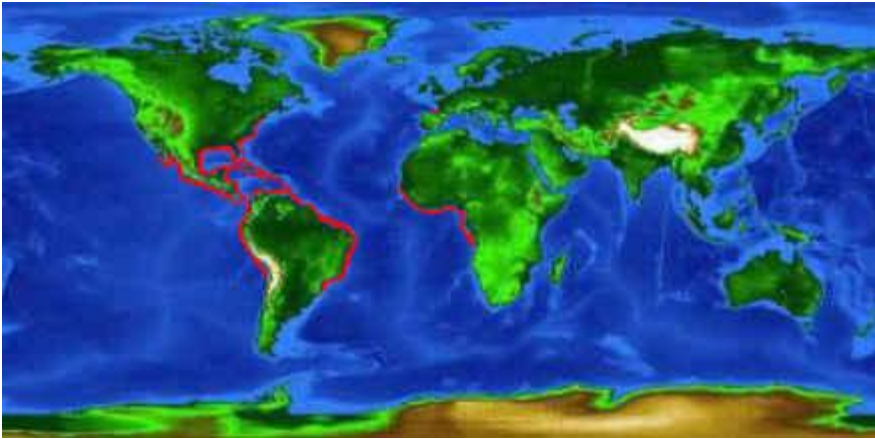


NURSE SHARK

by

JEREMY



The nurse shark is a fish that has cartilage instead of bones. Nurse Sharks live on the ocean floor off the east and southwest coasts of the United States and near the west coasts of Africa. They live in coral reefs, lagoons, and sandy surf areas too. The biggest nurse sharks can be 14 feet long and weigh as much as a man. Males are 18 years old when they are considered adults.

Females are considered adults when they are 22 years old. Nurse sharks eat squid, crabs, shrimp, fish, lobster, sea urchins, mollusks, and shellfish. Nurse sharks suck sleeping sea creatures out of the sand whole. Nurse Sharks are nocturnal. They hunt at night. Sharks have five senses just like humans do and one more that allows them to feel electric currents. It is called electroreception. The things that sharks eat give off electric currents that make it easy for sharks to track them. Nothing really feeds on the bigger nurse sharks. Nurse sharks live in shallow waters and predators can't eat them. Man is its predator and bigger fish and nurse sharks eat smaller nurse sharks. Some nurse shark babies hatch inside their mother and others hatch outside of the mother. When they are born and when they hatch their mother leaves them to find food for themselves. Nurse Sharks got there name because scientists saw them laying on each other and it looked like they where nursing their babies. They did not nurse their young. Baby nurse sharks are called pups. Every other year the nurse shark has a litter of 20-25 babies. There are many more interesting facts about nurse sharks. Nurse sharks have almost 200 teeth in rows of 36 that move up if they get broken. The nurse shark doesn't need to swim to breath like other sharks. It pumps water over its gills so it can breathe. It doesn't migrate like other sharks. It just moves slower when it gets colder. It uses its front fins to walk. It doesn't attack people unless they attack it. The nurse shark is an interesting animal. I think it looks really cool with its beady eyes that can't really see and all of its fins. I hope I never step on one.



