



# The Sale of Sawfish Rostra on eBay

## *Preliminary Results*

*Sawfish Recovery Team Meeting  
August 3 – 5, 2004*



Matthew T. McDavitt  
3371 Turnberry Cir.  
Charlottesville, VA 22911  
434-973-0922  
mtmcdavitt@aol.com

# Topics

- Purpose & design of study
- Methodology for distinguishing rostra to species
- Historical data on trade in sawfish saws?
- Results
- Implications



# Background

- Since 1999, I have observed sawfish rostra for sale on eBay
- I noticed that there were normally several rostra for sale on any day



**There is very little data available concerning trade in sawfish snouts**

# Purpose

- To quantify the scope of one regular source of trade in sawfish rostra
- To characterize the rostra being sold:
  - Frequency of sale
  - Avg prices
  - Avg rostral lengths
  - Species involved
  - Source of rostra
- Characterize the buyers & sellers



The screenshot shows an eBay listing for a "GIANT SAWFISH BILL MUSEUM SPECIMEN". The item is listed by the user "marcziq" and has a feedback score of 6 with 100% positive feedback. The winning bid is US \$1,242.00, with a reserve met. The item was sold on February 9, 2004, at 23:45:00 PST. The seller is a member since January 18, 2004, in the United States. The listing includes a photo of the sawfish bill, which is a long, thin, light-colored object with a serrated edge, mounted on a dark green wooden door. The listing also includes a "Purchase Protection" badge.

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**GIANT SAWFISH BILL MUSEUM SPECIMEN** Item number: 3701068036

You are signed in

**Bidding has ended for this item (sawfishcreek is the winner)**



Winning bid: **US \$1,242.00**  
([Reserve met](#))

Ended: Feb-09-04  
23:45:00 PST

Start time: Jan-30-04 23:45:00 PST

History: [14 bids](#) (US \$495.00 starting bid)

Winning bidder: [sawfishcreek](#) ( 2 )

**Seller information**  
[marcziq](#) ( 6 )  
Feedback Score: 6  
**Positive Feedback: 100%**  
Member since Jan-18-04 in United States  
[Read feedback comments](#)  
[Ask seller a question](#)  
[View seller's other items](#)

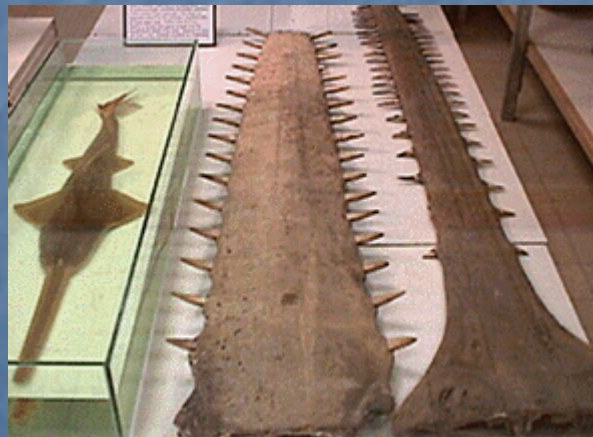
 [Purchase Protection](#)



# Study Details

**Study Period:** Feb 1, 2004 - July 31, 2004

- 182 days
- 6 mos
- *Ongoing – will be 1 year*



# Methods

- On bi-weekly basis, examined eBay listings for sawfish rostra internationally
  - Using only publicly available information
- When auctions completed, listing information and photograph were saved
- Sale details were then recorded to a spreadsheet
- Examined listing photograph to determine species, where possible
  - *If species unclear and the photograph was taken straight-on, rostrum was measured using Adobe Photoshop to verify length / width proportions*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1		<b>Sales of Sawfish Rostra on Ebay</b>															
2	max recs	139	Avg Length (mm):	749	Mode	Avg Days Listed	Max price:	\$1,242.00	Avg Price:	\$124.24	Percent of Rostra	100.0%	Avg bidders:	2.91	Tooth Counts:		compiled
3	records:	139	Avg length (ft):	2.46	7	8.0	Price / ft:	\$46.28	Total Spent:	\$11,804.54	Percent of \$	100.0%	Avg bids:	5.32	min / max:	15	35
4		Item #	Start Date	Date Ended	Days Listed	Animal Name	Rostrum Name	Species ID (McD)	Seller	Buyer	Country of Seller	Country of Buyer	Seller State (US)	Buyer State (U)	Int'l Sale?	Origin	Capture D
5	1	3701068036	30-Jan-04	9-Feb-04	10	sawfish	bill	zijsron	marczig	sawfishcreek	United States	United States	MD		No		
6	2	3657729352	31-Jan-04	10-Feb-04	10	saw shark	bill	zijsron	polyglot0		Australia						
7	3	2593913417	4-Feb-04	11-Feb-04	7	sawfish	bill	Anoxypristis	manofthemoores	dorevera	UK	Belgium			Yes		
8	4	3703316717	8-Feb-04	15-Feb-04	7	sawfish	bill	indeterminate	coolstuffcat	we*buy*tribal*ar	United States	United States	NY		No		
9	5	2594463944	6-Feb-04	16-Feb-04	10	sawfish	bill	zijsron	peterpansemper		Australia					Torres Strait, Au c 1900	
10	6	2594465076	6-Feb-04	16-Feb-04	10	sawfish	bill	Anoxypristis	peterpansemper		Australia					Townsville, QLD, Australia	
11	7	2986503580	9-Feb-04	16-Feb-04	7	sawfish	saw	pectinata	judgel	tdrake2	United States	United States	IN		No		
12	8	3703377966	9-Feb-04	16-Feb-04	7	sawfish	bill	pectinata	babashag	klu38	United States	United States	WA		No		Florida
13	9	2595301677	11-Feb-04	21-Feb-04	10	sawfish	bill	Anoxypristis	thehoarder	eklectress	UK	United States			Yes		
14	10	3660466942	11-Feb-04	21-Feb-04	10	saw shak	bill	zijsron	polyglot0		Australia						
15	11	3661124156	14-Feb-04	21-Feb-04	7	sawfish	saw	Anoxypristis	ruppee74	wabsicle35	UK	UK			No		
16	12	3704431199	14-Feb-04	21-Feb-04	7	sawfish	bill	indeterminate	coolbrith	obubio	United States	United States	NV		No		
17	13	3275582395	12-Feb-04	22-Feb-04	10	Sägefisch	Schwert	indeterminate	breiersders007	buntlackier	Germany	Germany			No		
18	14	3661406010	15-Feb-04	22-Feb-04	7	saw tooth shark	bill	Anoxypristis	protex3		United States		IL				
19	15	2597114308	17-Feb-04	24-Feb-04	7	saw fish	blade	zijsron	stuffedtoad	drdustbin	UK	UK			No		
20	16	2226713491	18-Feb-04	28-Feb-04	10	Sägefisch	Sage	Anoxypristis	m_janssen	enstein123	Germany	Germany			No		
21	17	3275582395	19-Feb-04	29-Feb-04	10	Sägefisch	Schnauze	largetooth	doerte	zum_merowing	Germany	Germany			No		
22	18	3706090084	22-Feb-04	29-Feb-04	7	shark	bill	Anoxypristis	costanza98		Italy					Papuan Gulf	
23	19	3706306356	22-Feb-04	29-Feb-04	7	saw fish	snout	indeterminate	wch141	shinycycads	United States	United States	FL		No		
24	20	3707576960	22-Feb-04	29-Feb-04	7	sawfish	bill	zijsron	shushy247		Australia				No		

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## Huge Antique Sawtooth Shark Bill 4ft + Long!

Item number: 3664485799

You are signed in

**Bidding has ended for this item** (quiverdog is the winner)

If you are **quiverdog**, [Sign in](#) for your status.



[Go to larger picture](#)

Winning bid: **AU \$100.00**  
Approximately US \$72.99

Ended: Mar-09-04 15:37:15 PST

Start time: Mar-02-04 15:37:15 PST

History: [1 bid](#) (AU \$100.00 starting bid)

Winning bidder: [quiverdog](#) ( [54](#) ★ )

Item location: Shipped with care from Australia

Ships to: Australia only

[Shipping and payment details](#)

### Seller information

[lntfarmer](#) ( [679](#) ★ )

Feedback Score: 679

**Positive Feedback: 100%**

Member since Jun-30-98 in Australia

[Read feedback comments](#)

[Ask seller a question](#)

[View seller's other items](#)

### Description

Please note I am unable to sell this item outside Australia as to export it requires an export licence and information regarding the exact species which I am unable to do. So please do not bid unless you reside in Australia - sorry. I purchased this fabulous sawtooth shark bill at the deceased estate auction of a local racehorse owner/breeder. His wife attended the sale and verified that they had owned it for many years. It is a very impressive size measuring 58 inches/ 147 cms long! There is one area underneath which has slight damage (see pic 3) but this could be easily repaired with resin. There are 49 teeth on the bill and three are damaged. It is a wonderful example of the superb adapted bill of this now protected fish and would look terrific mounted behind glass. Offered here on ebay at NO RESERVE - High bidder to pay shipping and payment in cash, direct deposit, PayPal or Australian Post money order. Apologies once again, please remember no overseas bidders.

