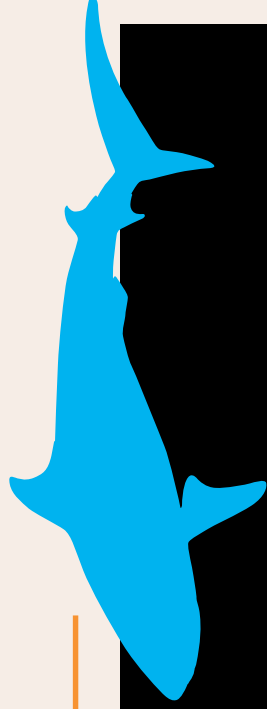


BIG NEWS



THE GLOW IN THE DARK SHARKS

SCIENTISTS have discovered three kinds of deepwater shark that can glow in the dark!

The kitefin shark, blackbelly lanternshark and southern lanternshark are found in the deep seas, east of New Zealand. Experts have recently discovered that they can produce a blue-green light in their skin!

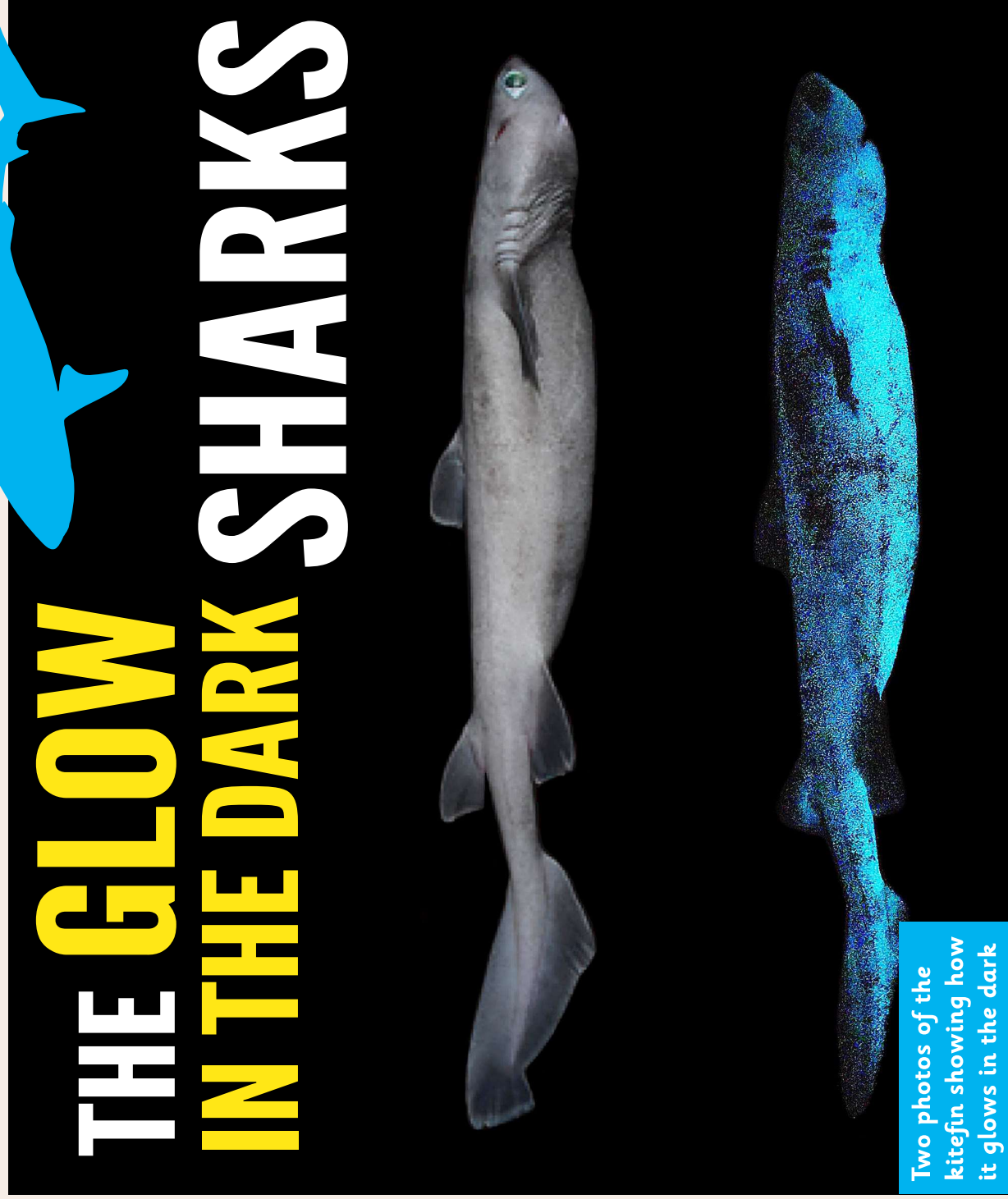
The ability of a creature to make light is called **bioluminescence** – “**bio-loom-in-ess-ense**”.

The kitefin shark is the largest known vertebrate (creature with bones) on the planet that can do this. It grows to be about six foot long (180cm) – about the same size as a man. Giant squid, which grow much bigger, also produce light.

Being able to create light when you live in the deep ocean can be extremely useful. It is used to attract prey and may help animals communicate with each other.

The sharks might use it as camouflage. When seen from below, a glowing belly would help the shark blend in with the brighter ocean surface.

It's thought the sharks could also use light to illuminate the ocean floor when searching for food.



Two photos of the kitefin showing how it glows in the dark

Questions on: 'The glow in the dark sharks'

1) Where do these sharks live?

Part of the ocean:

- shallows
- mid-ocean
- deep water

Part of the world:

- Southeast Asia
- east of New Zealand
- Arctic

2) What colour light is made by the sharks and where in the creature is it made?

The colour:

Area of the body:

3) What long word describes light made by living creatures?

4) What is a vertebrate?

5) Why would it be wrong to say the kitefin is the largest creature in the world that makes light?

6) How does the light help to camouflage the sharks?

7) Can you find three other reasons why it's useful for creatures to make light in the deep ocean?

8) Imagine a future where scientists give humans the ability to make light. How would you light up your body?

What would you use your light for?