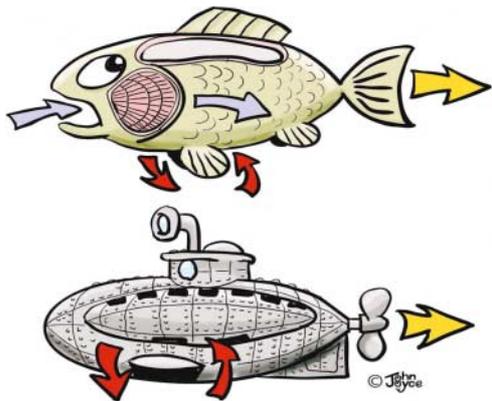


Aquatic Life



Fastest, Largest, Smallest - The Fantastic World of Fish

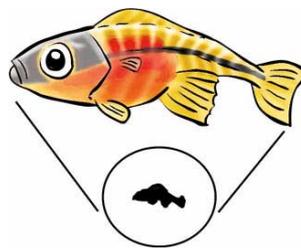


Fish - Nature's Natural Submarines!

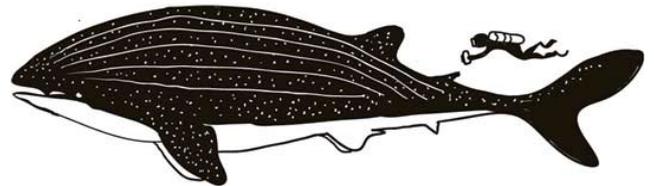
The developers of the modern submarine must have got their inspiration from that natural submarine - the fish. Like a fish's swim bladder, submarines have 'ballast tanks' containing air that allows them to float at 'neutral buoyancy' without having to put any effort into staying at a particular depth. The fish's powerful tail is replaced by a propeller and the fins that allow a fish to 'fly' underwater are replaced by diving planes. Unlike the crew of a submarine however, fish can even breathe underwater with their gills - blood filled membranes that absorb oxygen from the water and allow carbon dioxide to be released.

Images and text copyright © John Joyce

The Smallest and Largest Fish



The smallest fish so far recorded lives in the forest swamps of the Indonesian island of Sumatra and belongs to the carp family - which includes the common goldfish. It is only 7.9 mm long and so small that it will easily fit onto your fingernail.



The largest fish in the world is the Whale Shark, which is harmless and feeds on plankton by filtering seawater. The largest ever recorded was 12.65 metres long and weighed 21.5 metric tonnes. The largest gathering of Whale Sharks occurred in 2011 when over 400 gathered off the coast of Mexico, to feed on eggs produced by tunny fish.

by John Joyce

For more Fun Facts check out

www.spindriftpress.com



Speedy Sailfish Clock Over 100 Kms per Hour

The Indo-Pacific Sailfish (*Istiophorus platypterus*) lives life in the fast lane! Not only is it the fastest swimming fish in the sea - clocking up an incredible 100 kilometres per hour (68 miles per hour) - faster than a cheetah can run - it also grows at an incredible rate. Young sailfish hatch from eggs within 36 hours and grow to be two metres long within twelve months. They feed on squid, flying fish and anchovies and can retract their large dorsal fin when travelling at speed. Sailfish are found in the warmer water regions of the Pacific and the Atlantic, where they grow to a maximum size of around three metres. The largest sailfish ever captured was caught in 1994 and weighed 64 kilos.

To see a great video of sailfish in action, check out the great National Geographic video on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spkjQ3c_AjU

© 2013 Sherkin Island Marine Station & its licensors. All rights reserved.