

# WHAT'S THE SCOOP?



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## GIANT MANTA RAY



The largest of the rays, with a wingspan of at least 6m, they use their large pectoral fins for propulsion. They are filter feeders, guiding small animals into the large, terminal mouth by means of the pair of dextrous cephalic horns. They have rows of tiny plates used for sieving food. The Giant Manta Ray is often confused with the Reef Manta (*Manta alfredi*) and identifiable (Giant Manta) by a generally black mouth and T shaped black colouration on its back.

Seen on reefs where they are cleaned by various types of fish, such as wrasse and juvenile Angelfish. They are curious and will approach boats which are standing still. They give birth to 2-4 live young. They occur in both open water and close in-shore on coastal reefs where they visit cleaning stations and allow cleaner wrasse to remove parasites from the mouth and gills, and to clean the wounds of shark-inflicted bites. They are often accompanied by certain fish species, including the remora (suckerfish) which has a dorsal fin modified as a sucker to allow it to attach and detach from the manta.

<b>Scientific Name:</b>	<i>Manta birostris</i>
<b>AKA:</b>	Giant Manta Ray
<b>Ocean Hang out:</b>	Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans
<b>Warm/Cool Waters:</b>	Warm
<b>Diet:</b>	Filters small fish and crustaceans from the water column
<b>Slow/ Fast:</b>	Slow but active swimmer
<b>S/ M/ L/ XL/ XXL:</b>	XL
<b>Shy/ Bold:</b>	Bold
<b>At the beach/ In the sea:</b> (Inhabits coastal or oceanic waters)	At the beach (Typically along coral reefs and continental shelves)
<b>Local/ International:</b> (Endemic/ Non-native)	International
<b>Nomadic/ Homely:</b> (Migratory or resident)	Nomadic
<b>Social/ Anti-social:</b> (Normally found in groups or solitary)	Social
<b>Black Tie/ Eccentric:</b> (Easily recognisable as a shark or ray or has a unique appearance)	Black Tie
<b>Teeth:</b>	Have rows of tiny plates in their mouth (no teeth)
<b>Best Feature:</b>	Prominent fleshy horns on either side of the mouth and very large!
<b>Red Listing:</b>	Vulnerable (2018 IUCN)