Today: Nektonic Life

• What is Nektonic
• Who is Nektonic

Nektonic Organisms

• Nektonic organisms swim
• They can be herbivore or carnivore
• Most are Epipelagic (<200 m)- why?
  – Well, where does their food live?
• Vertebrates & invertebrates
Types of Nektons: Sharks & Rays

- Cold blooded Fish - most live in tropics
- Cartilage skeleton - not boney
- Give Birth to live young (eggs stay in mothers body, hatch and live baby fish released).
- More sense than you have
  - Extra touch: they have extra pressure receptors on their bodies that feel changes in water pressure due to your presence.
  - Electoreception - They sense magnetic fields (internal compass)
- Largest fish is a shark...

Nektons: Boney Fish

- Epipelagic (mostly)
  - Herring, Tuna etc.
- Rockfish = fish that live in the benthic environment.
  - These live (mostly) in the neritic environment
  - Halibut, sole
Nektons: Deep Sea Fish (boney)

- Adaptations
  - Attract prey with bioluminescence
  - Eat big - they can ingest food that is bigger than they are!
  - Toothy - some can’t close their mouth
  - Conserve E - don’t swim much
  - Find a mate and keep it - Male Angler fish is a parasite

Mammalian Nektons: Whales

- Terrestrial ancestor
- Toothed - nasty predator
- Baleen - Zooplankton
  - Hunted
Mammalian Nekton: Pinniped (flipper)

- Hunted to near extinction
- Rebound 1950s
- Declining again
  - Entanglement
  - Loss of prey
  - Over predation by killer whales (they lost baleen whales)

Mammalian Nekton: Sea Cows

- Dependant on mom for 2 years
- Mature at 9
- Protected by Marine Mammal Protection Act ‘72, Endangered Species Act ‘73
  - Greatest threat: loss of habitat