

MISSION CONSERVATION ACTIVITY GUIDE

July 2026 – Shark & Ray Adventure

Hello agents! This July, Wonders of Wildlife is joining aquariums and zoos across the country in recognizing Shark & Ray Awareness Month. Discover the incredible adaptations, behaviors, and conservation stories of sharks, rays, and skates through hands-on activities, family-friendly learning stations, special animal presentations, and interactive experiences throughout the aquarium.

Outdoor Activity: Senses Like a Shark



Sharks and rays explore our oceans in some incredible ways! Sharks and rays rely on sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch to find food or avoid predators... just like us! Unlike us, some sharks are able to smell a drop of blood from far away, and others can use special organs to detect vibrations and movement in the water! Some are even able to detect electrical currents given off by living creatures! Even though sharks and rays live underwater, these animals experience their environment using the same five senses humans do, just in their own unique ways! Now it's your turn to explore your own senses! In the following activity, we'll put our five senses to the test and understand how they help us explore the world, just like sharks and rays!

Procedure:

1. Grab a notebook, pencil, and your favorite snack and head outside
2. Using just your sense of sight, write down 5 things you see. Now imagine yourself as a shark... what do you think you would see swimming in the ocean with you?
3. Using just your sense of hearing, write down 4 things you can hear. Do you think sharks use their ears when swimming in the ocean?
4. Using just your sense of touch, write down how 3 things feel when you touch them with your

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fingers. Now imagine what it would be like trying to feel without your fingers, just like a shark!

5. Using just your sense of smell, write down how 2 things that might have a scent. Sharks have super powerful senses of smell... imagine being able to smell a drop of blood from 3 miles away like a Great White Shark!

6. Using your sense of taste, take a bite from your snack, and write down how it tastes. Do you think sharks ever eat things that taste bad to them?

Great job on using your senses like a shark! One secret sense that sharks have that humans do not is the ability to detect electromagnetism given off by animals. These organs, called the Ampullae of Lorenzini, are located inside a shark's nose and are great for locating hidden prey in the dark depths of the ocean! Can you think of any other animals that might use a secret sixth sense to detect things around them?

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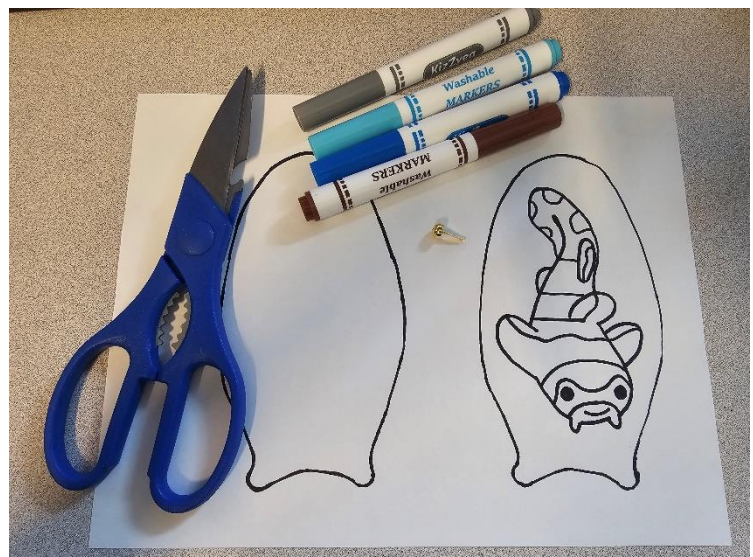
Indoor Activity: Make Your Own Mermaid Purse



Shark and skate egg cases are tough, leathery protective capsules for shark and skate embryos. They're called "mermaids' purses" due to sailors historically believing these items, often found washed up on beaches after storms, were the lost handbags of mythical mermaids. Their long tendrils are used to anchor them to seaweed and contribute to their folkloric name. Participants can use the attached guide to create their own "mermaid purse" or egg case for either a shark or a skate.

Materials:

- Egg case printout/blank piece of paper
- Scissors
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, or paint
- Brass fastener

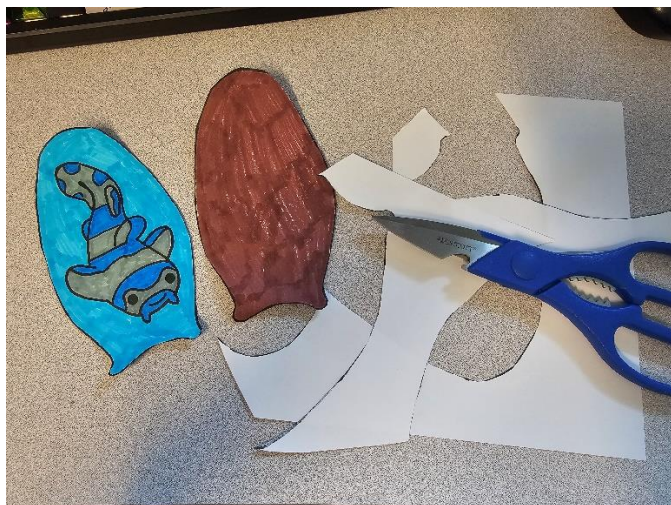
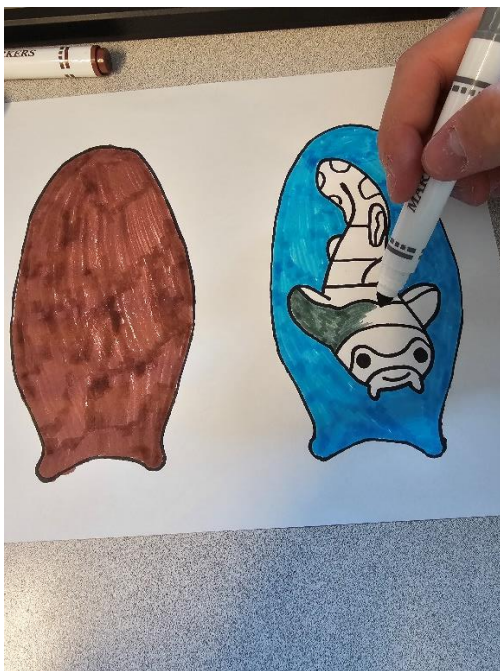


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Steps:

1. Print off or use the below attached image of the egg case to draw your own
2. Color both egg cases, both inside and outside, and cut them out



3. Using a brass fastener, attach both egg cases to each other so they can swivel open
4. Enjoy your brand-new shark egg case!

We hope you enjoyed the activity guide this month! Don't forget to check out the at-home mission for this month! To see a list of our other missions, or to learn more about Wonders of Wildlife, visit us at <https://wondersofwildlife.org/mission-conservation/>

