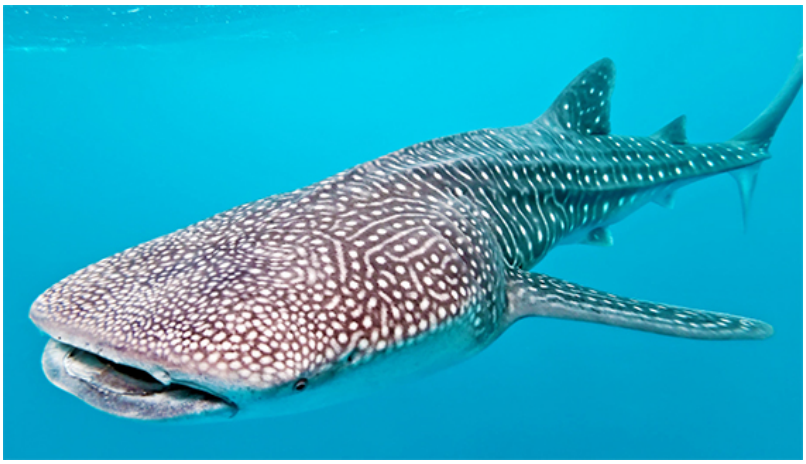
Whale Shark

drishtiias.com/printpdf/whale-shark-1

Why in News

Recently, fishers in Odisha rescued a **whale shark.**



Key Points

- **About:**
  - Whale sharks are the **largest shark**, and indeed **largest of any fishes alive today** and they **travel large distances** to find enough food to sustain their huge size, and to reproduce.
  - The whale shark is a **'filter feeder shark'** which means it does not eat meat like other sharks. Whale sharks **filter sea water** and **feed on tiny planktons.**
  - The maximum size of whale sharks is not known, but **could be as large as 20m.**
- **Scientific Name:**
  Rhincodon typus.
- **Habitat:**
  Whale sharks are **found in all the tropical oceans** of the world.
- **Threats:**
  Oil & gas drilling, shipping lanes etc.

- **Protection Status:**
  - **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
  - **CITES:** Appendix II
  - **Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I

Source: DTE