

## = Bluespotted stingray =

The bluespotted stingray ( *Neotrygon kuhlii* ) or Kuhl 's stingray , is a species of stingray of the Dasyatidae family . It was recently changed from *Dasyatis kuhlii* in 2008 after morphological and molecular analyses show that it is part of a distinct genus , *Neotrygon* . The body is rhomboidal and colored green with blue spots . Maximum disk width is estimated 46 @. @ 5 centimeters ( 18 @. @ 3 in ) . It is popular in aquaria but usually not distinguished from the bluespotted ribbontail ray . The ribbontail has a rounded body , is a brighter green with brighter blue and more vivid spots , but the bluespotted stingray is larger . The stingray 's lifespan is estimated thirteen years of age for females and ten years for males . The bluespotted stingray preys on many fish and small mollusks . The bluespotted stingray is also generally found from Indonesia to Japan , and most of Australia . The bluespotted stingray is also targeted by many parasites such as tapeworms , flatworms , and flukes .

## = = Taxonomy = =

The bluespotted stingray was discovered by Heinrich Kuhl in Java , Indonesia . The population of this species is greatly debatable due to the five different species of rays in Indonesia . Also , there are two different subgroups : the Java and Bali form . The distinct difference between the two strains is their size , with the Bali being much larger than the Java . On the familial level , the family Dasyatidae is made up of 9 genera and 70 species . The genus of *Neotrygon* are called maskrays , because of the color pattern around their eyes .

## = = Description and behavior = =

The bluespotted stingray has a flat disc @-@ like rhomboid body up to 47 centimeters ( 19 in ) in diameter and 70 centimeters ( 28 in ) in total length . Their coloring is a dark green with blue spots with a light white underbelly also known as countershading . Its snout is very short and broadly angular along with its angular disc . The rays ' bright coloration serves as a warning for its venomous spines . The ray has a very long tail accommodating two venomous spines on the base of the tail . The tail is about twice as long as the body of the ray , and the barbs or spines are two different sizes , one being very large and the other a medium @-@ sized barb . The bluespotted stingray has bright yellow eyes that are positioned to allow them a wide angle of view . Since the gills are located ventrally , the spiracles allow water to reach the gills while resting or feeding on the benthos . The spiracles are located directly behind the eyes . The mouth is located on the ventral side of the body , which promotes the unique foraging technique of stingrays . Rays are normally solitary individuals but can occur in groups . One unique characteristic of the bluespotted stingray is that they rarely bury themselves in the sand , only to hide from predators , unlike the majority of stingrays who bury themselves regularly to hunt .

## = = = Diet = = =

The bluespotted stingray feeds on shrimp , small bony fish , mollusks , crabs and other worms . Due to the fact that this ray is a shallow bottom feeder , it has a small variety of marine life to prey on . The bluespotted stingray overpowers its prey by pinning them to the bottom of the seafloor with its fins . The bluespotted stingray has numerous tiny teeth , with the lower jaw being slightly convex . They also , like most stingrays , have plate @-@ like teeth to crush prey .

## = = = Reproduction = = =

The bluespotted stingray is ovoviviparous . The embryos are retained in eggs within the mother 's body until they are ready to hatch . The embryos receive nourishment from the mothers ' uterine fluid . Mothers give birth to up to seven pups per litter ; these pups range from 6 inches ( 150 mm )

to 13 inches ( 330 mm ) long at birth . The bluespotted stingray passes its offspring 32 sets of chromosomes . The mother also has an annual reproductive cycle . Studies show that the mating season is in October and November and the ovulating season is in the Australian summer ( December 1- February 28 / 29 ) , which coincides with the embryonic development .

#### = = Habitat = =

The bluespotted stingray is commonly found in waters of depths about 0 ? 90 meters ( 0 ? 295 feet ) , being commonly found in sand and mudflats , but have also been encountered near rocky coral reefs , and sea grass beds . This stingray is found in a tropical climate at 29 ° N- 31 ° S , and 20 ° E- 171 ° W. At high tide the bluespotted stingray moves into the shallow lagoons and reef flats . It is found in northern Australia , Kenya , Madagascar , The island of Mauritius , Somalia , the east coast of South Africa , India . The bluespotted stingray is in almost the entire continental waters of Asia , including the Sea of Japan , Yellow Sea , East China Sea , Philippine Sea , Sulu Sea , Java Sea , Banda Sea , Celebes Sea , Andaman Sea , the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea .

#### = = Threats and protected areas = =

In Queensland , Australia there are many areas for high protection of the bluespotted stingray , three being the Shoalwater , Corio Bay 's Area Ramsar Site , and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park . A major threat to the bluespotted stingray is the destruction of coral reefs mainly in the north Western Pacific . The rays dwell in these reefs and the destruction and pollution from fertilizers and pesticides hurt them . The ray is commonly caught in the Java Sea by fishermen trawling and by Danish seine boats in large quantities . The bluespotted stingray is the second most significant species out of the sharks , rays , and skate family to be fished , contributing to about 700 kilograms ( 1 @, @ 500 lb ) per boat in 2006 @-@ 2007 .

#### = = Predators = =

Larger elasmobranchs , such as hammerhead sharks , prey on the bluespotted stingray . The rays coloration is a warning for the highly venomous barbs , thus few animals attempt to overpower this ray . The hammerhead shark uses its head to pin down the bluespotted stingray , while it is in shock and much weaker .

#### = = Human interaction = =

Due to the unique characteristics of this ray it is very common to be found in pet trade , many people ignore the fact that in total maturity the size of the ray exceeds the capacity of many household aquariums . The bluespotted stingray is generally fished for its meat , being either smoked and salted or dried for local markets , but inexpensive due to its small size . It is caught in mass in bottom trawl , trammel , and fish traps . The bluespotted stingray is very venomous and it has a barb approximately 12 inches ( 300 mm ) long . The venom contains serotonin , 5 ' nucleotidase , and phosphodiesterase .

The skin of the bluespotted stingray is often used for drums such as on the Arab and Turkish darbuka goblet drum and riq ( def ) tambourine .

#### = = Parasites = =

There are many parasites that inhibit the bluespotted stingray , this is a table of the common groups of the parasite , and the specific name of the parasite .