- eBay is the world's largest online auction house

- Registered users can buy or sell items

- Little interference from eBay

- Unless item is objectionable or prohibited



# eBay: *at a glance*



**Established:** September 1995

**Makes Money:** charges a fee for listing an item, & takes a percentage of the final sale price

**Gross Merchandise Sales (2003):** \$23.8 B

**Annual Auctions Listed (2003):** 971 M

**Avg Sale Price per Auction (2003):** \$24.49

**Registered Users (Q2 2004):** 114 M

SOURCE:

*“eBay Inc, Announces Second  
Quarter 2004 Financial Results”*

<http://investor.ebay.com/>



# How do you find items?

*Use search engine with keywords:*

sawfish - 55.9%  
saw fish - 13.6%  
saw shark - 3.4%  
swordfish  
sword fish - 1.7%  
saw tooth shark - 1.7%  
sawtooth  
poisson scie  
requin scie  
Sägefisch - 16.1%  
pesce sega  
pez sierra

bill - 70%  
saw - 6.1%  
blade  
snout - 2.6%  
nose  
rostrum  
rostra  
proboscis  
tusk  
specimen  
sword  
teeth

rostre  
Säge - 4.3%  
Schnauze  
Schwert - 9.6%  
Unterkiefer  
Zahn  
sierra  
hocico

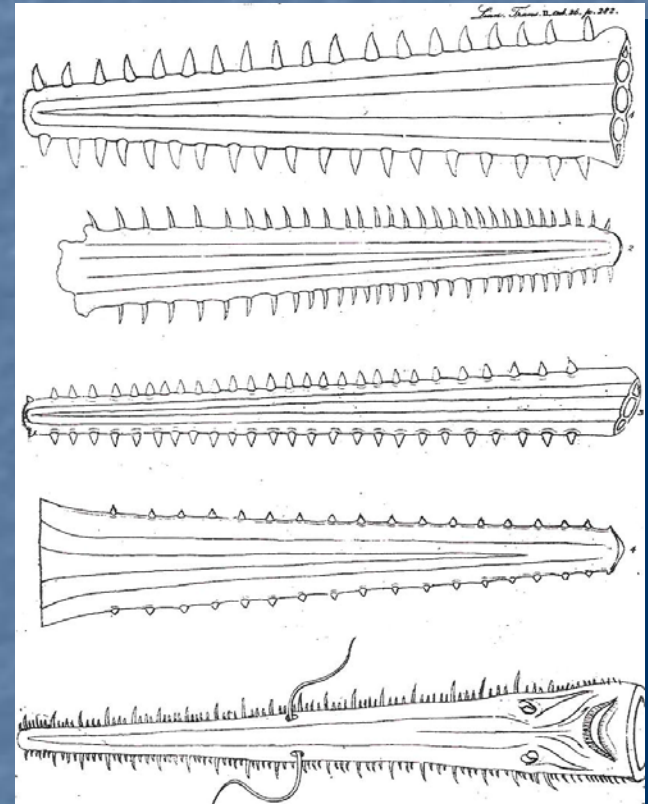
## Other Complications:

- After auction ends, listings are only searchable by title
- Many foreign auctions are not searchable at all after they end

# Can we distinguish rostra to species?


- Yes. ☒
- **Not a new idea**
  - Latham (1794) used:
    - Tooth length
    - Tooth counts
    - Tooth shape
    - Rostral body shape

*But are these characters reliable?*



Latham, J. (1794). An essay on the various species of sawfish. *Transactions of the Linnean Society of London*. 2: 273-282.

# Rostral Characters: *Tooth Length ?*

**Helpful?:** No. 

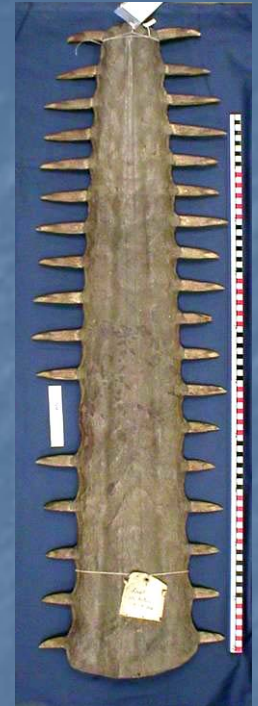
- Tooth length varies in individuals from the same population
- Seems to be impacted by differential wear

Jason Seitz: obtained film of *Pristis pectinata* from Flamingo, FL which had section of PVC pipe around the base of its saw

- Seemingly prevented use of saw in mud-grubbing
- Without this wear, rostral teeth became abnormally long



MR-0027



USNM 00232686

"The size of the teeth cannot be used as a specific character, as it is subject to much individual variation." p. 436

Gunther, A. 1870. Catalogue of the Fishes in the British Museum. Vol. 8. Order of the Trustees, London.

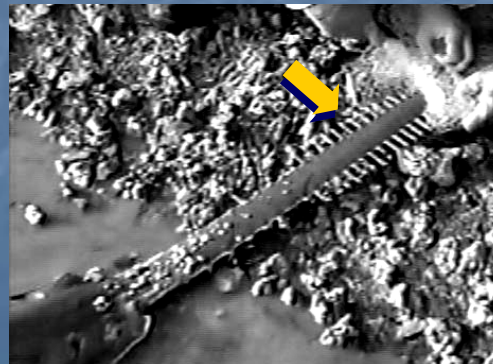
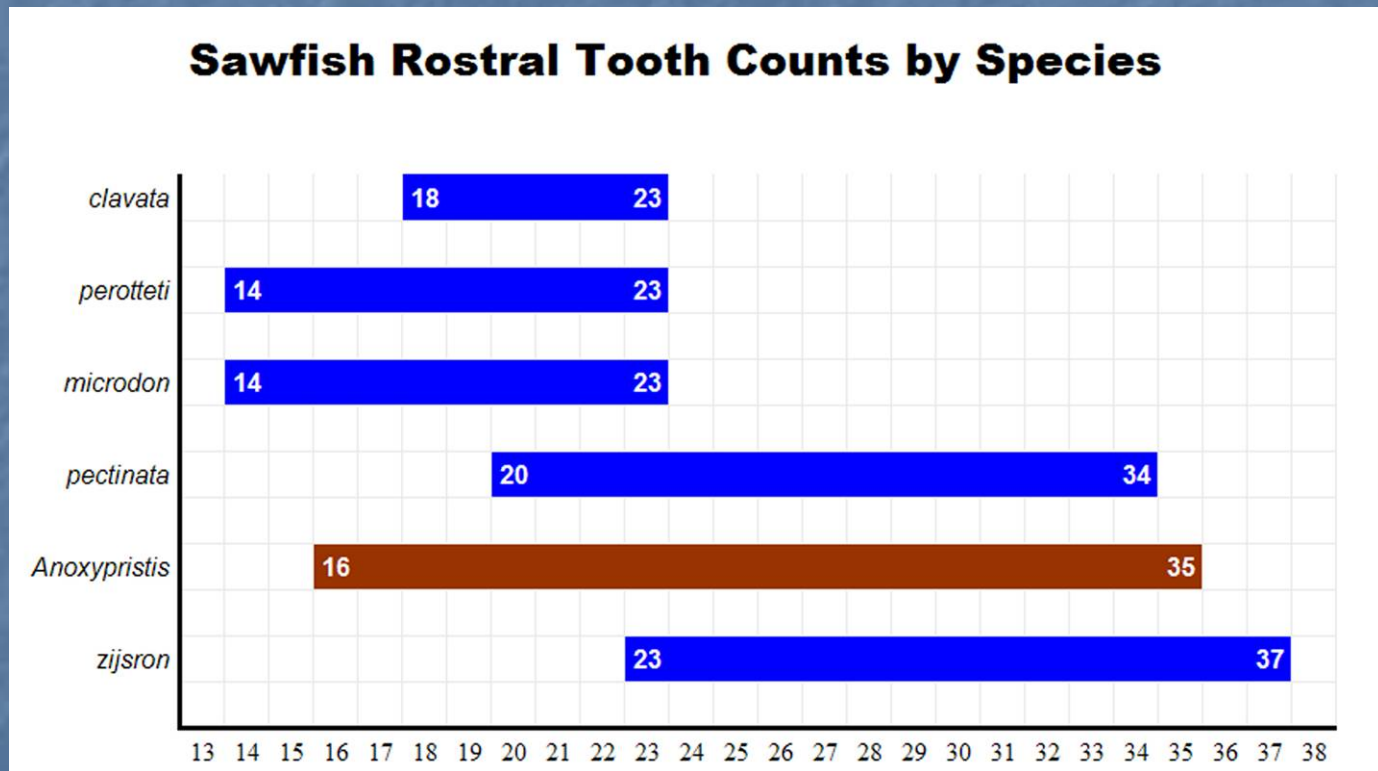


