Eggcases and Basking Sharks - linking long term citizen science sightings data to the Digital Twin Ocean

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Great Eggcase Hunt

BASKING SHARK PROJECT

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Great Eggcase Hunt

Project Background

- There are >1200 species of shark, skates, rays, and chimaeras (Class: Chondrichthyes) globally
- Of these approximately 40% are **oviparous** (egg-laying), and embryos develop within toughened eggcases that are deposited on the sea floor or attached to seaweed.
- Once hatched, the empty eggcases often wash up on the beach. By looking at the size, shape, and features, it's possible to identify which species it comes from.

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The Project

- Established in 2003. The Shark Trust's flagship citizen science recording project
- Encourages participants to search for eggcases that have washed ashore, or report those seen developing underwater
- By recording eggcases, we can gain a better understanding of the presence and diversity of oviparous (egglaying) species in British waters – and beyond!

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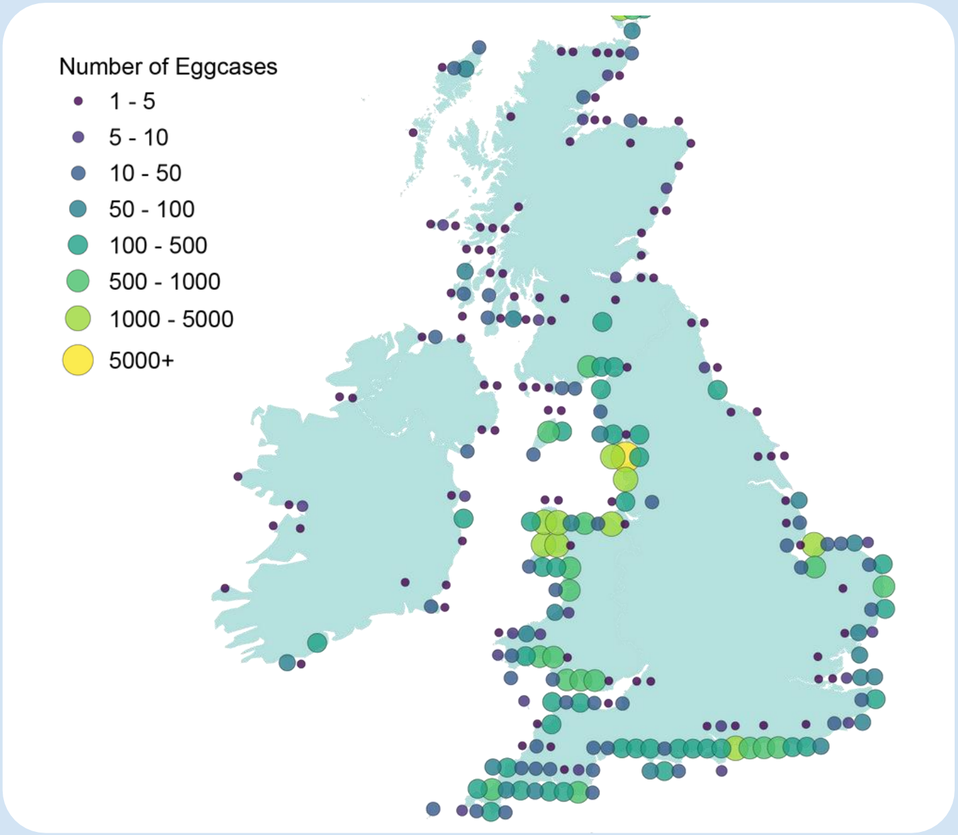
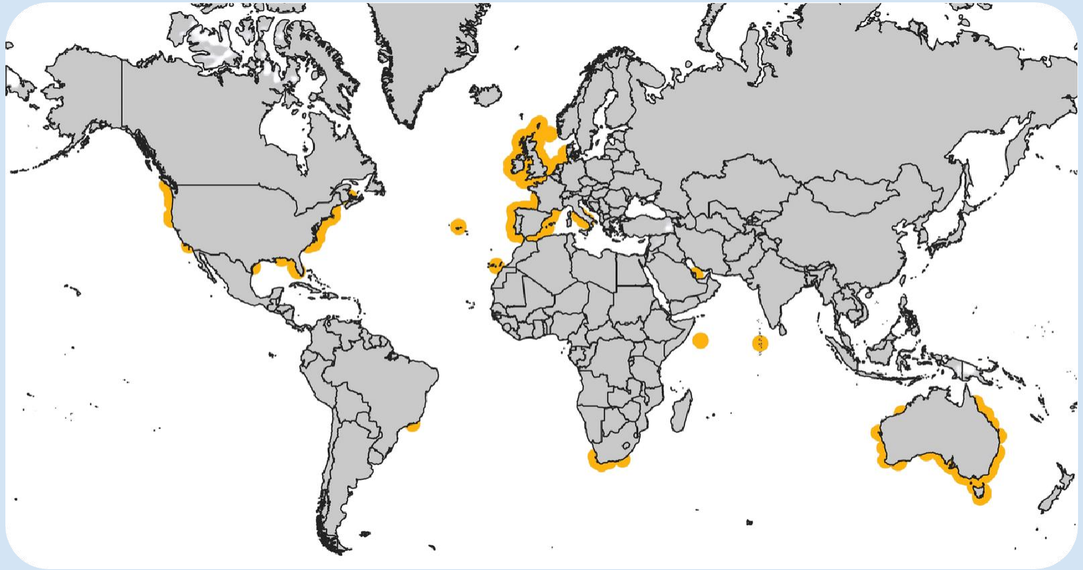
Project Stats

