

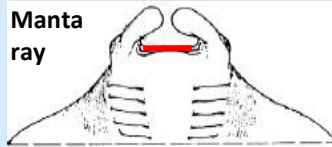
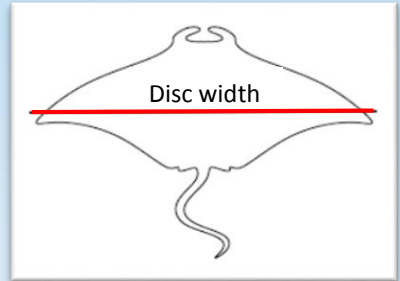


## Mobula Ray Identification Guide For Fisheries Observers

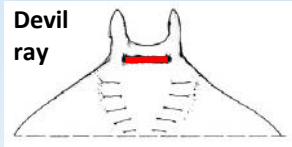
**Purpose:** This guide is intended to assist fishery observers in the visual identification of the giant manta ray and several devil ray species that occur in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic.

**General Observations:** The size, coloring patterns, and a few morphological differences can be used to distinguish between species.

- Giant manta rays are larger than devil rays. Measurements should be taken by estimating the distance over their wingspan [“Disc Width” (DW)].
- Giant manta rays have a terminal mouth (i.e., mouth points straight forward, in front of the head); Devil rays have a sub-terminal mouth (i.e., mouth beneath the head).



Terminal mouth



Sub-terminal mouth

### ***Manta birostris***

**Common Names:** Giant Manta Ray, Oceanic Manta Ray

**Status:** U.S.: Listed as *Threatened* under Endangered Species Act.

**Size:** Up to 700 cm DW; appx. 200 cm DW at birth.

**Dorsal Coloration:** Black with distinct white patches creating a T-shaped shoulder pattern.

**Ventral Coloration:** White with dark spots; spots rarely found between gill slits. Dark shading along the posterior edges of the pectoral fins.



Photo credit: Joshua Stewart

## ***Mobula mobular***

**Common Names:** Giant Devil Ray, Spinetail Devil Ray

**Status:** U.S.: Not listed. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN): *Endangered*

**Size:** Up to 520 cm DW

**Dorsal Coloration:** Predominantly dark gray; with a black (crescent shape) stripe that runs from side to side on upper shoulders. White tip on the dorsal fin.

**Ventral Coloration:** White.



Photo credit: Guy Stevens/Manta Trust

---

## ***Mobula tarapacana***

**Common Names:** Chilean Devil Ray, Sicklefins Devil Ray, Box Ray

**Status:** U.S.: Not listed. IUCN: *Vulnerable*

**Size:** Up to 340 cm DW

**Dorsal Coloration:** Golden brown to olive green.

**Ventral Coloration:** Predominately white with gray shading along the posterior margin of pectoral fins.



Photo credit: www.tomburd.co.uk

---

## ***Mobula hypostoma***

**Common Names:** Atlantic Devil Ray, Lesser Devil Ray

**Status:** U.S.: Not listed. IUCN: *Data Deficient*

**Size:** Up to 120 cm DW

**Dorsal Coloration:** Variable, brown, gray to black. Sometimes have a dark gray/black stripe that runs from side to side on the “neck” right behind the eyes.

**Ventral Coloration:** White.



Photo credit: Kim Basso-Hall/Mote Marine Laboratory