Photo courtesy Jason Seitz

# Rostral Characters: *Tooth Counts ?*

**Helpful?:** Yes & no.  

- There is substantial overlap between the species
  - *But tooth counts can help with initial sorting*
  - *And partial rostra can be misleading*



Sources: Al-Baharna (1986), Compagno & Last (1999), Ishihara, Taniuchi, Sano & Last (1991), Ishihara, Taniuchi & Shimizu (1991), Last & Stevens (1994), Thorson (1973), McDavitt Collection, USNM Collection



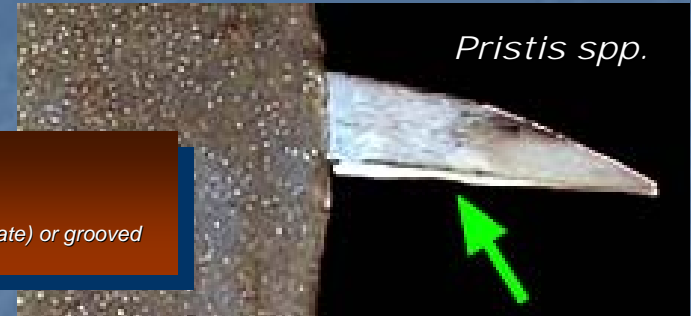
# Rostral Characters: *Tooth Shape ?*

**Helpful?:** Yes & no.  

- Can be used to sort *Anoxypristis* from *Pristis* spp.

## *Pristis* spp. teeth:

- awl-form
- posterior edge flat (neonate) or grooved



## *Anoxypristis* teeth:

- lancet-form
- anterior & posterior edges sharp
- neonate teeth have barb on posterior edge

## Rostral Tooth Cross Section



*Pristis* spp.



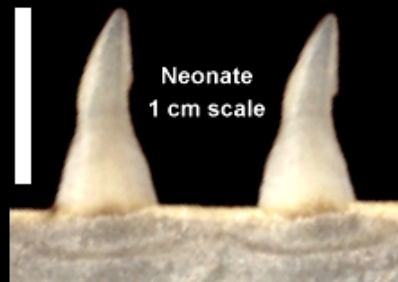
*Anoxypristis*

Neonate rostrum

10 cm 

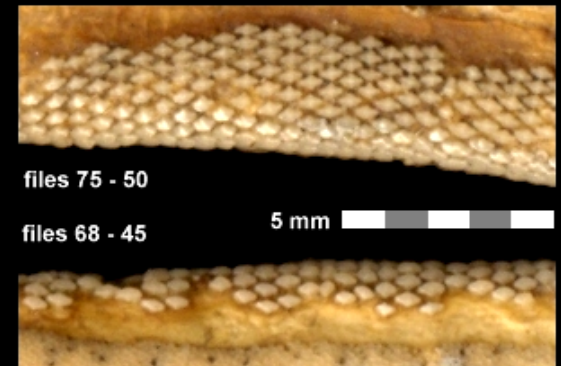


*Anoxypristis cuspidata*  
(Latham, 1794)



Neonate  
1 cm scale

Adult, lateral files (RH)



files 75 - 50

files 68 - 45

5 mm 

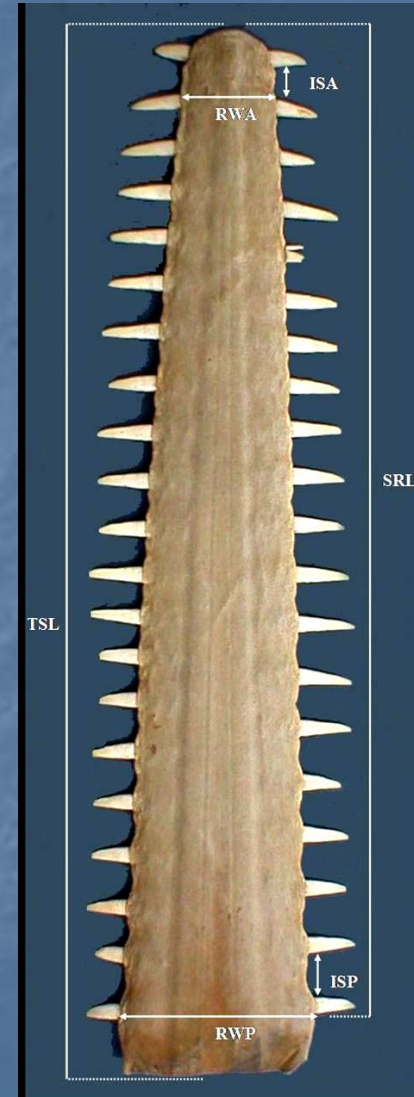
# Proportion 1: *Rostral Body Shape* ?

Helpful?: Yes. ☒

- Combined with other characters, rostral body shape is very useful in distinguishing spp.
- *However, must standardize measurements:*

**Standard Rostral Length** (SRL) – length from anterior tip to posterior edge of posteriormost rostral tooth

**Rostral Width Posterior** (RWP) – rostral body width at the posterior edge of posteriormost rostral tooth



## Proportion 2: *Change in inter-tooth space ?*

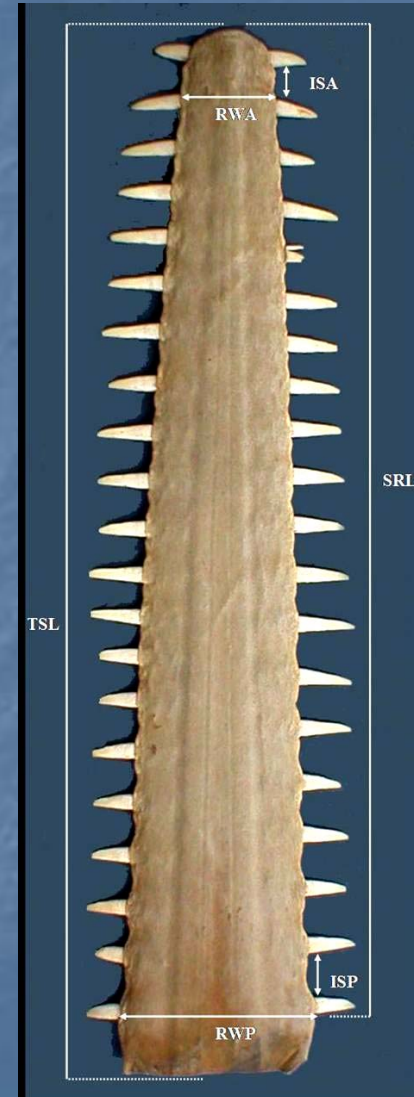
**Helpful?:** Yes. 

- Combined with other characters, change in intertooth space is very useful in distinguishing spp.

Combining rostral body shape proportion with change in intertooth space proportion yields species specific data. . . .



*Photo courtesy Lyle Squire, Jr.*





# Rostral Shape Data Collection

In 2002 & 2004, I examined all available specimens in my collection & the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, **n=122**

## Collections Examined

<b>USNM</b>	72 specimens
<b>McDavitt Collection</b>	50 specimens

## Species Represented

	Qty	
Anoxypristis	16	
largetooth sp.	5	} combined, 56 largetooth specimens
microdon*	12	
perotteti*	39	
clavata	1	
Pectinata	37	
zijsron	12	

