

# WHAT'S THE SCOOP?



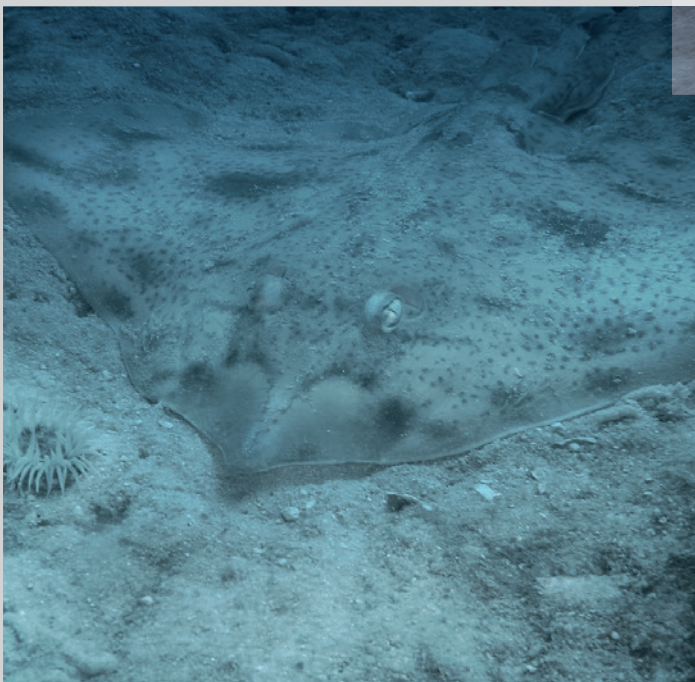
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## BISCUIT SKATE

This is one of more than 20 species of skates in South African waters, most of which occur in very deep waters of the continental slope (200-1300m). They inhabit sandy, muddy substrates where they are caught in large numbers by trawlers. They all have a pointed snout with large pectoral fins and a thickset tail with two small dorsal fins close to the tip. The diet includes a variety of crustaceans, worms and small fish. Skate wings are a very tasty meal. Unlike all other rays which give birth to live young, skates lay their eggs on the substrate, each enclosed in a tough keratin capsule, termed a mermaid's purse, which may wash up on the shore after the young skate has emerged.



<b>Scientific Name:</b>	<i>Raja straeleni</i>
<b>AKA:</b>	Biscuit Skate
<b>Ocean Hang out:</b>	Mainly Atlantic on the seabed
<b>Warm/Cool Waters:</b>	Cool
<b>Diet:</b>	Crustaceans, squid and fish
<b>Slow/ Fast:</b>	Slow, rests on seabed
<b>S/ M/ L/ XL/ XXL:</b>	S
<b>Shy/ Bold:</b>	Shy
<b>At the beach/ In the sea:</b> (Inhabits coastal or oceanic waters)	In the sea - on the bottom out to the continental slope
<b>Local/ International:</b> (Endemic/ Non-native)	International, most of the west African coast
<b>Nomadic/ Homely:</b> (Migratory or resident)	Homely
<b>Social/ Anti-social:</b> (Normally found in groups or solitary)	Unknown
<b>Black Tie/ Eccentric:</b> (Easily recognisable as a shark or ray or has a unique appearance)	Black Tie
<b>Teeth:</b>	Numerous rows of very small, pavement teeth (like pavers)
<b>Best Feature:</b>	Unlike rays, skates lay eggs individually packaged in a keratin capsule
<b>Red Listing:</b>	Data Deficient (IUCN, 2009)