

Shark is oldest known vertebrate

A new study reveals that Greenland sharks can live at least 400 years, making this mysterious species the longest-lived vertebrate on Earth



GREENLAND SHARK
Somniosus microcephalus

■ **Size:** Up to 7m long – largest fish native to Arctic waters

■ **Growth rate:** Only about 1cm per year, reaching sexual maturity around age 150











■ **Longevity:** Average life span of at least 272 years.
Largest shark studied (5m) estimated at 392 years old

■ **Range:** Very cold waters from surface to depths of around 2,000m

■ **Food:** Any meat or fish including carrion

■ **Sight:** Most Greenland sharks suffer from parasite which latches on to eye and destroys corneal tissue, rendering animal almost blind



1 Ocean Quahog <i>Arctica islandica</i>		507 years
2 Greenland Shark <i>Somniosus microcephalus</i>		400
3 Bowhead whale <i>Balaena mysticetus</i>		211
4 Rougheye Rockfish <i>Sebastes aleutianus</i>		205
5 Red Sea Urchin <i>Mesocentrotus franciscanus</i>		200
6 Galapagos Tortoise <i>Chelonoidis nigra</i>		177
7 Shortraker Rockfish <i>Sebastes borealis</i>		157
8 Lake Sturgeon <i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>		152
9 Aldabra Giant Tortoise <i>Aldabrachelys gigantea</i>		152
10 Orange Roughy <i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>		149

TOP 10 LONGEST LIVING ANIMALS:
Life expectancy of Greenland Shark exceeded only by that of Ocean Quahog