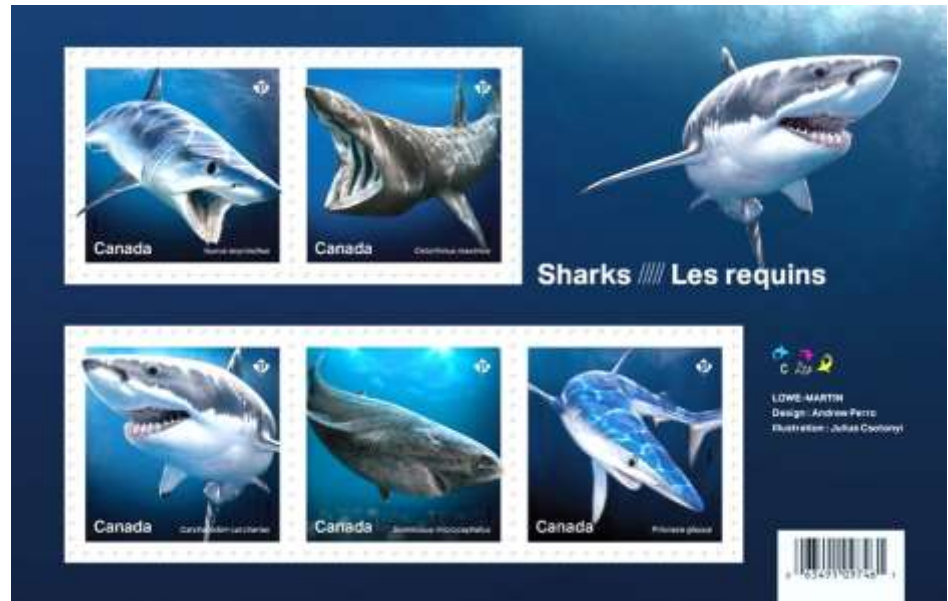


SHARKS

On 12 July 2018, Canada Post unveiled the designs of five stamps depicting sharks found in Canadian waters. The unveiling took place at the Vancouver Aquarium in Vancouver, British Columbia. The stamps went on official sale the following day. Each stamp is denominated at the Permanent domestic rate (85c).

The stamps were issued in a booklet of ten containing two of each design and a souvenir sheet of five. A quantity of 1,500 uncut press sheets of 25 were also produced.



The stamps were designed by Andrew Perro and illustrated by Julius Csotonyi. They were printed by Lowe-Martin using lithography in four colors.

According to the Canada Post *Details* magazine, the Canadian coastal waters serve as a permanent or temporary home to almost 30 shark varieties. Sharks are among the oldest surviving species on Earth. Their earliest ancestors swam the oceans during the Silurian period about 420 million years ago.

The first stamp shows a Shortfin Mako Shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*). It is a visitor to the Atlantic coast and is the fastest swimming shark on the planet, reaching burst speeds in excess of 40 miles per hour (65 kph). It grows to an average length of ten feet (3.2 m). Some specimens have been weighed at 1,300 pounds (600 kg). It is one of the few endothermic shark species. It is currently classified as Vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation or Nature (IUCN).

The second stamp depicts a Basking Shark (*Cetorhinus maximus*). Native to Canadian waters, it is the second largest living shark after the Whale Shark. It is a slow-moving filter feeder subsisting on plankton. It has an average length of 26 feet (8 m) and weight of 11,400 pounds (5,170 kg). It is classified as Vulnerable by IUCN.

The third stamp shows a Great White Shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*). Often depicted as a villain, this shark inhabits the Atlantic coast. It can reach a length of 20 feet (6.1 m) and weigh up to 4,200 pounds (1,905 kg). Although humans are not its preferred prey, it is responsible for the largest quantity of reported and identified fatal unprovoked attacks on humans.

A Greenland Shark (*Somniosus microcephalus*) appears on the fourth stamp. Found on the Atlantic side of the Arctic, it has the longest known lifespan of any vertebrate on Earth (estimated between 300–500 years). It can reach a length of 21 feet (6.4 m) and a weight of 2,200 pounds (1,000 kg). Its flesh is toxic due to high concentrations of trimethylamine oxide.

The final stamp shows a Blue Shark (*Prionace glauca*). Found along the Atlantic coast, it migrates long distances as far as South America. It is viviparous and noted for large litters of from 25 to 100 pups. Females can grow to a length of 11 feet (3.3 m) and weigh up to 450 pounds (204 kg). It is classified as Near Threatened by IUCN.