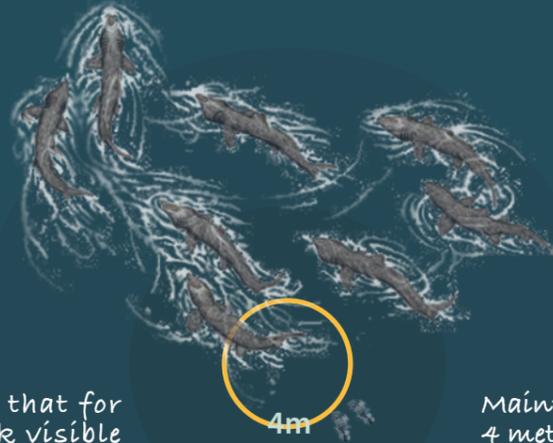


# Basking Shark Code of Conduct

BOAT-USERS, KAYAKERS, SWIMMERS, DIVERS AND SURFERS

The following guidelines have been designed to help water-users reduce the risk of injuring or harassing Basking Sharks, ensuring they return to British waters each year.



Remember that for every shark visible on the surface there are likely to be more hidden below

Maintain a distance 4 metres away from each shark

Restrict the number of people in the water at any one time

**Do not approach within 100m of the sharks – but if you do find yourself close to Basking Sharks here are some general tips:**

- Although mostly placid, Basking Sharks can startle if disturbed, often thrashing their tail with enormous power
- Be extremely cautious in areas where Basking Sharks have been seen breaching
- Avoid pairs or large numbers of sharks following each other closely. This may be courting behaviour and they should not be disturbed. Maintain a distance of at least 500m
- Remember that for every shark visible on the surface there are likely to be more hidden below
- Take time to observe the direction(s) of movement of the sharks and then quietly position yourself alongside their anticipated course for a safe and enjoyable view. Wait for them to come to you



Don't forget to take pictures of the fins for the Photo-ID Project and record your sighting

## SWIMMERS, DIVERS AND SURFERS



- Maintain a distance of at least 4m from each shark and be wary of the tail
- Do not try to touch the sharks
- Do not swim towards them if they are near you
- Ideally, swimmers should remain on the surface – stay in a group, rather than stringing out around the sharks
- No more than four people in the water within 100m of a shark at any one time

[www.baskingsharks.org](http://www.baskingsharks.org)

## REMEMBER

Basking Sharks are legally protected in the UK. It is illegal to intentionally kill, injure, recklessly disturb or harass Basking Sharks in British waters. Any person committing such an offence could face up to 6 months in prison and a large fine.

## BOATS



- Never chase a shark or direct a vessel towards them – this could make them dive or act unpredictably
- When sharks are sighted, restrict speed to below 6 knots and/or operate under sail
- When closer than 100m, switch the engine to neutral to avoid injuring sharks
- Avoid sudden changes in speed
- Do not allow several vessels to surround the shark(s)
- **Jet-skis should not approach Basking Sharks**

## KAYAKS (AND SUPs)



- Remain calm and quiet – avoid sudden movements which will disturb the sharks
- Never paddle directly towards the sharks or allow several kayakers to surround them – this could make them dive or act unpredictably
- Stay in a group, rather than stringing out around the sharks
- Try not cross the path of the shark so the sharks can maintain their course without changing direction or speed
- Never use your paddle or kayak to touch a shark