Rays and skates are flattened fish that are closely related to sharks. All belong to a group of fish called Elasmobranchs.

There are many different types of ray including Stingrays, Electric rays, Butterfly rays, Round rays, Manta rays, guitarfish, and sawfish.

DID YOU KNOW?
Rays protect themselves with venomous spines or barbs, in their tail. Skates rely on thorny projections on their backs and tails.

DID YOU KNOW?
Stingrays and skates feed on crustaceans, small fish, snails, clams, shrimp and other small sea creatures.

DID YOU KNOW?
The smallest ray is the Short-Nose Electric ray which is approximately 10cm across and weighs about 400g. The Oceanic Manta ray is the largest ray reaching up to 7m in wing span and weighs 2,000kg.

DID YOU KNOW?
Overfishing, habitat loss and climate change are the major threats to rays. They are also hunted for their gill rakers (used for feeding) for use in Chinese medicine.

DID YOU KNOW?
2008 saw one of our female Bluespotted Ribbontail rays give birth to a set of twins – a European first!

The number classified as threatened.

539 Number of ray species assessed under IUCN Red List.

107 The number classified as threatened.

Fossil records date Stingrays back to the Jurassic period, 150 million years ago!

Stingrays are ovoviviparous, meaning the young are hatched from eggs that are held within the body. Skates are oviparous, meaning they lay eggs.

Electric rays are named for their ability to generate and discharge a strong electric current to stun prey and for defence from potential predators.

Humans should do the ‘stingray shuffle’ when walking along sandy bottoms to give any stingrays in the vicinity enough warning to swim away. Don’t forget to wear sandals!

The natural predators of stingrays are sharks, other large fish, seals, and sea lions.

The Deep is part of the European Breeding Programme for the Bluespotted Ribbontail ray and Blue Spot stingray, as well as the species monitoring programme for the Honeycomb Whiptail ray. This means we are helping to safeguard populations of these species and are leading the way in pioneering new husbandry techniques.