

Dwarf SAWFISH *Pristis clavata* (Garman, 1906)

Other names: broad billed sawfish

Conservation status: IUCN Red List - Critically endangered; NT - vulnerable

Description: moderately large thick bodied sawfish; skin rough; olive sandy brown dorsally and pale white ventrally; first dorsal fin origin over pelvic fin origin; no fork in caudal fin; 18 to 22 rostrum teeth extend onto base of saw; rostrum tapers distally unlike green and narrow sawfishes.

Descriptors:

1. 18-22 pair of teeth extending onto base of saw
2. First dorsal fin origin over pelvic fin origin
3. No fork in caudal fin
4. rough skin

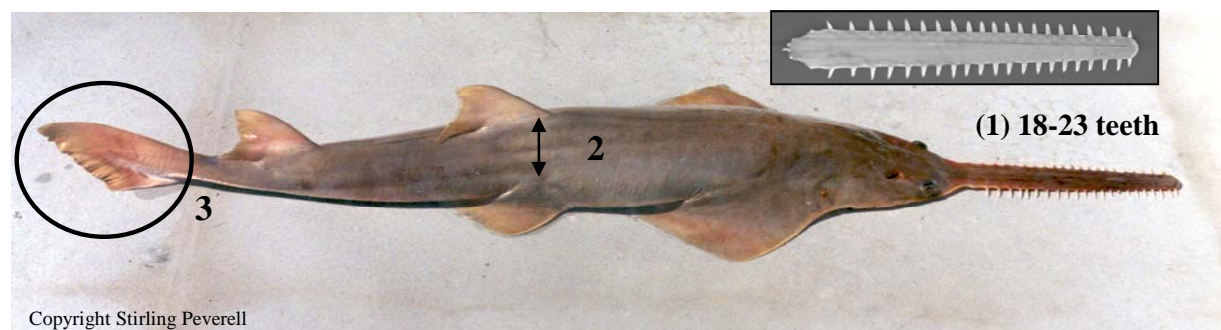
OLD Distribution: Reported in very low abundances to inhabit isolated regions of the northern and western Gulf of Carpentaria. There are very few reports of dwarf sawfish caught in the southern Gulf of Carpentaria. Inhabits coastal foreshores and embayments mostly in its juvenile life stages and marine waters in its adult life stages. Adults seasonally frequent inshore waters throughout the year. Catches of dwarf sawfish are very low and are highly variable.

Size: reported to attain at least 150cm, locally caught at 310cm.

Diet: prawns and fish

Fisheries: Commercial trawl, gill net and long line fisheries. Recreational line fishery and bait collection using small mesh cast nets and seine nets. Indigenous net and harpoon fishing. Foreign illegal gill net and line fishing.

Utilisation: Meat and fins; rostrum trophy collector; collection of live aquarium specimens.



Note: (1) rostral teeth generally opposite, (2) 1st dorsal fin origin slightly behind or over the top of pelvic fin origin, (3) straight caudal fin, rough skin