

senior **living**
activity assistant
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THE WHALE SHARK



GETTING TO KNOW...

THE WHALE SHARK

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Region & Habitat | Broad distribution in tropical and warm temperate seas. |
| Classification | Chondrichthyes |
| Size | 18 - 33ft |
| Nocturnal or Diurnal | Both |
| Conservation Status | Endangered |
| Average Lifespan | 70 years in the wild |
| Diet | planktonic organisms, including krill, jellyfish, and crab larvae |
| Scientific Name | Rhincodon typus |
| Fun Fact | Whale sharks have tiny teeth that cover their eyeballs called dermal denticles. |



The enormous whale shark is not only the largest fish, but the largest fish known to have ever lived on this planet! Roughly the size of a school bus, it's not aggressive and doesn't threaten humans. Whale sharks have a two-toned pattern of light spots on their gray back, with a white underbelly. And unlike most sharks, the whale shark's mouth is located on the front of its head instead of its underside.

The Whale Shark is one of only three types of sharks that are "filter feeders". That is, it swims with its mouth open while seawater fills its mouth and filters the seawater through its gill slits, which act as a sieve. It catches plankton and other tiny organisms. And a quirky trait of the whale shark: it sometimes feeds "standing up", with its tail pointed down towards the ocean floor and its open mouth facing the water's surface. It does this to create suction, pulling fish towards its open mouth!

Apparently whale sharks are very private or very shy; its mating behavior has been observed only twice in its natural habitat, and never in an aquarium setting! However, when they do give birth, each litter contains about 16 live young – sometimes even more!

WORD SEARCH

K D F M A O O Q U A O W K D J
T I E T W I I C F X W K M V N
V I E L O J D N E J K F S Y T
D U D R M G Z M B A W L H O M
F K E E H T S Y M S N H Y F E
V T R X I Y I S C T W U A K U
I L J V X V X C H D B V U L T
C W O D M T T Z A A J O G F E
V Z O P X A E H J G R J G I W
G R A J C J E C B A T K Q L Y
U G H S U L N V U Q B Q J T N
U K W Q P L A N K T O N G E I
W R J W E U S P O T S D R R B
K D E Y T L A R G E Y O E C G
S C H O O L B U S N O L Y V I

Whale
Shark
Ocean

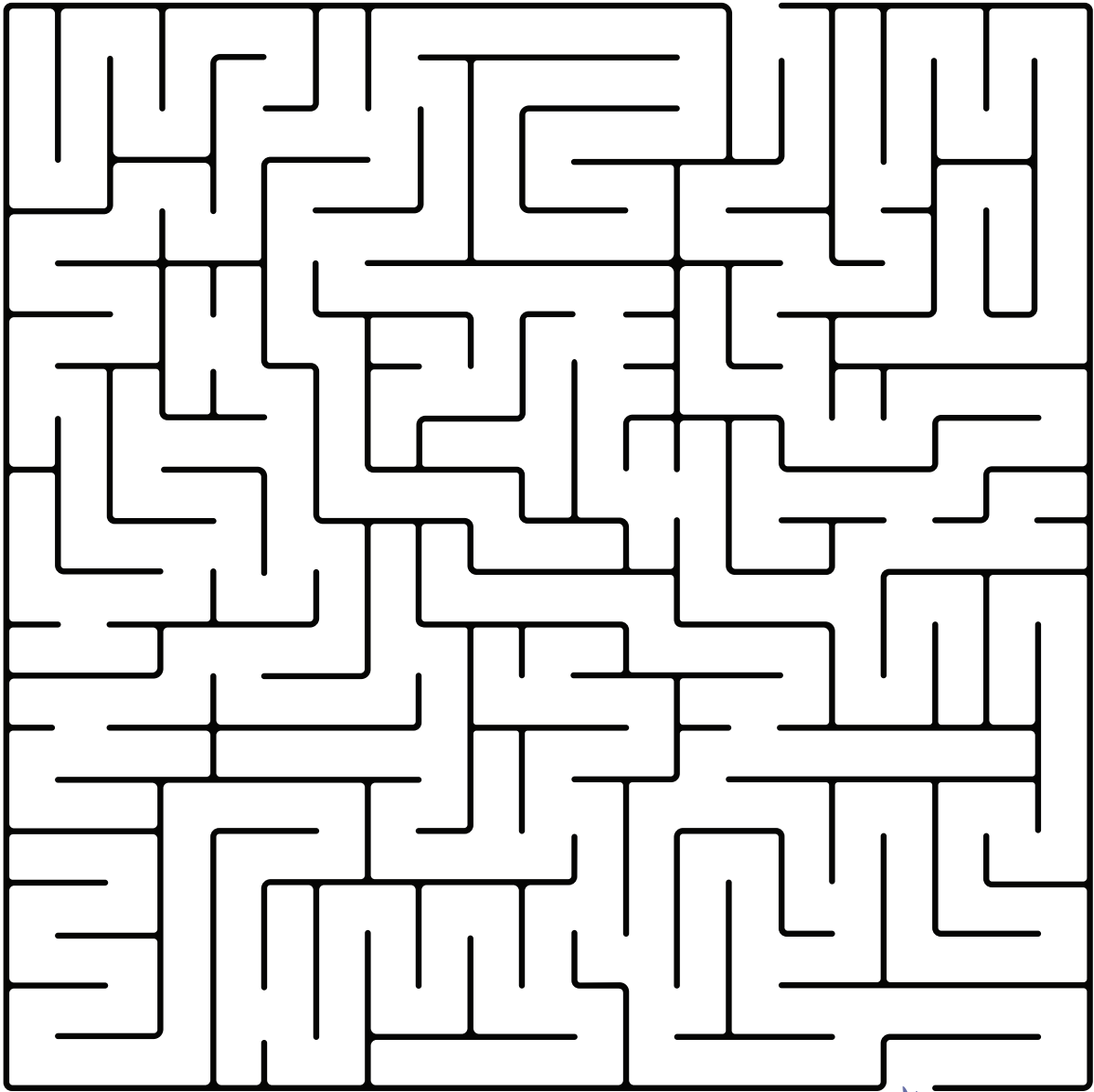
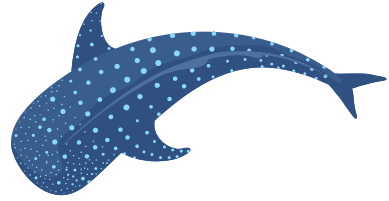
Spots
Grey
Large

Filter
Feeder
Shy

Plankton
School Bus
Sixteen

MAZE

Help the whale shark find its way back home.



SOLUTIONS