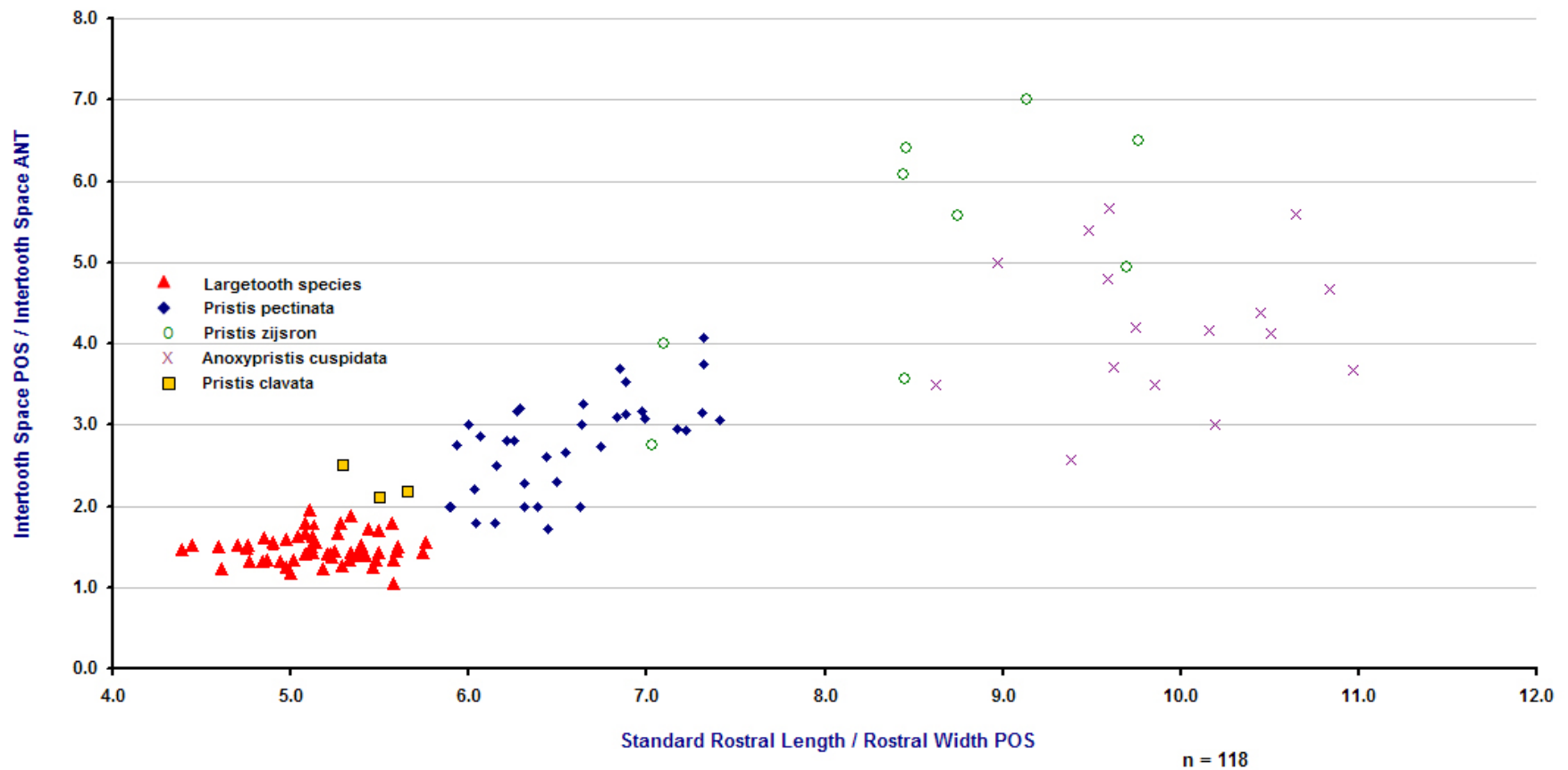
\* By convention, largetooth sawfishes from the Americas and the Atlantic coast of Africa are designated *Pristis perotteti*, while Indo-Pacific examples are named *Pristis microdon*





# Proportional Graph

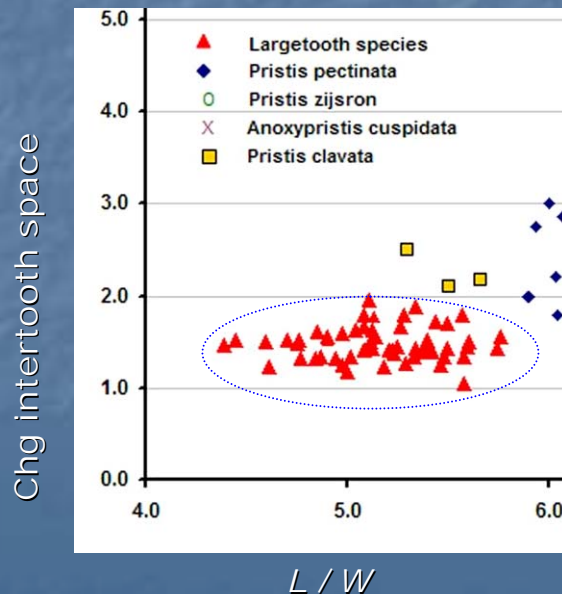
USNM & McDavitt Collection Sawfish Rostra - *Proportional Calculations*



\* Specimens USNM 00232677, USNM 00260349, and MR-0019 not included, as these are probably incomplete

# *Large tooth spp.*

- No morphometric difference between Atlantic & Indo-Pacific largetooth sawfishes
  - It may be that there is a single species?



## *Rostral Proportional Range*

	McDavitt	Compagno & Last 1999
L / W	4.4 - 5.8	5 - 6
Intertooth Space Chg	1.1 - 1.9	1 - 2



# *Pristis clavata*

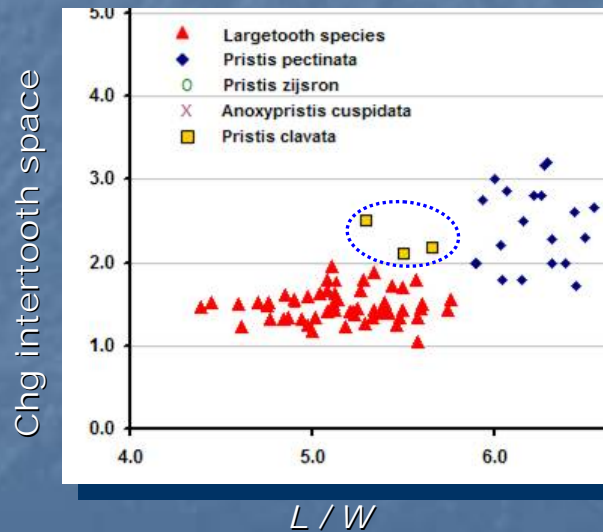
## Rostral Proportional Range

	McDavitt	Compagno & Last 1999
L / W	5.3 – 5.7	6
Intertooth Space Chg	2.1 – 2.5	2

- Length / width proportions fall within range for largetooth spp.

- However, in the three rostra examined, the intertooth space change is higher, between 2.1 – 2.5

- the range for largetooth spp. is: 1.1 – 1.9

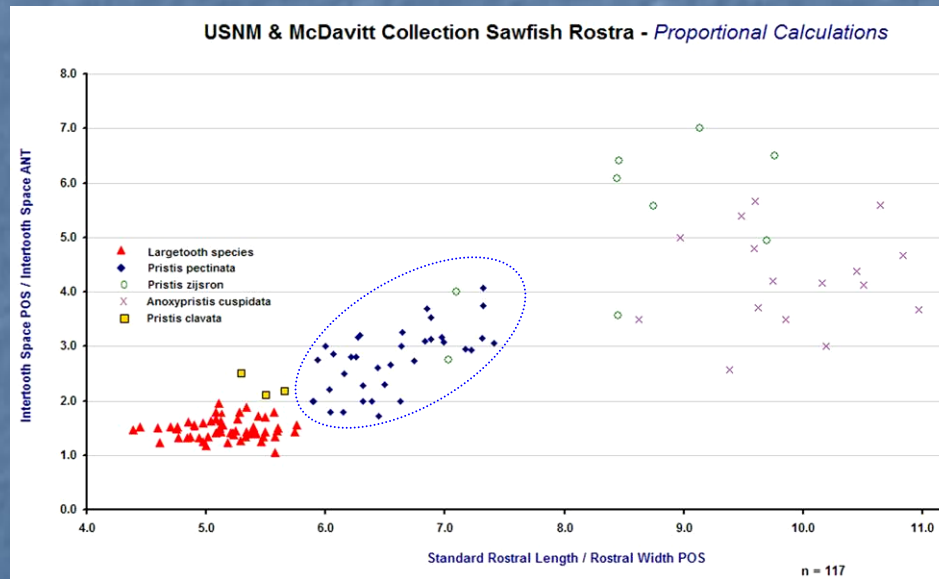


# *Pristis pectinata*

- Proportions midway between the largetooth spp. and *P. zijsron*

## Rostral Proportional Range

	McDavitt	Compagno & Last 1999
L / W	5.9 – 7.4	6 - 8
Intertooth Space Chg	1.7 – 4.1	2 - 4



