



SHARK FACTS

# BASKING SHARK



The basking shark's most distinctive characteristic, other than its size, are the extended gill slits that

**NEARLY ENCIRCLE THE HEAD**

## BASKING SHARK (*Cetorhinus maximus*)

- ▶ Named because they feed at the surface (basking in the sun) these sharks are the second largest fish in the ocean growing up to 10-11 meters (33-36 feet) in length
- ▶ These coastal-pelagic sharks are highly migratory and are found throughout the world's arctic and temperate waters
- ▶ They are listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List. Their large fins are valuable in the fin trade. Historically they were targeted by harpoon and net fisheries for meat, fins, skin, cartilage, and liver oil

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Despite their large size, these sharks feed on plankton (size of a grain of rice). With mouths up to a meter wide, they can filter 1.5 million liters of water per hour!



MUST

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Image: Rudolf Svensen

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