

**Family: Molidae**

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Photo Courtesy of Chad Macfie

**Sharptail Sunfish**

*Mola lanceolata*

**Range:** *Mola lanceolata* is found nearly worldwide in warm waters. In the western Atlantic, they span from North Carolina to southern Florida.

**Similar Species:** The Ocean Sunfish (*Mola mola*) is similar in appearance to the Sharptail Sunfish. However, unlike the *Mola mola* the Sharptail Sunfish's caudal fin exhibits a central projection.



*Mola mola*

**Identification:** As with all sunfish, *Mola lanceolata* exhibits a truncated body shape with elongated dorsal and anal fish which it undulates to move through the water. This species of sunfish is generally dark grey throughout with a pale ventral surface. Some may exhibit spotted patterns. The caudal fin has a central projection that can be relatively small in size or may exceed the length of the head.

**Note:** *Mola lanceolata* does not appear to exhibit any behavior that would help to differentiate it from its more common relative, the Ocean Sunfish (*Mola mola*). However, it has been suggested that *Mola lanceolata* does not bask as *Mola mola* does.