



In one form or another, sharks have been around for about 400 million years. Even before dinosaurs roamed the earth, sharks hunted through the oceans. They're such good survivors that they've had little need to evolve in the last 150 million years. Sharks belong to the class of fish, Chondrichthyes. Sharks have the most powerful jaws on the planet.

Unlike most animals' jaws, both the sharks' upper and lower jaws move. A shark bites with its lower jaw first and then its upper. It tosses its head back and forth to tear loose a piece of meat which it swallows whole. Each type of shark has a different shaped tooth depending on their diet (the shark in the photo is a great white). A shark may grow and use over 20,000 teeth in its lifetime! Normally, sharks eat alone. But sometimes one feeding shark attracts others. They swim up as quickly as possible and all begin to try to get a piece of the prey. They bite wildly at anything that gets in their way—even each other. The great white shark rarely partakes in feeding frenzies. [<http://www.kidzone.ws/sharks/facts3.htm>]

Well, how's that for getting your attention! Sharks would make a neat small category, don't you think? The idea occurred to me when I happened upon the above cover from Sea World Shark Institute. It's a nice cover...nice drawing...hmmmm...nice category? I *have* known collectors who have collected *fish*, but I don't think I've ever run into anyone who specifically requested sharks. They've certainly got more character than just...*fish!* Sounds good to me....There's...just...one...small...problem...

As far as *I* know, there's only this one shark cover in the entire world! I can't remember ever having seen others. So, as fascinating a category as this promises to be, it may well be your *smallest* small category! On the other hand, Chester Crill, CA, who collects *every* small category ever imagined and unimagined, has 43 Shark covers, including four boxes and seven with...pool cues (!)

Does this hobby have variety or what?!