

basking sharks: one of the largest fish in the world

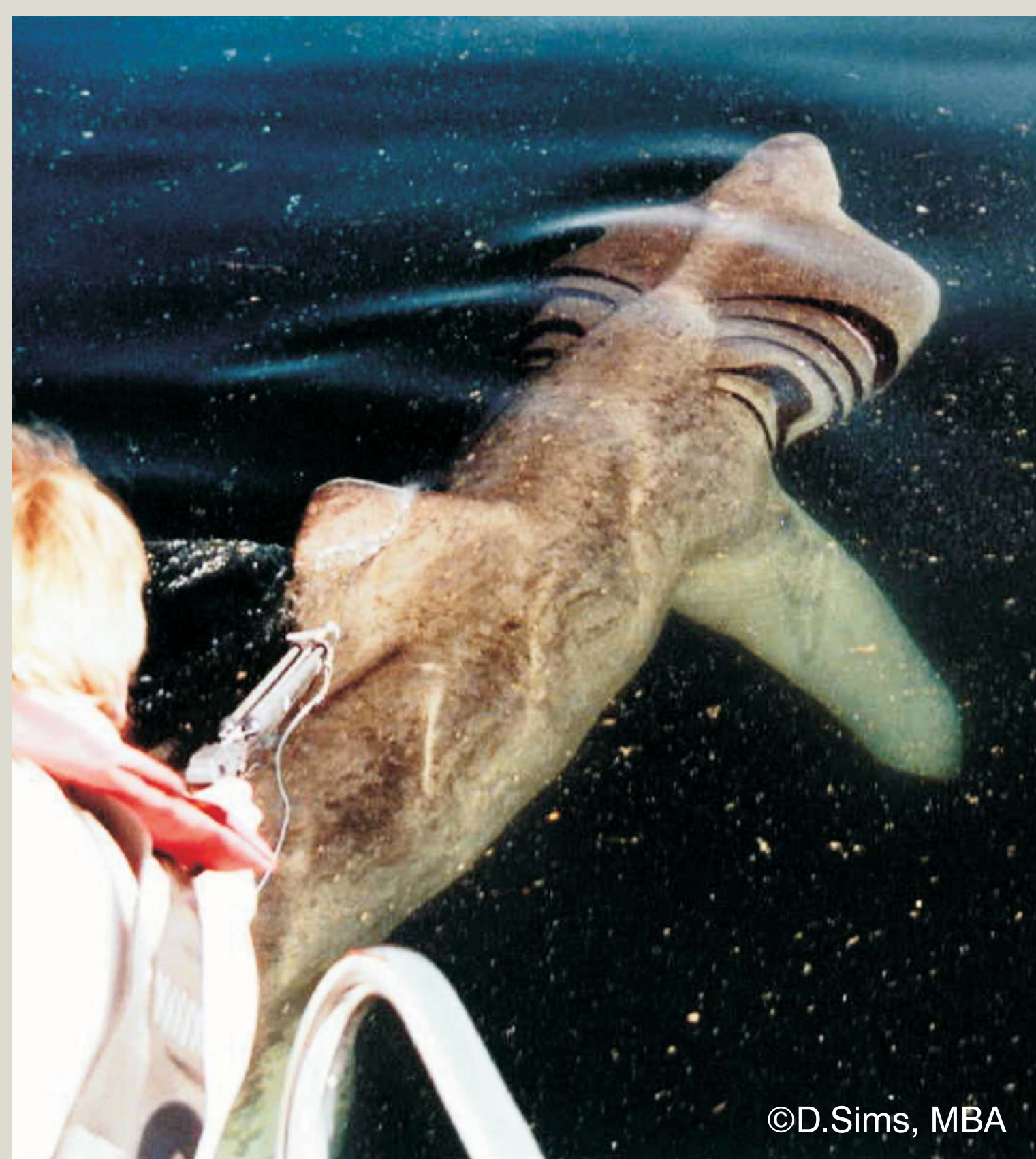
Reaching an average length of 7–9 metres and weighing up to 10 tonnes, the basking shark nevertheless feeds on tiny plankton in the sea.

- Basking sharks are commonly seen very near the surface of the water, where concentrations of plankton are found.
- As water flows through their open mouth, plankton are filtered through bristle-like gill rakers before the water flows out through the basking shark's gill slits.

plankton being scooped into the wide-open mouth (an overall gape of 0.85 sq m on a 7–9 metre fish)

bristle-like gill rakers

filtered seawater flows out through the shark's gill slits



Basking sharks seem to follow their seasonal food source. Some tracked sharks remained active in the winter and were sometimes located very close to the UK coast.