
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
NEWS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

NATIONAL
OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION

Contact: Susan Buchanan
(301) 713-2370

NOAA04-R101
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Feb. 11, 2004

**NOAA FISHERIES ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF IDENTIFICATION GUIDE
FOR SHARKS, TUNAS AND BILLFISHES**

NOAA Fisheries, in partnership with Rhode Island Sea Grant, today released a "Guide to Sharks, Tunas & Billfishes of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico." The book presents 44 of the sharks, tunas and billfishes commonly found in these waters. NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

"We are very proud to be a part of this project," said Chris Rogers, Chief of NOAA Fisheries' Highly Migratory Species. "The guide will help fishermen and fish dealers in their efforts to obey the laws, while at the same time supporting conservation efforts."

Developed for use in the field, the water-resistant guide highlights external features to expedite the identification of these fishes. It provides descriptions of physical features, diagnostic photographs and habitat information to help with species recognition. The book is not a definitive key, but it does offer a quick reference for identification for commercial and recreational fisherman, scientists and others that frequently come in contact with these fishes. Careful identification is the first step toward appropriate management and conservation.

The book also includes information about reducing the risk of shark attack as well as procedures for the protection, handling and release of entangled marine mammals and turtles.

- more -

The book is available for \$25 from Rhode Island Sea Grant, with discounts offered for multiple purchases. You can purchase the book online at: <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/>, or by calling 401-874-6842.

NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources, and the habitat on which they depend, through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, while helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

Rhode Island Sea Grant is part national network of 30 Sea Grant Colleges and institutional programs are located in coastal and Great Lakes, States, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Located within the NOAA Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (NOAA Research), the National Sea Grant Program encourages the wise stewardship of our marine resources through research, education, outreach and technology transfer. Sea Grant is a partnership between the national's universities and NOAA that began in 1966, when the U.S. Congress passed the National Sea Grant.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

On the Web:

NOAA - <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA's Fisheries - <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>