- over **37,000** records
- over **530,000** eggcases
- over **55** verified species
- over **40** countries





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The Project

- Basking Sharks are seasonal visitors to Bristish and Irish waters, with a few well known hotspots
- The project encourages citizen scientists to record Basking Shark sightings
- Contains data collated from multiple organisations, including the historic Marine Conservation Society's (MCS) Basking Shark Watch dataset

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(c) Frogfish Photography

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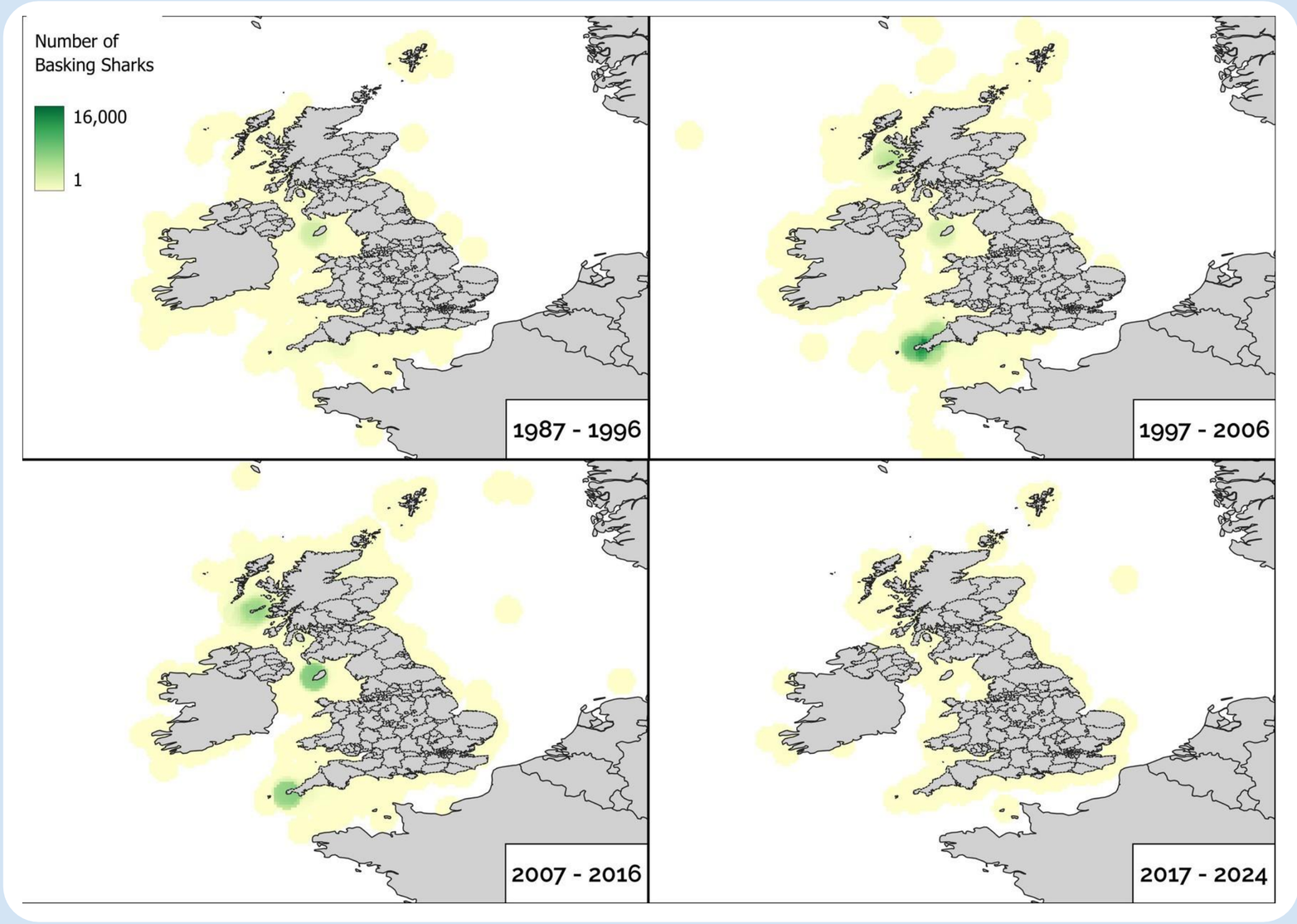
Project Stats

- over **18,000** records
- over **65,000** individuals



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Next steps

Great Eggcase Hunt

- Unify and QC 22 years worth of data
- Make data open access
- Contribute to data portals/archives
- Identify key subsets for reporting

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- Unify data from different sources
- Address duplicate data
- Make data open access
- Contribute to data portals/archives
- Establish a data directory for the wider community

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Any questions?

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