

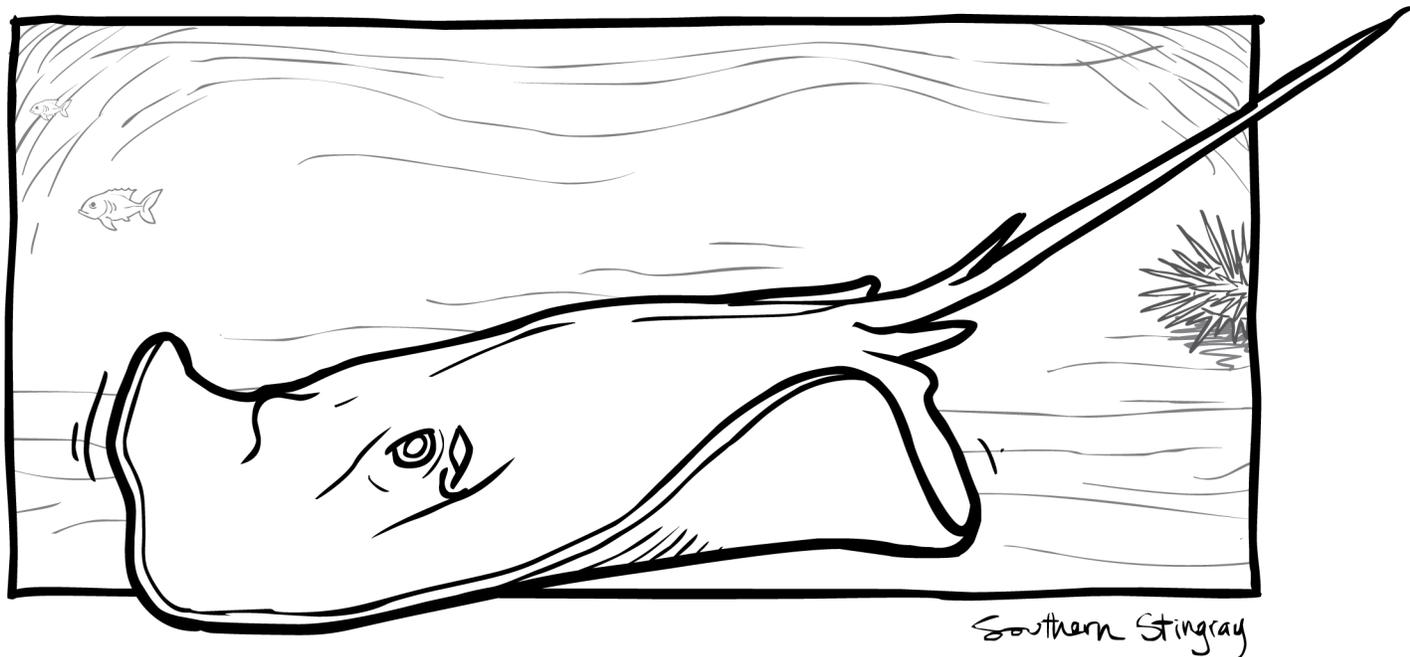
Southern Stingray *(Dasyatis americana)*

Instant ID

- A diamond-shaped, flattened sea animal related to sharks
- Can grow over five feet across, but normally they are smaller
- Juveniles are gray and adults range in color from olive-brown to green
- Long, slender tail has a barbed spine

Native Niches

- Inhabits coastal waters from New Jersey to Brazil, including the Gulf of Mexico
- Found in benthic (sea floor) habitats, including sand flats, seagrass beds and coral reefs
- Common to the northeast regions of the Gulf of Mexico along the west coast of Florida



Southern Stingray *(Dasyatis americana)*

Favorite Foods

- Eats clams, scallops, shrimp, crabs and other invertebrates (animals without a backbone) found on the sea floor
- Uses touch, electric signals and smell to find prey

Critter Characteristics

- Hide in sand during the day, with eyes and gills exposed
- Tail barb used for protection, yet is not fatal to humans
- Females give live birth from eggs that hatch internally

Population Protection

- Shuffle your feet when wading in water frequented by stingrays
- Stingrays can sense the shuffling vibrations, giving them time to swim away before they can be stepped on