



The Miami Herald > Sports > Other Sports

# Other Sports

Monday, 12.21.09 Welcome Guest Login Register

HOME

NEWS

SPORTS

ENTERTAINMENT

BUSINESS

LIVING

OPINION

JOBS

CA

Dolphins | Heat | Marlins | Panthers | UM | FIU | UF | FSU | College | High School | Autos | Fightin

Posted on Sunday, 12.06.09



share email print comment reprint

SHARK OVERHARVESTING

## Nova scientists develop shark identification tool



Nova Southeastern research will allow scientists to identify the geographic origins of species such as hammerhead sharks. UNDERSEA HUNTER

BY SUSAN COCKING  
SCOCKING@MIAMIHERALD.COM

Scientists led by Nova Southeastern University's Mahmood Shivji said they have pinpointed the geographic origins of the fins of scalloped hammerhead sharks now showing up in Hong Kong's lucrative fin market.

Shivji and colleagues from New York's Stony Brook University developed new DNA forensic tools that distinguish one hammerhead species from another and determine where each came from -- using only a small fin clip.

The groundbreaking research is important because scalloped hammerhead stocks are in trouble throughout their range -- including Atlantic and Gulf waters in the United States -- while commanding

high prices in Hong Kong.

The U.S. government has proposed the scalloped hammerhead and five other shark species for listing under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which would greatly restrict the legal fin trade. Shivji says his research would help management and enforcement efforts.

Shivji, who heads the Guy Harvey Research Institute and Save Our Seas Shark Center at Nova, says his team used a technique called "genetic stock identification" to trace scalloped hammerheads from the Western Atlantic to three distinct stocks -- northern (U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico); central (Belize and

Panama); and southern (Brazil). The three groups, Shivji said, do not mix -- making them especially vulnerable to overfishing.

“If a stock gets wiped out, there is no replacement,” Shivji said. “Without somebody keeping track of it, you could completely wipe out an entire genetic stock.”

The new CSI-like technique also might be applied to great hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, dusky, oceanic whitetip, tiger, porbeagle, bull and gray reef sharks -- all of which are found in the Hong Kong fin trade.

The study builds upon a previous DNA test developed in 2005 at the Guy Harvey Research Institute that allows scientists to distinguish among great, scalloped and smooth hammerheads from fin or meat tissues.



- **Save 50% off regular home delivery subscription!**  
[Click here.](#)

[recommend](#)

[email](#)

[print](#)

[share](#)

[buzz up!](#)

[Digg](#) [submit](#)

### Join the discussion

The Miami Herald is pleased to provide this opportunity to share information, experiences and observations about what's in the news. Some of the comments may be reprinted elsewhere in the site or in the newspaper. We encourage lively, open debate on the issues of the day, and ask that you refrain from profanity, hate speech, personal comments and remarks that are off point. In order to post comments, you must be a registered user of MiamiHerald.com. Your username will show along with the comments you post. Thank you for taking the time to offer your thoughts.

Comments (0)

|

#### [Online College Degrees](#)

Get your AA, BA, Masters or PhD at a Top Online School. Start Now.

[CollegeDegreeNetwork](#)

#### [Compare Top CD Rates](#)

Spread Your Savings Around. Compare Rates From FDIC Insured Banks.

[www.Bankrate.com](#)

#### [Don't Pay For School - Free Scholarships](#)

Sign Up For Your Free Guide To \$38 Million In Scholarships.

[ProgramAdvisor.com](#)

#### ADS BY YAHOO!

[NEWS](#)

[SPORTS](#)

[ENTERTAINMENT](#)

[BUSINESS](#)

[LIVING](#)

[OPINION](#)

[CLASSIFIEDS](#)

[SERVICES](#)

[Site Map](#)

 [RSS](#) |  [My Yahoo!](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Widgets](#) | [Mobile](#) | [Alerts](#) | [Twitter](#)

[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [About our ads](#) | [Copyright](#) | [About The Miami Herald](#) | [About the McClatchy Company](#) |  
[Corrections](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Advertise](#)

**Partners:** [El Nuevo Herald](#) | [Newspaper in Education](#) | [WLRN](#) | [Miami Herald News](#) | [CBS4 WFOR-TV](#) | [More](#)

Copyright 2009 Miami Herald Media Co. All rights reserved