. Thick walls run the length of the capsule joining the two sides.



### Q4. Is your eggcase capsule <8cm with curly tendrils?

**Yes! You've found a Small-spotted Catshark eggcase.**

*Scyliorhinus canicula*

This small eggcase has a capsule length of 5-7cm, excluding the fine curly tendrils that extend from each corner. They can come in many different colours and so colour should not be used as an identifying feature.



## Skates and Rays - Small Eggcases

**Q5. Is your eggcase capsule <7cm and squarer in shape with horns?**

No. Go to Q9  
Yes. Go to Q6

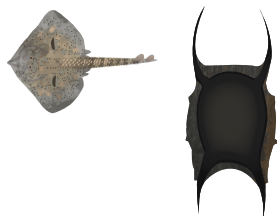
**Q6. Does your eggcase have well-formed keels?**

No. Go to Q7

**Yes! You've found a Thornback Ray eggcase.**

*Raja clavata*

This robust eggcase can be square or rectangular, and is 6-7cm in capsule length. Well-formed keels along the length of the capsule.



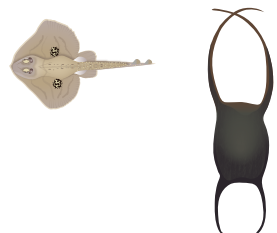
**Q7. Is your eggcase rounded with very long and curved upper horns?**

No. Go to Q8

**Yes! You've found a Cuckoo Ray eggcase.**

*Leucoraja naevus*

This small rounded eggcase, 5-6cm in capsule length has very long and curved upper horns (if intact).



**Q8. Is your eggcase capsule between 5-6cm in capsule length?**

**Yes! You've found a Spotted Ray eggcase.**

*Raja montagui*

This a small, neat eggcase, 5-6cm in capsule length.



Find out more about our local sharks at  
[www.seadeepni.org](http://www.seadeepni.org)

## Skates and Rays - Large Eggcases

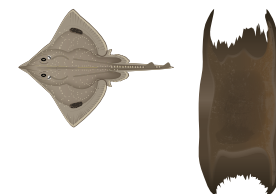
**Q9. Is your eggcase squarer in shape and larger than 15cm?**

No. Go to Q10

**Yes! You've found a Flapper Skate eggcase.**

*Dipturus intermedia*

This very large eggcase is 15-20cm in capsule length. It is often covered with dense fibrous bark-like substance that peels away easily. Upper eggcase edge is usually long and ragged.



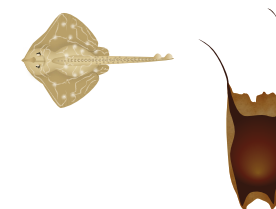
**Q10. Is your eggcase capsule tapered from top to bottom with long filamentous upper horns and short hooked lower horns?**

No. Go to Q11

**Yes! You've found a Small-eyed Ray eggcase.**

*Raja microocellata*

This eggcase capsule tapers from top to bottom and is 7-8cm long. If the upper horns are intact, they are long and filamentous, and the lower horns are short and hooked.



**Q11. Is there a small fringe present along the sides of your eggcase?**

No. Go to Q12

**Yes! You've found an Undualate Ray eggcase.**

*Raja undulata*

This is a moderately large eggcase, 7-8cm in capsule length. There is usually a small fringe present along the margin of the eggcase.



**Q12. Is your eggcase capsule 10-12cm in length with a distinctive pinch at the base of the upper horns?**

**Yes! You've found a Blonde Ray eggcase.**

*Raja brachyura*

This large eggcase capsule is 10-12cm long, and has a distinctive pinch at the base of the upper horns.

