



SPRING / SUMMER 2012

SHARK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Newsletter

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Status of Sharkfin Trade Bills in the USA



Four Pacific states – California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington – and the U.S. territories of Guam and Northern Mariana Islands have already passed bills providing critical protection to rapidly dwindling populations sharks and the health of the world's ocean ecosystems by banning the possession, sale, trade and distribution of shark fins. Similar bills are still pending in other states.

Illinois: On March 8, the House passed HB 4119 by a vote of 81-33. On April 25, Illinois Senate Environment Committee passed HB 4119 with a vote of 7-1. The Chinese community and restaurants have been supporting this legislation. The deadline for the final reading is May 25. If you live in Illinois please call your senator and ask him/her to support HB

4119. They are only accepting calls from constituents.

New York: More than a quarter of the state legislature has demonstrated their support for the sharkfin trade bill: S.6421 / A.7707a. As of May 3, 15 of the 62 Senators have signed on as sponsors of the bill, and 41 of the 150 members of the Assembly are sponsors. A coalition of conservation organizations, including SRI, are supporting the legislation. On May 17, at 1 pm, a rally/press conference will be held on the steps of City Hall at 260 Broadway in lower Manhattan. Please join the rally to demonstrate your support for the bill. If you live in New York, please call your senator and assembly member to urge them to support the bill.

New Jersey: A coalition to support the New Jersey legislation has been formed by SRI and the Humane Society of the United States. The Senate bill, S.1764 (Bateman), was referred to the Senate Economic Growth Committee, chaired by Senator Raymond Lesniak who has a history of supporting conservation bills. On May 3, Senator Lesniak submitted an almost identical bill (S.1922) which includes a definition of shark, and both S.1764 and S.1922 are in his committee. The committee will take testimony on the bills at 10:30 am on May 14 in the State House Annex in Trenton. If you are able to attend please let us know. If you have a relationship with any legislators in NJ, please encourage them to sign on as co-sponsors to the sharkfin trade bills.

Another identical bill, A.2719 (Wagner), was referred to the Assembly's Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Nelson T. Albano, who represents Cape May, a district with a number of commercial

fishing interests. The only objections to either the New York or New Jersey bills have come from the spiny dogfish lobby who want be able to sell fins from the small sharks. Unfortunately, dogfish fins cannot be distinguished from fins of endangered species of small sharks.

Many species of sharks are on a fast track to extinction. If shark populations are to recover, the market for their fins needs to end.

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New Shark Species Identified

In 2005, scientists from Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center sampling sharks caught on charter boats off Fort Lauderdale made a startling discovery: Some of the sharks that looked like scalloped hammerheads, *Sphyrna lewini*, were a new species. It is very hard to tell the two species apart; Only the differences in their DNA and number of vertebrae reveal their true identities.

Professor Mahmood Shivji's team first discovered the new hammerhead species when examining the DNA of sharks thought to be scalloped hammerheads based on their physical appearance. "These sharks are completely genetically different," said Shivji. Initially, the new species was thought to be a local anomaly. Then it turned up in waters off South Carolina and off the coast of southern Brazil. Nuclear and mitochondrial DNA sequences demonstrated that this cryptic lineage also occurs in the western South Atlantic Ocean, extending its distribution >7,000 km from its only previously reported location. Coalescent analysis (ITS2 locus) yielded a divergence estimate of ~4.5 million years between *S. lewini* and the cryptic lineage. These genetic assessments indicate that at least seven percent of the sharks in U.S. waters, originally thought to be scalloped hammerheads, are the newly identified species.

The discovery – described in the April issue of the scientific journal *Marine Biology** – means both the scalloped hammerhead and its lookalike could be in serious danger due to overfishing. Lookalike species have skewed population data in the past. Java sharks (*Carcharhinus amboinensis*) were misidentified as Zambesi sharks (*C. leucas*) along the South African coast until the late 1960s.

