

GO HUNTING!

How to find shark and skate egg cases on the shore

There are over 20 different sharks, skates and rays in our seas. Sadly, many of these incredible creatures are now endangered with few individuals left. Through the Sea Deep project, Ulster Wildlife is working with local communities to collect much-needed information about these animals to help our conservation efforts.

You can take part by hunting for shark and skate egg cases around our coasts. Just follow the steps below to identify and record your finds. This information will help us to identify potential spawning areas and nursery grounds for the young pups!



Thornback Skate © Paul Naylor



Small-Spotted Catshark © Amy Lewis

Step 1: Choose Your Shore

You can find shark and skate egg cases 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. Go hunting on both rocky shores and sandy beaches – check out our recommendations for good spots at seadeepni.org/eggcase.

- ✓ **Top tip! Make sure you have warm clothing and good shoes. If you are planning on hunting for a long time, check the tide times before you begin.**
- ✓ **Top Tip! Please respect the wildlife and habitats on the beach. Avoid disturbing creatures where possible, replace any moved seaweed and remember not to take any live specimens home with you.**

Step 2: Hunt in the strandline

The best place to look for egg cases is within the strandline – the seaweed washed up at the top of the shore. Some may also be blown into the crevices between rocks at the top of the beach. They are well camouflaged so keep your eyes peeled!

- ✓ **Top tip! Use a stick or your shoe to turn over seaweed as there can sometimes be nasty surprises hidden underneath.**

Step 3: Identify Your Finds

Once you have found an egg case you can use ID Guides online at seadeepni.org/eggcase to identify which species you have found. If possible, please take a picture of the egg case sitting on your hand or next to a coin or ruler to give us an idea of its size. Please remember to record the location, date and any other relevant information (e.g. after a storm) before you leave the beach.

Catshark egg case © Ulster Wildlife



- ✓ **Top tip! Sometimes egg cases are easier to identify once they have been soaked - put them in water for a couple of hours and see how they have rehydrated.**

Step 4: Submit Your Records

Submit your records to our online data platform by following the link at seadeepni.org/submitrecords/submit-your-egg-case-records.

- ✓ **Top Tip! If you're unsure of what you have found, send us a picture through email, Twitter or Facebook so we can help you to identify the species before you submit it.**

Step 5: Spread the Word!

Help us to spread the word about our endangered sharks and skates! Tell your family, bring a friend and let us know about your hunt on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.



@LIVINGSEASNI



@SEADEEPNI



@SEADEEPNI