

# KNOW YOUR MANTA RAYS

## OCEANIC MANTA RAY

MOBULA BIROSTRIS



Oceanic manta rays are pelagic rays and can be found in the open ocean around islands, offshore pinnacles and seamounts. They tend to move inshore to socialise and clean in shallow waters.



**OCEANIC MANTA RAYS MAY BE THE LARGEST LIVING RAYS FOUND IN THE OCEAN.**

The biggest manta reported was 7 metres long from wing tip to wing tip. The females are generally bigger than the males.



In Myanmar, manta rays have been recorded in a few sites in Myeik Archipelago and have been observed as by-catch in Rakhine and Ayeyarwaddy.



**THE AVERAGE LIFESPAN FOR A MANTA RAY IS 45 YEARS.**

The average female oceanic manta ray is expected to only produce 4 to 7 pups during her lifespan. The females usually give birth to one pup at a time and pregnancy lasts about 12-13 months.



**MANTAS ARE FILTER FEEDERS.**

They swim with their mouths open wide, drawing in zooplankton and krill, which are then sifted through their gill plates. They also must keep swimming in order to breathe.



**MANTA RAYS ARE HIGHLY INTELLIGENT AND CURIOUS.**

Did you know mantas have the biggest brain to body ratio of any fish?



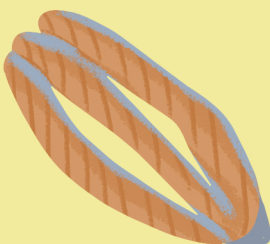
**MANTA RAYS ARE DEEP DIVERS!**

They have been recorded to dive up to a depth of over 1000 metres!



**OVERFISHING IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST THREATS TO MANTAS.**

In Myanmar, mantas are both targeted and caught as accidental by-catch by the fisheries. Domestically, their meat is dried and sold for consumption and their gill rakers are often exported to China for medicinal use.



# HOW SHOULD WE INTERACT WITH MANTA RAYS?

Myanmar is a signatory of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), but currently there are no specific clear laws prohibiting capture and sale of oceanic manta rays (*Mobula birostris*) or other endangered mobula species.

## KEEP NOISE TO A MINIMUM

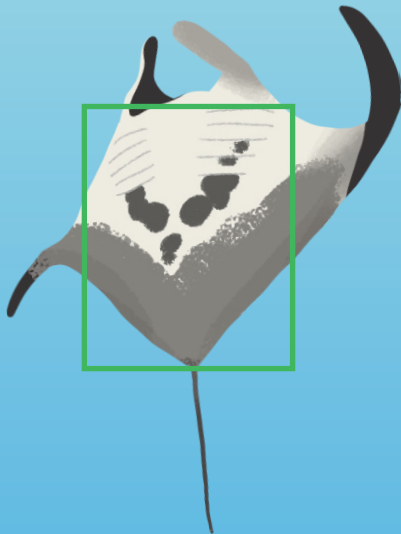
Enter the water without jumping in. Swim quietly and don't splash around. Sudden noise may frighten the mantas.

## STOP THE BOAT ENGINE OR REDUCE SPEED.

Slow or stop your boat engine in order to avoid injuring mantas with the boat propeller.

## SNORKEL CALMLY AND KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.

Stay at least 3 metres away from the manta rays. If the manta chooses to approach you, stay calm and give it space to swim around you.



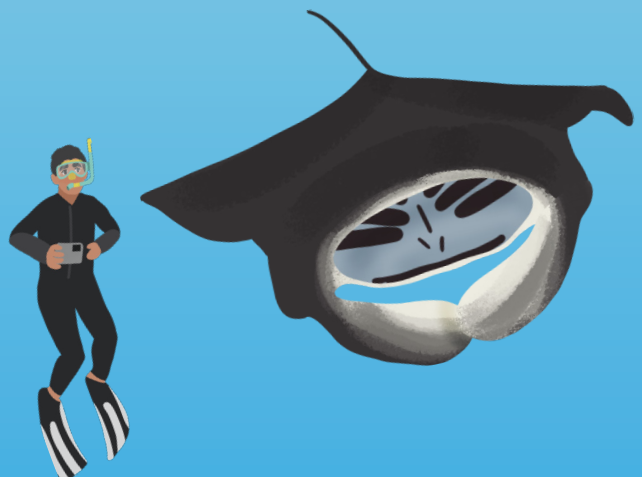
## AVOID CHASING THE MANTAS AND DO NOT TOUCH THEM.

Approach the mantas from the side, giving them a clear path if they want to leave. Never approach a manta from their front.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Avoid excessive flash photography and shining flashlights directly into their eyes. The spot patterns on the belly of the manta rays are like fingerprints. They are unique and researchers can identify each individual and study the population and their movements.

If you take photographs of the spot patterns of the manta belly, you can submit them to [www.mantamatcher.org](http://www.mantamatcher.org) in order to help researchers.



# MOBULA SPECIES FOUND IN MYANMAR COAST

These mobula species have been observed in the water and/or at landing sites and markets in Myanmar.

## SHORTHORNED PYGMY DEVIL RAY

MOBULA KUHLII

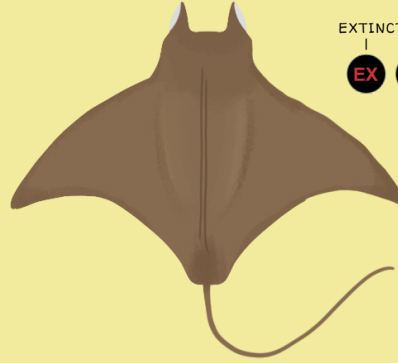
DISC WIDTH: AVERAGE 100CM (3.3 FEET)



## SICKLEFIN DEVIL RAY

MOBULA TARAPACANA

DISC WIDTH: AVERAGE 200-270CM (6.6-8.8 FEET)



## BENTFIN DEVIL RAY

MOBULA THURSTONI

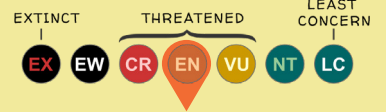
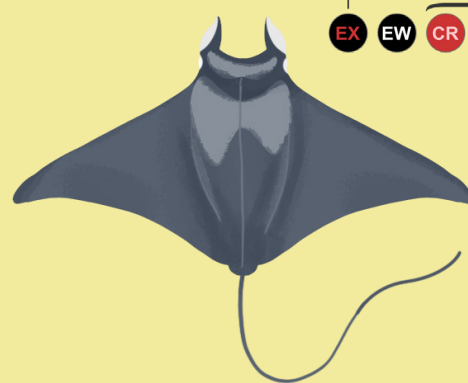
DISC WIDTH: AVERAGE 135CM (4.5 FEET)



## SPINETAIL DEVIL RAY

MOBULA MOBULAR

DISC WIDTH: AVERAGE 180-280CM (5.9-9.2 FEET)



## OCEANIC MANTA RAY

MOBULA BIROSTRIS

DISC WIDTH: AVERAGE 400-500CM (13-16.5 FEET)

