

Oceanic Whitetip Shark

The Oceanic Whitetip Shark cruises the open ocean in search of prey—mostly fish and squid, but also just about anything, dead or alive, that they can get their teeth on. If they find something they *could* eat (besides remoras) they'll eat it.

Oceanic Whitetips have a bad reputation as man-eaters. Just after midnight On July 30, 1945, the USS *Indianapolis* was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine in the Philippine sea. Two explosions killed 300 crewmen. The remaining 880 men were left adrift in the sea. They spent 4 days in the glaring sun in the Philippine sea without food or water. On top of that there were sharks: Oceanic Whitetip Sharks and Tiger Sharks. Survivors of the *Indianapolis* recalled crewmates' limbs being bitten off cleanly.

Recent research shows the Oceanic Whitetip Shark does not have the jaw power to cleanly sever human limbs. The real bad guy is the Tiger Shark. Tiger Sharks shake their heads when they bite. With their more powerful jaws and serrated teeth they can easily sever limbs.

Back to the Oceanic Whitetip Shark. Oceanic Whitetip Sharks live in warm waters worldwide. They can dive to 500 ft (150 m). They

grow up to 13 ft (4 m) in length and weigh up to 375 lbs (170 kg).

These sharks are viviparous, meaning they give birth to live young.

They have up to 15 pups.

Even though they are the shark most feared by shipwreck survivors, and have been known to attack people, these graceful hunters are fished.

1. Ellwood, Nancy, and Margaret Parrish. "Black and White." *Sharkpedia*. New York, New York: DK publishing, 2008. 51. Print.

2. *Eyewitness Shark Profiles*. New York, New York: DK Publishing, 2008. Print.

3. *Shark Week: 20th Anniversary Collection*. Dir. Laura M. Seitz and John E. McKenny. Image Entertainment, 2007. DVD.

4. "Oceanic Whitetip Shark 1200 x 1600." *WallpaperWeb.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 5 Sept. 2010. <<http://www.wallpaperweb.org/>



A picture of an Oceanic Whitetip Shark.