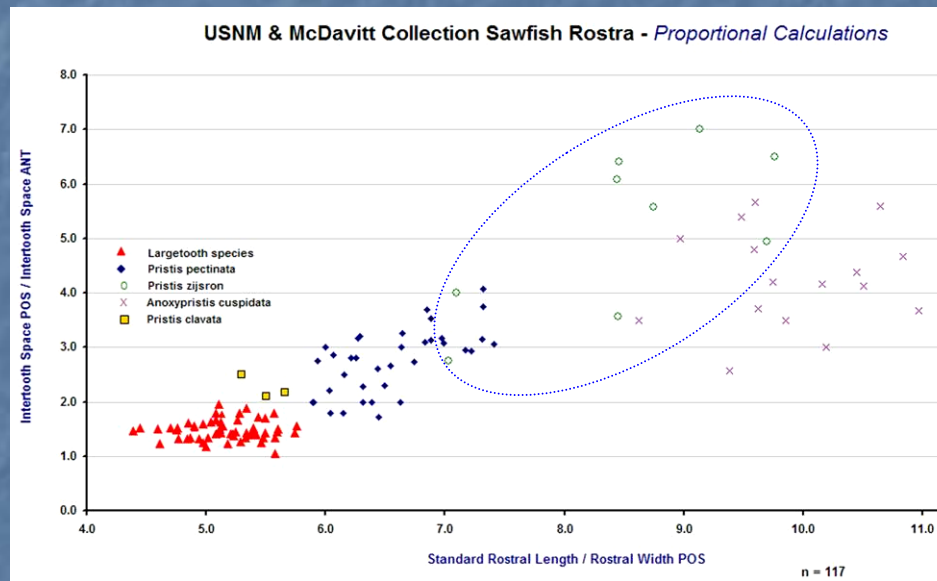


# *Pristis zijsron*

- Much proportional variation with this species
- Most *zijsron* rostra have dramatic increase in inter-tooth space at the basal sets of teeth

## Rostral Proportional Range

	McDavitt	Compagno & Last 1999
L / W	7.0 – 9.8	7 - 10
Intertooth Space Chg	2.8 - 7	2 - 7



- overlap with *pectinata* is not problematic
  - *zijsrons* which overlap are below 227 mm (0.7 ft)
  - *pectinatas* which overlap are above 734 mm (2.4 ft)
- overlap with *Anoxypristis* is not problematic
  - no way to confuse the two species based on tooth shape alone



Photo courtesy Lyle Squire, Jr.

# *Anoxypristis cuspidata*

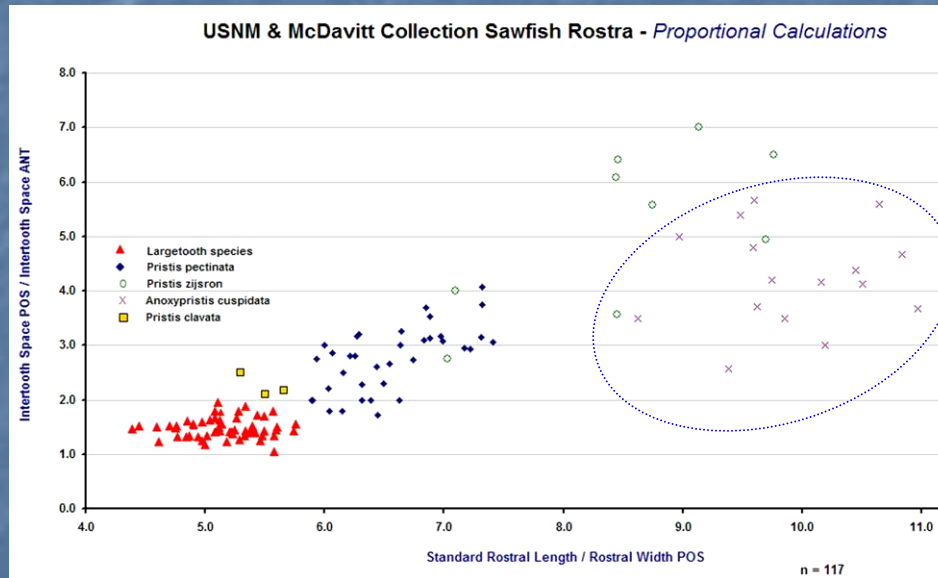
- Proportions overlap with *zijosron*, but no way to confuse the two:

- *Tooth shape*
- *Color (most are light gray)*
- *Tip is often turned up*
- *Basal quarter of saw is toothless*

## *Rostral Proportional Range*

	McDavitt	Compagno & Last 1999
L / W	8.6 - 11	10 - 12 *
Intertooth Space Chg	2.6 - 5.7	4 - 9

\* Measured to rostral base, not posteriormost tooth



# Species I.D.'s from photos?

## ■ Problem

- Most eBay photos are small, low resolution
- Many are taken at an angle
  - Thus, measurements cannot be taken on most eBay photos



## ■ Solution

- Look for character traits of species
  - Anoxypristis: *teeth, and toothless basal 1/4*
  - *P. zijsron*: *dramatic basal intertooth space*
  - Largetooth *wide base and evenly spaced teeth*



Positive I.D. possible in **84.4%** of the listings



# Trade in sawfish saws?

TRAFFIC has little data:

## East Africa

- “frequently available in many curio stalls in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar ”
- Price range: US \$14.30 – 35.70, depending on size & condition

## Madagascar

- “the saws of sawfish are sold occasionally to tourists. . . . for up to about. . . . US \$28”
- “no evidence of an organized trade”

## *Scope of trade?*



### Sources:

Barnett, R. 1997. *The Shark Trade in Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar*, pp. 39 - 66. In: *The Trade in Sharks and Shark Products in the Western Indian and Southern Indian and South East Atlantic Oceans*. TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.

Cooke, A. 1997. *Survey of Elasmobranch Fisheries and Trade in Madagascar*, pp. 101-130. In: *The Trade in Sharks and Shark Products in the Western Indian and Southern Indian and South East Atlantic Oceans*. TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.



# Trade in sawfish saws? II

**Patricia Charvet-Almeida**

*Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi, Brazil*

## Northern Brazil

- She has been documenting trade in sawfish rostra in northern Brazil for several years

### MONTHLY SALES (dry season – 6 mos)

- **Market: Vigia**
  - 150 to 200 small/med saws (200 – 1,000 mm)
  - 10 to 20 large saws (over 1,200 mm)
    - ½ these figures during 6 mos wet season

### ANNUAL SALES (estimated)

- Assuming each of the five major markets have similar numbers as Vigia:



**Annual Trade:** would equal at least **7,200 – 9,900** rostra per year

NOTE: annual estimates are the author's, Charvet-Almeida only provided monthly figures for two markets.

#### Sources:

Charvet-Almeida, Patricia. July 21, 2004. Personal Communication.

Charvet-Almeida, Patricia. 2002. Sawfish Trade in the North of Brazil. **Shark News** 14.

# Trade in sawfish saws? II

Patricia Charvet-Almeida

*Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi, Brazil*

Northern Brazil

## Who is buying them?

### ■ Locals

- *Grind up pieces or small (inexpensive) saws to make asthma cure*

### ■ Cock Fighting Trade

- *Rostral teeth used as artificial spurs for roosters*
- *This sport is illegal in Brazil, so rostral teeth exported*
  - Sophisticated consumers

### ■ Asian Buyers

- *Buy the large rostra for high prices (US \$150 – 500)*
- *Use and destination unknown. . . .*
  - Presumed to be decorations
- *Pay in US \$ cash*



#### Sources:

Charvet-Almeida, Patricia. July 21, 2004. Personal Communication.

Charvet-Almeida, Patricia. 2002. Sawfish Trade in the North of Brazil. **Shark News** 14.

# Non-eBay Auctions

## Some Examples:

### ■ Sotheby's

- Paul de Grande... May 4, 2004
  - Species: largetooth sp. rostrum
  - Length: ?
  - Price: \$563.54 US
- Arcade Auction – Sep 3, 2002
  - Species: 1 zijssron & 2 Anoxypristis
  - Length: zijssron: 590 mm; Anoxy 360 & 340 mm
  - Price: \$337.81 US total
- The Marine Sale – May 29, 2002
  - Species: zijssron
  - Length: 1,385 mm
  - Price: \$343.03 US

### ■ Antiques Roadshow

- *Estimate...* April 5, 2001
  - Species: ?
  - Length: 1,200 mm
  - Estimate: \$717 – 1,148 US

### ■ AntiqueWeek

- *Unstated* – Jan 6, 2003
  - Species: zijssron
  - Length: 1,524 mm
  - Price: \$800 US





# eBay – *rostral sales overview*

Feb 1 – Jul 31, 2004

Auction listings for sawfish rostra	136
Auctions <u>ended</u> during study	130
Auctions <u>active</u> at study end	6
Ended auctions resulting in <b>sale</b>	102
Ended auctions remaining <b>unsold</b>	28
Unsold items relisted	17

% sold of ended	<b>78.5%</b>
% unsold of ended	<b>21.5%</b>

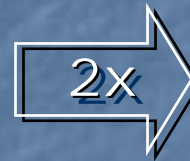




# eBay sawfish rostra – sales statistics

Study Duration: Feb 1 – Jul 31, 2004

<b>Rostra Offered</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>Rostra Sold</b>	<b>105</b>
Avg Length (mm)	726
Avg Auction Duration (days)	7.7
Avg Price (US \$) *	\$112.79
Max Price	\$1,242
Avg Price / 300 mm *	\$47.92
<b>Total Sales</b>	<b>\$12,542</b>



