

out of their bodies. They also have special cells in their gills that pump excess salt out into the sea. Together, these two systems mean that marine fish can stay hydrated.

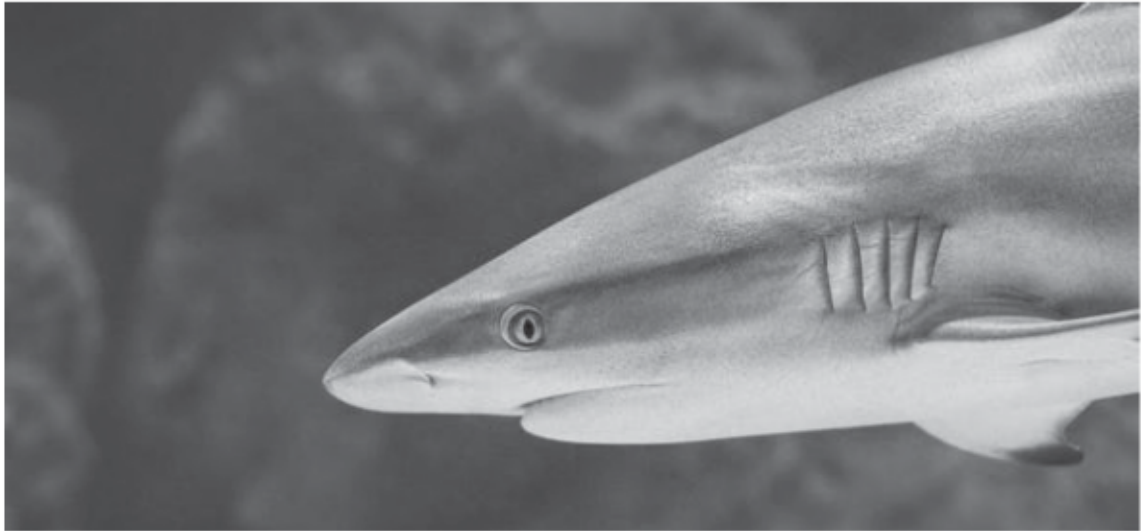
Salty sharks

Sharks have evolved a completely different system. Their bodies have a slightly higher concentration of salt than

~~I don't drink, David Clode/Unsplash, FAI~~

Sharks take in small amounts of water through their gills (by osmosis – because they are slightly saltier than the sea) which means they don't directly have to drink.

Sharks also have a salt gland (in their rectum) to get rid of any excess salt they may have.



seawater. This means they don't have the problem that bony fish have, of losing water through their skin all the time.

Sharks have high levels of waste chemicals – called urea and trimethylamine N-oxide – in their body, which other animals would usually get rid of. Sharks keep them in their body, which keeps them “salty”.

The problem of drinking seawater isn't just for fish. Some seabirds – albatrosses, for example – have to drink seawater too. Like sharks, these seabirds have a salt gland to get rid of excess salt. But on an albatross it is found at the top of the bird's beak.

