

# Eagle ray

## Eagle ray

Temporal range:

**Upper Cretaceous to Recent**

[Spotted Eagle Ray](#), *Aetobatus narinari*

### Scientific classification

Kingdom: [Animalia](#)  
Phylum: [Chordata](#)  
Class: [Chondrichthyes](#)  
Subclass: [Elasmobranchii](#)  
Superorder: [Batoidea](#)  
Order: [Myliobatiformes](#)  
Suborder: [Myliobatoidei](#)  
Family: **Myliobatidae**  
[Bonaparte](#), 1838

**Eagle rays** are [cartilaginous fish](#) in the [ray family](#) **Myliobatidae**. They are mostly large species living in the open ocean rather than on the sea bottom.

Eagle rays feed on [molluscs](#) and [crustaceans](#), crushing their shells with their flattened teeth, while [devil rays](#) and [manta rays](#) filter [plankton](#) from the water.

They are excellent swimmers and are able to breach the water up to several metres above the surface. Compared with other rays, they have long tails, and well-defined [diamond](#)-shaped bodies. They are [ovoviviparous](#), giving birth to up to six young at a time. They range from 48 centimetres (19 in) to 9.1 metres (30 ft) in length. <sup>[1]</sup>

The tail looks like a whip and may be as long as the body. It is armed with a sting. Eagle rays live close to the coast in depths of 1 to 30 metres and in exceptional cases they are found as deep as 300 m. The eagle ray is commonly seen cruising along sandy beaches in very shallow waters. <sup>[2]</sup>

## Classification

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

In Nelson's *Fishes of the World*, the eagle rays are a subfamily, and are joined by the manta rays and the eagle rays. As Nelson sees it, there are seven [genera](#) in the family, in three subfamilies. <sup>[3]</sup> In our classification, the three groups are families in the suborder Myliobatoidei.

# References

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

1. [↑](#) Froese, Rainer, and Daniel Pauly, eds. 2009. "Mylobatidae" in FishBase. [FishBase online](#)
2. [↑](#) Long, John A. 1995. *The rise of fishes: 500 million years of evolution*. University of New South Wales Press.
3. [↑](#) Nelson J.S. 2006. *Fishes of the World*. 4th ed, Wiley.

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