



Locations where fossils have been found

# Squalus

**Common Name:**  
Dogfish shark

**Classification:**  
**Class:** Chondrichthyes  
**Order:** Squaliformes  
**Family:** Squalidae



Dogfish shark tooth, *Squalus*. 3 mm wide. Paleocene Cannonball Formation. Bowman County. University of North Dakota Paleontology Collection.

**Description:**  
*Squalus* is in the group of fish (Chondrichthyes) whose skeletons consist mostly of cartilage rather than bone. Rays and ratfish are also in that group. *Squalus*, which still exist today, are small sharks that grow to lengths of about 3 feet. They live in both temperate and tropical waters in both shallow and deep depths. *Squalus* often live in schools and eat primarily bony fish but also other sharks, various invertebrate animals, and even marine mammals. They are known to have scavenged the carcasses of the large Cretaceous marine reptiles, mosasaurs, such as the *Plioplatecarpus* on exhibit at the North Dakota Heritage Center in Bismarck.



Dogfish shark. Painting by, and courtesy of, Richard Ellis.



In the middle right background dogfish sharks, *Squalus*, are scavenging the carcass of a *Plioplatecarpus* mosasaur. Painting by David Miller.