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# Hide & Seek Sharks

California's coast is home to sharks of all sizes. Can you spot:

**Bat Ray:** Sharks, rays, and skates have skeletons made of cartilage, the flexible material in our noses and ears. This group of fish is called *elasmobranchs*.

**California Moray Eel:** Eels' long bodies are excellent for hiding in rocky reefs, and their scaleless skin produces slimy mucus.

**Giant Kelp:** Kelp forests are important habitats for ocean life along the California coast. Giant kelp has air pockets to keep the leaves near the surface, where the sun is the brightest.

**Great White Shark:** This famous fish has a special type of camouflage called *countershading*. From below, the shark's white belly blends in with the bright sun, and from above the gray back blends in with the darker deep ocean.

**Hammerhead Shark:** Why the long face? Hammerheads' excellent senses and strange snout help them find and catch their favorite prey—stingrays! Hammerheads don't come as far north as San Francisco, preferring the warmer waters of Southern California.

**Horn Shark:** Horn sharks have unique horny spikes at the top of their dorsal fins, and prominent ridges over their eyes.

**Leopard Shark:** Leopard sharks get their name from their large spots and "saddles," the patches that cross their backs. These nocturnal sharks often swim in groups, hunting for food in the mud and sand.

**Ochre Sea Star:** These sea stars can open the shells of their preferred prey, mussels, using tiny tube feet on the bottom of their five arms.

**Pacific Sea Nettle:** Jellyfish use their stinging tentacles to catch their food, like their relatives, coral. Sea nettles are recognizable by their reddish brown color.

Art by Louise Prescott for the California Academy of Sciences.

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