## *Projected Annual Sales on eBay*

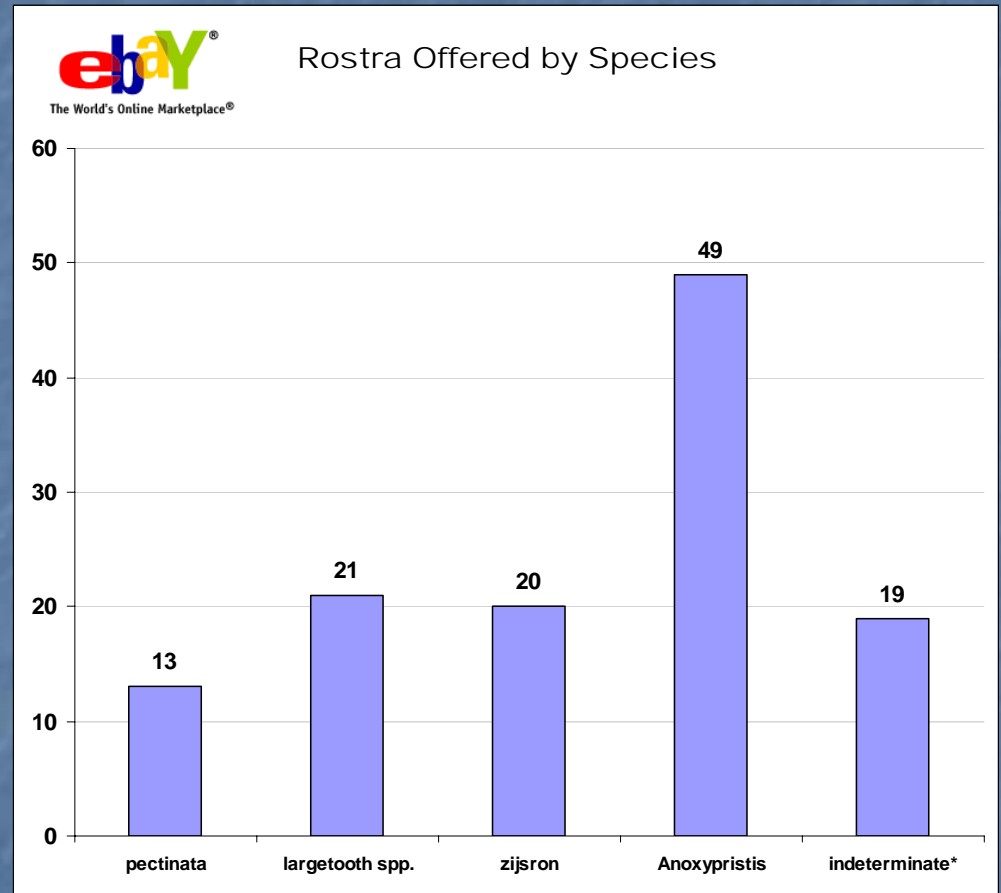
Rostra Offered	244
Rostra Sold	210
<b>Total Sales</b>	<b>\$25,084</b>

*Assumes current trends continue*

\* Prices exclude culturally modified rostra

# eBay: Stats by Species

	Rostra Offered	% of Offered
Unique rostra offered	122	100%
Anoxypristis	49	40.2%
largetooth spp.	21	17.2%
zijsron	20	16.4%
indeterminate	19	15.6%
pectinata	13	10.7%



**indeterminate:** means either *P. pectinata* or *P. zijsron*, where photo was insufficient to make positive I.D.

# Indeterminate category

## Indeterminate

- partial rostra
- Where photo insufficient to make I.D.
  - *Mostly pectinata & zijsron*

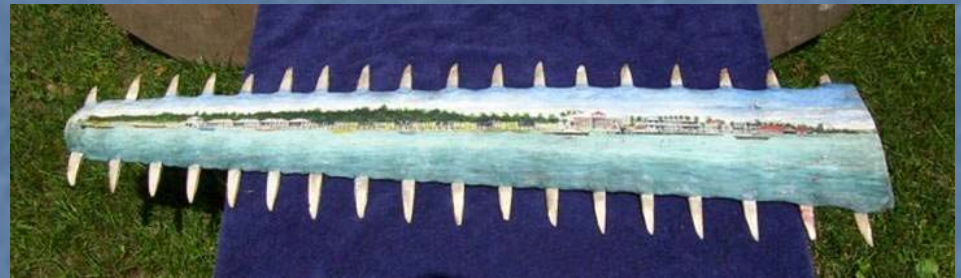


15.6 % of sawfish rostra offered



# Culturally Modified

- Some rostra are painted, or fashioned into artifacts (*7 in this study*)
- This enhances their value
  - *These were excluded from price averages*



*Sale Price: \$422 (2.5 times expected price given size)*



*Sale Price: \$422 (1.5 times expected price given size)*



# Stats by Species



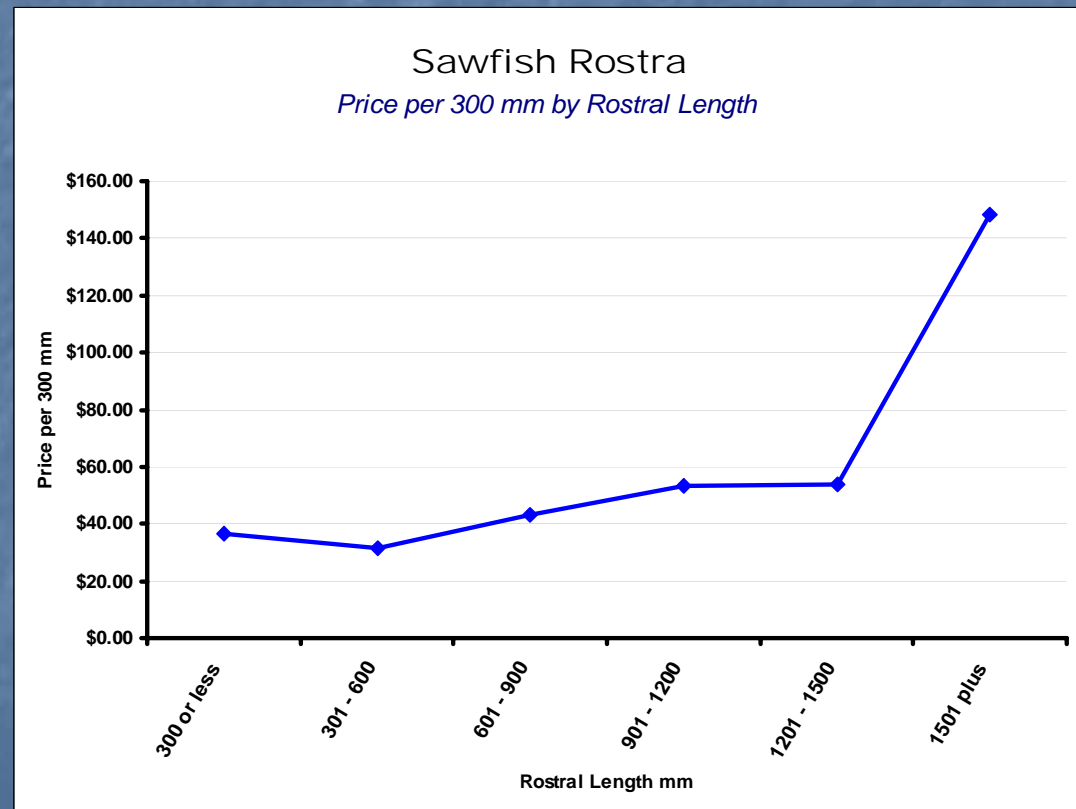
	Overall	pectinata	Anoxypristis	indeterminate	Targetooth spp.	zijosron
Rostra Offered	122	13	49	19	21	20
Rostra Sold	105	11	41	17	19	17
Avg Length (mm)	726	597	600	666	766	1,116
Avg Price (\$ US) *	\$112.79	\$66.41	\$71.96	\$114.56	\$90.07	\$261.17
Max Price (\$ US)	\$1,242.00	\$178.50	\$333.92	\$489.95	\$500.00	\$1,242.00
Price per 300 mm *	\$47.92	\$36.96	\$37.02	\$51.00	\$37.19	\$71.05
% of Rostra Off'd	100%	10.7%	40.2%	15.6%	17.2%	16.4%

# What are rostra worth? – *Length vs. Price*

- Species is *not* the factor influencing price
- *Size is. . . .*

Avg Price per 300 mm:


<i>Rostral Length</i>	<i>Price / 300 mm</i>
<b>300 or less</b>	\$36.56
<b>301 - 600</b>	\$31.25
<b>601 - 900</b>	\$43.41
<b>901 - 1200</b>	\$53.17
<b>1201 - 1500</b>	\$53.86
<b>1501 plus</b>	\$148.07

