

Belonging to the genus *Mobula* within the family *Mobulidae*, these gentle giants are among the largest rays in the ocean. Manta rays are characterized by their wide, flattened bodies, which can span up to 23 feet (7 meters) in width. They have long, triangular pectoral fins that they use to propel themselves through the water with ease. Unlike many other rays, manta rays lack a stinging spine on their tails, making them harmless to humans.

Taxonomic classification of Manta Rays

Kingdom: Animalia
 Phylum: Chordata
 Class: Chondrichthyes
 Order: Myliobatiformes
 Family: Mobulidae
 Genus: *Mobula*

REPRODUCTION



Manta rays have a fascinating way of making baby mantas! These majestic creatures engage in a special underwater dance when it's time to reproduce. Instead of laying eggs like many other sea animals, manta rays practice viviparity. That means mama mantas give birth to live pups! Picture this: inside the mama manta's belly, tiny pups are snuggled up, getting all the nutrients they need from a yolk sac. After a gestation period of about a year, mama manta gracefully welcomes her little ones into the world, tail-first!



Pectoral Fin

Cephalic lobes



Oceanic Mantas Vs Reef Mantas

There are two species of Manta Rays the reef manta (*Mobula alfredi*) & Oceanic mantas (*Mobula birostris*), while belonging to the same genus, both species exhibit some striking differences in their behavior and habitat preferences.

Mantas possess cephalic lobes, or "horns," on either side of their heads, which they can unfurl to help channel food into their mouths

HABITAT



Tropical & Sub-tropical waters

LOCATION



Warm shallow coastal waters around the world

DIET

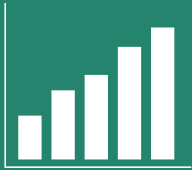


Planktons & small fish



Manta Rays of the Conflict Islands

Manta rays are known for their social behavior, and the Conflict Islands offer a prime location for aggregation.



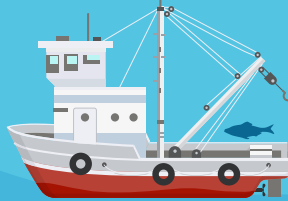
POPULATION
116+



MELANISTIC MANTAS

9

THREATS TO MANTA RAYS



OVERFISHING

BYCATCH

UNSUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES

ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

POLLUTION

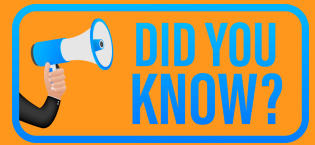
CLIMATE CHANGE



CONSERVATION STATUS

Vulnerable/Endangered

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Did you know that every manta ray has its own "underwater fingerprint"? Yep, that's right! Just like how humans have unique fingerprints, mantas have one-of-a-kind spot patterns on their bellies that are as individual as a snowflake. It's like Mother Nature's way of giving each manta its own personal paint job! So, the next time you spot a manta cruising by, take a closer look at its belly and see if you can crack the code to its underwater identity!



Melanistic/Black Mantas

Have you ever seen a black Manta Ray and wondered what makes it that color? Their colouring is simply caused by an increase in darker pigment, or melanism. This is relatively common in land animals but is much rarer in marine species. Manta rays are actually one of the only marine species that shows melanistic traits on a large scale.

