

Do the Tags hurt?

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This is a legitimate concern and something we have also struggled with. However, when we think of what is at stake - entire species that have existed for 400 million years, and we consider the important information that each tag provides - identifying their critical habitats for protection, we believe that it is necessary sacrifice. In the last 40 years their numbers have plummeted due to over fishing (some species are 90% depleted!!). As top predators for so many millions of years they have adapted a life history that "self-regulates" their own populations - slow reproduction. Therefore, they cannot sustain the additional mortality that humans inflict. We realize that everyone might not agree. But it is a decision that we have made, and something that we certainly do not take lightly.

However, some facts about sharks are reassuring. Sharks generally heal very quickly from wounds relative to other animals. Also, they are tough. During the mating season we often see large cuts on their backs and dorsal fins, where they give each other "love bites". To us they seem like very deep cuts, but in a matter of week they appear much less so. And a month or so after mating season, virtually no traces of the bites remain (no scarring). In comparison, the small dart that we insert below the skin seems like a tiny splinter.