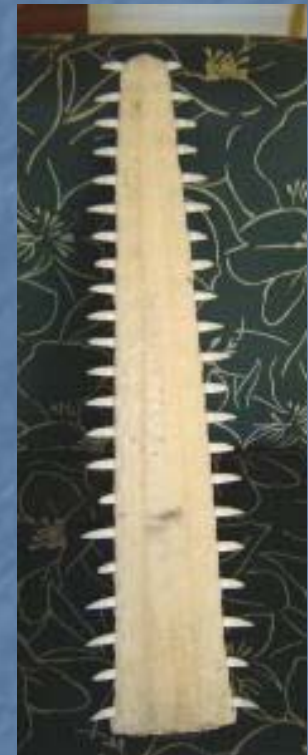


\* Data excludes culturally modified rostra (which have above normal prices)

# Comparison: *sawfish vs. swordfish*



 The World's Online Marketplace®		
	Swordfish Bills (Xiphias)	Sawfish Rostra (Pristidae)
Dates Tracked	Feb 15 - Apr 6, 2004	Feb 1 - July 31, 2004
Total Days	52	182
Sales	22 *	99 *
Avg Length (mm)	604	706
Avg Price (US \$)	\$17.89	\$112.79
Max Price	\$32	\$1,242
Avg Price / 300 mm	\$8.88	\$47.92
Avg # Bidders	2.0	3.6
Avg Auction Duration	3.7	7.7
% Sold of Listed	76.7%	79.8%
Avg Active Listings / Day	3	6.7



\* sales exclude culturally modified examples which inflate average values

# Listed & Sold per Month

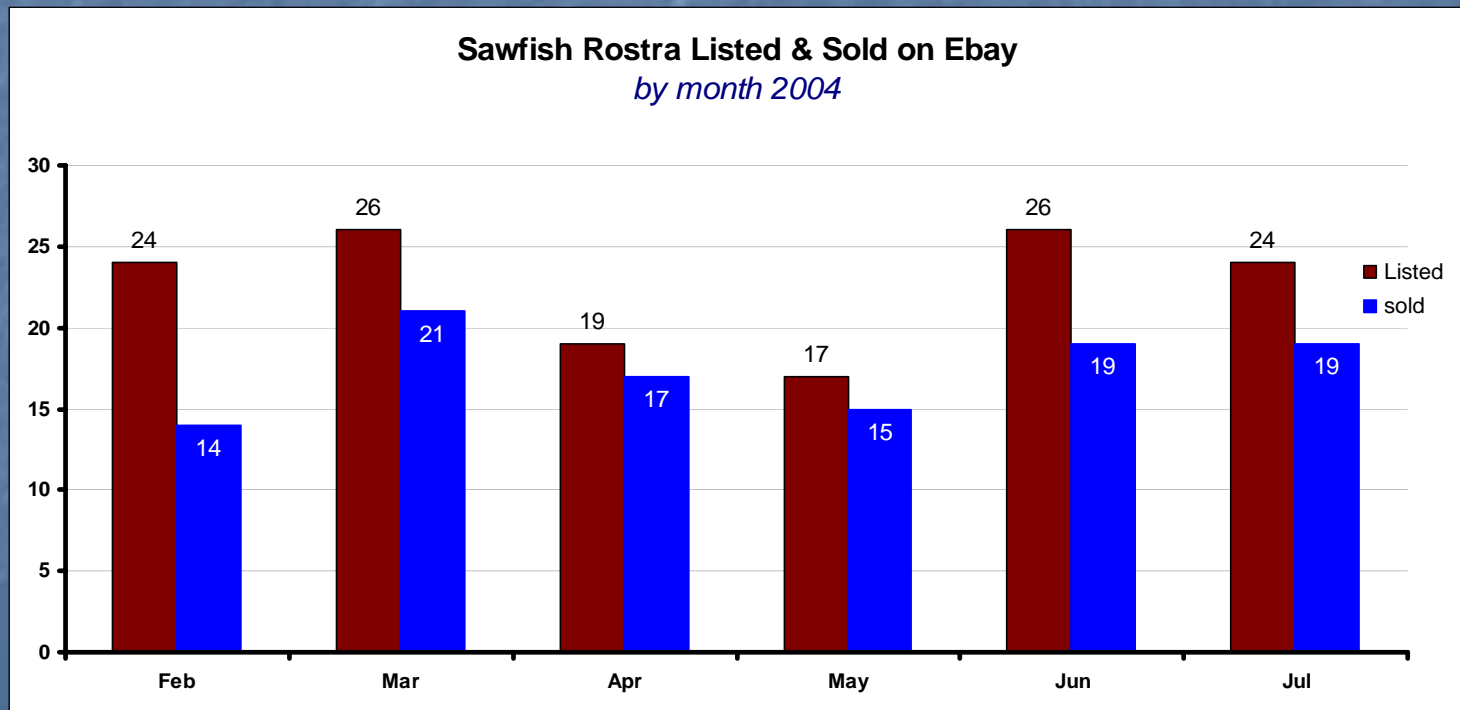
Avg New Listings for Rostra per Month: 22.7

Avg Rostral Sales per Month: 17.5



*Projected Annual Listings  
& Sales*

Rostra Listed	272
Rostra Sold	210





# Active Listings

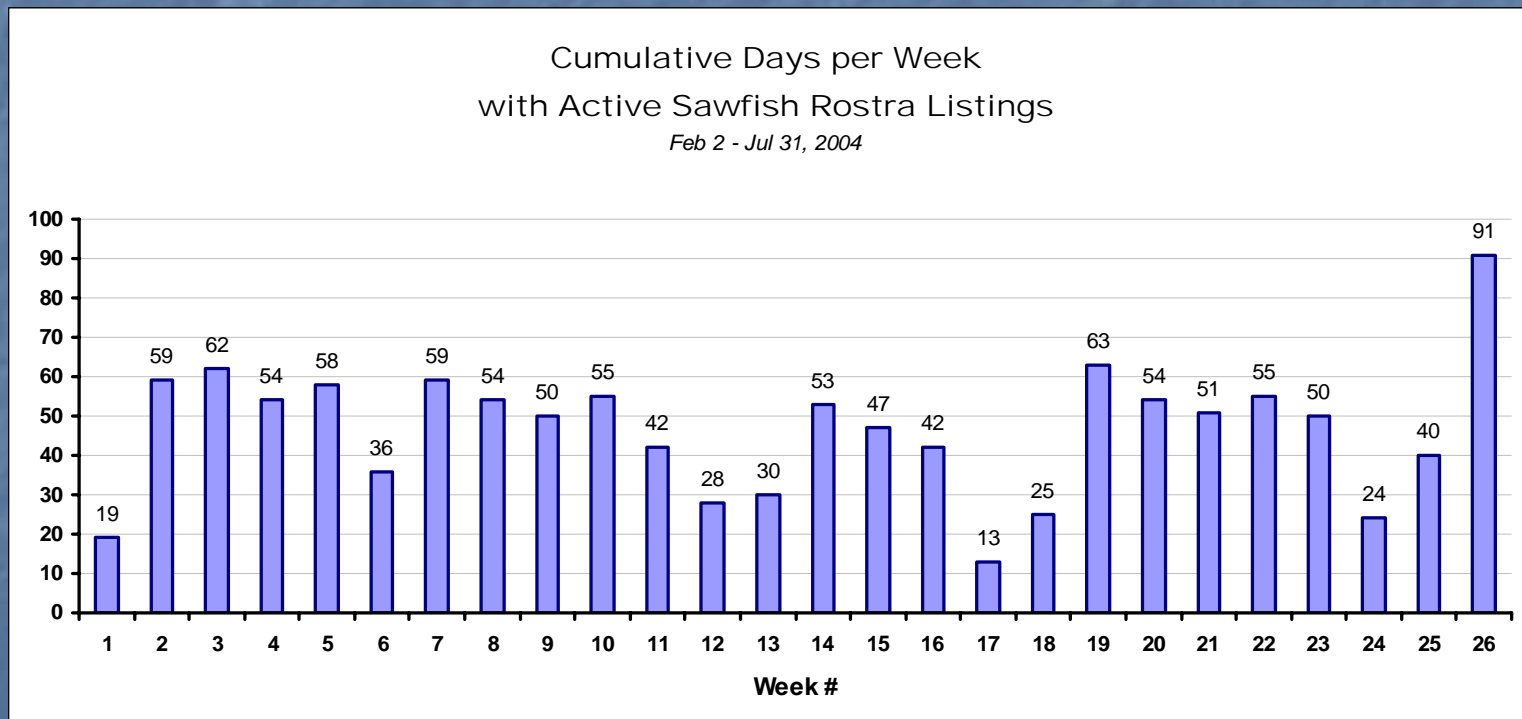
## Avg Active Listings

per day: 6.7

min: 1

max: 15

Example: 7 days x 6 listings = 42



# Repeat Sellers

- 85 successful sellers; 105 rostra sold
- 60% were one-time sellers of sawfish rostra
- 11.8% of sellers sold two rostra

## Top 3 repeat sellers:

eBay I.D.	Rostra Sold	Total Earned \$	Nationality	% of Rostra Sold
peterpansemp	7	\$452.18	Australia	6.7%
e-consignor	4	\$81.00	U.S.A	3.8%
cshelloz	3	\$139.08	U.S.A	2.8%



# #1 Repeat Seller – Noosa Antiques

- Shop located in Cairns, Australia
  - eBay ID: peterpansemper

During Study period:

Listings	19
Unique rostra	10
Sales	7

Since Dec. 2002 (based on website information)

Noosa has offered (*mostly on eBay*): at least  
**52 sawfish rostra**

	Qty	Avg L (mm)	Overall eBay Avg L
Anoxypristis	44	718	600
microdon	2	1027	766
zipsron	6	1113	1116



**Also of interest:** Noosa includes scientific name with all rostra – *which were correct 100% of the time*

# #1 Repeat Seller – Noosa Antiques II

Where are they getting these saws?

