







## The Goblin Shark. Meet The Living Fossil Of The Deep Seaaad

Also known as the Living Fossil, this rare species of deep-sea shark is the only extant representative of the Mitsukurinidae family which dates back over 125-millionyears.



A living fossil. Photo: Dianne Bray

The goblin shark (*Mitsukurina owstoni*) has many peculiar characteristics that help to describe precisely what the creature is like. It has a pink skin and a very distinct profile featuring an elongated, flattened snout. Within it are protruding jaws filled with nail-like teeth. And there is much more.

The goblin shark's flabby body is paired with small fins, and scientists therefore speculate it is very sluggish in movement. Because of that and its poor eyesight, the goblin shark has devised a hunting method that has been described as ambush predatory. Since its low density flesh and large oily liver makes the shark neutrally buoyant, it can silently drift towards its prey without making much in the way of movements that would otherwise scare it off. As soon as the target is within range, the uniquely positioned jaws in its mouth snap forward and catch the unsuspecting snack, mostly crustaceans, cephalopods and teleost fish.