- Two possibilities near Cairns:

Annual Reported Bycatch of Sawfishes	
Northern Prawn Fishery	2,380 / year
QLD beach shark-meshing	66.7 / year

*Total Annual Bycatch: 2,447 sawfishes*



## Sources:

Pender, P.J., R.S. Willing and D.C. Ramm, 1992. **Northern prawn fishery bycatch study: distribution, abundance, size and use of bycatch from the mixed species fishery.** Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries, Fishery Report 26. 70 p.

QDPI. 1992. **Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Operation and Maintenance of Shark Meshing Equipment in Queensland Waters.** QDPI, Brisbane.



# Repeat Buyers

- 80 unique buyers; 105 total rostra sold
- 88.8% were one-time buyers of sawfish rostra

## Top 5 repeat buyers:

eBay I.D.	Rostra Purchased	Total Spent \$	Nationality	% of Rostra Sold
dorevera	12	<b>\$1,258.79</b>	Belgium	11.4%
lamna344	5	\$230.22	Italy	4.8%
luvcash	3	\$359.74	U.S.	2.9%
olddriverroad10i2	3	\$156.00	U.S.	2.9%
sawfishcreek	3	<b>\$2,094.50</b>	U.S.	2.9%

# Nationality of Buyers & Sellers

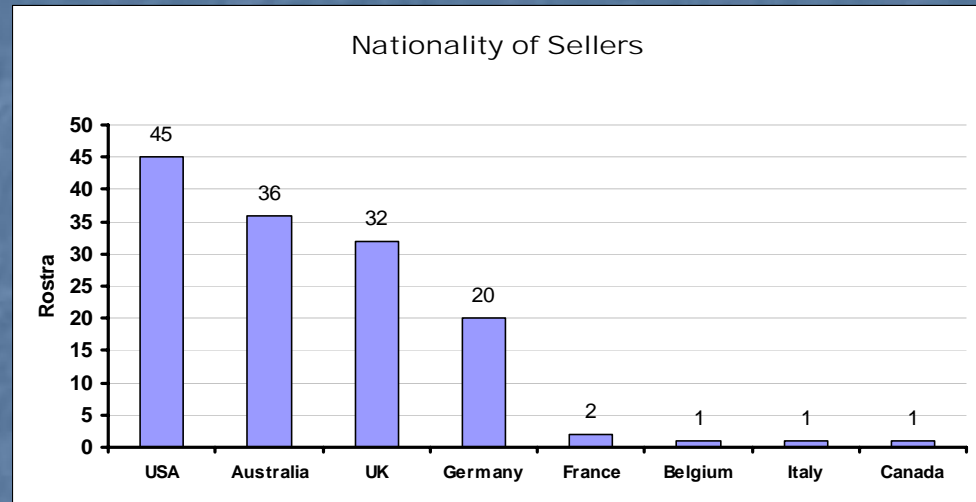
Listings with Nationality Data: 138

Domestic Sales: 64.3%

International Sales: 35.7%

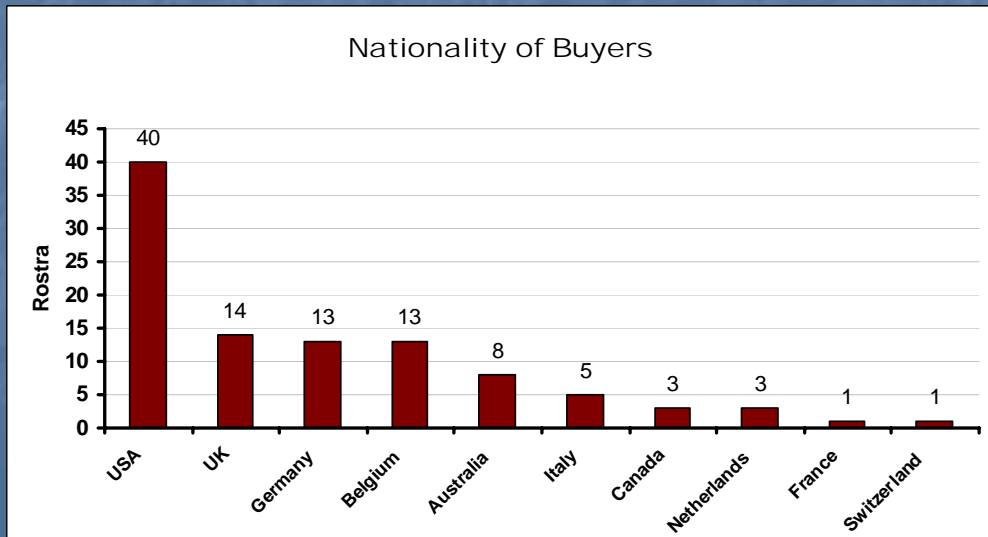
Nationality of Sellers		
	Rostra	% TTL
USA	45	33%
Australia	36	26%
UK	32	23%
Germany	20	14%
France	2	1%
Belgium	1	1%
Italy	1	1%
Canada	1	1%
	138	

Based on all listings



Nationality of Buyers		
	Rostra	% TTL
USA	40	40%
UK	14	14%
Germany	13	13%
Belgium	13	13%
Australia	8	8%
Italy	5	5%
Canada	3	3%
Netherlands	3	3%
France	1	1%
Switzerland	1	1%
	101	

Excludes 4 buyers whose identity was kept private



# *Pristis pectinata* sales by country

- 13 offered for sale
- 11 sold
  - 7.7% of listings for this species mentioned its protected status

## **Pristis pectinata Rostra Sold**

Seller	Buyer	Qty Sold
U.S.A.	U.S.A.*	5
U.S.A.	Belgium	4
U.S.A.	Canada	1
U.K.	U.K	1



\* of rostra sold domestically in the United States, it remains unknown how many were interstate purchases, but logically most would be

*eBay does not release Buyer state of residence except to law enforcement for a specific investigation*

Source: Joe Sullivan, eBay Prohibited Items Dept., contact: [jsullivan@ebay.com](mailto:jsullivan@ebay.com)

# Where are the rostra coming from?

- Total non-duplicate listings: **119**
- *Of these, 30.3% had data on where seller obtained rostrum:*

Estate sale	33.3%
Inherited from relative	33.3%
Found in house / furniture	13.9%
Private collection	11.1%
Purchased from business	8.3%
Caught by seller, relatives	0%



## Implication:

- *rostra appear to be older*
- ***Compare to swordfish bills:*** 86.4% stated to have been caught off Grand Banks



# Capture Data?

- *Total non-duplicate listings: 119*
  - **14.3%** provided capture location / origin
  - **6.7%** provided capture date

8	Australia
1	Papua New Guinea
1	Indonesia
1	India
1	Oman
2	Africa
1	Florida
1	stated Greece

## Reported Capture Dates

c. 1900
c. 1920
c. 1923
1937
1950
1950's
c. 1960
1968

## Observations:

- *rostra appear to be older*
- *Apparently capture details are not retained for the majority of rostra*



# Final Thoughts

- What have we learned?:
  - Sawfish trade on eBay is regular
    - *With an average of 6.7 active listings on any given day*
  - Sawfish rostra are valuable
    - *i.e. – more valuable than swordfish bills*
  - Many (or all) species are represented, from diverse regions
  - Most sales are between buyers & sellers who do not regularly deal in sawfish rostra
  - Capture details are not available for the majority of rostra offered
- Use of this data?:
  - Provide information about illegal sales of *Pristis pectinata* for FWS / NOAA law enforcement
  - Facilitate communication between FWS / NOAA & eBay Prohibited Items Dept.
  - Quantitative data for CITES proposals
  - Information for other countries protecting sawfish populations (*ex.: Australia*)