Hammerhead sharks are hunted worldwide mostly for their fins for use in sharkfin soup. Millions have been killed for the luxury soup, upsetting the balance of ocean ecosystems in which they are a top predator. "It's very important to officially recognize, name, and learn more about this new hammerhead species and the condition of its populations through systematic surveys," Shivji says

The scalloped hammerhead is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) red list of endangered species. The species is also currently under review by NOAA Fisheries Service to determine whether it should be listed as a threatened or endangered species. The unnamed species is not on either list. "If you don't really curtail fishing of the scalloped hammerhead, you'll also overfish a species that hasn't been officially acknowledged," Shivji said. "Without management intervention to curtail its inadvertent killing, we run the risk that overfishing could eradicate an entire shark species before its existence is even properly acknowledged."

*D. Pinhal, M. S. Shivji, M. Vallinoto, D. D. Chapman, O. B. F. Gadig and C. Martins (2012), Cryptic hammerhead shark lineage occurrence in the western South Atlantic revealed by DNA analysis. *Marine Biology*, 159:4 (829-836).

700-year-old Medallion in Shark



The 7.4 x 6 cm artifact weighs 10 grams

On February 22, 2012, 47-year-old Suseela Menon purchased a shark at the market in Klebang, Malaysia. As she was preparing to cook the shark in a curry, she found a medallion in the fish.

The medallion dates from the 13th century. One side bears the profile of a woman wearing a crown, while the other side shows a crucifix. According to a local historian, the profile is that of Elizabeth, consort of King Dionysius I of Portugal who reigned from 1279 to 1325. It was thought the medallion may have been carried by a soldier during the Portuguese colonization of Malaysia in 1511

The family reportedly gave up eating shark because of the religious elements of the medallion.

Thank You to Our Supporters!

We are very grateful for the continued support of:

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- **World Wildlife Fund**
- **Josip Zeko**

A Major Donation That Costs You Nothing

Spring is the time of year many homes go on the market. If you are thinking of buying or selling a home, you can make a big donation to the Shark Research Institute — and it won't cost you a dime.



**My
Broker
Donates**

My Broker Donates matches our supporters with caring, qualified real-estate brokers who have agreed to donate 15% of their fee to the Shark Research Institute.

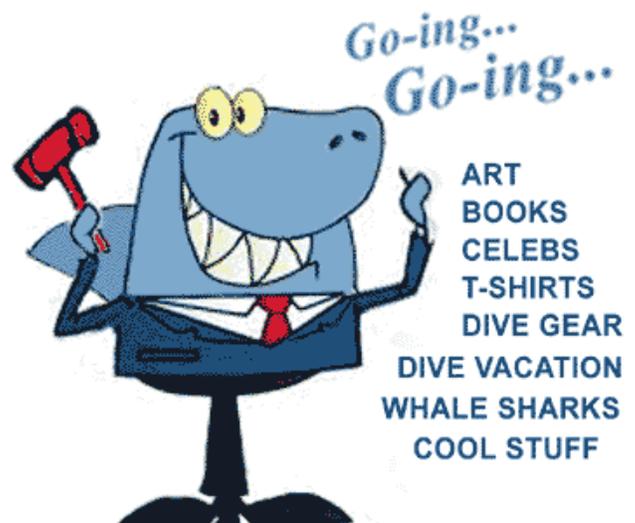
That is money we can use to save sharks from destructive fishing practices and to educate people about these magnificent animals.

Please visit www.mybrokerdonates.com to learn more the program.

SRI SPRING AUCTION

To Benefit our Conservation Programs

Look for the Catalog on our website.



WELCOME to SRI's Two New Board Members

Mark J. Rovner is an accomplished and creative non-profit leader. He is a sought-after public speaker and writer on organizational branding, internet marketing, and non-profit strategy.

He is the Founder and CEO of the Washington-based Sea Change Strategies, a boutique agency providing communications, fundraising and marketing work for non-profits. Over the course of his 30-year career, Mark has advanced and helped to reinvent cause-based communications and public engagement. As Vice President for Communications at World Wildlife Fund, Mark dramatically expanded awareness of WWF and the urgent conservation causes it works on. He served as the coordinating producer of an Emmy-winning HBO children's special on endangered wildlife. He also served as chief architect of the multi-million dollar Living Planet Campaign.

As an Internet communications guru since 1999, Mark has helped shape pioneering strategies and tactics for Environmental Defense Fund, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Sierra Club, Southern Poverty Law Center, Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union and many others.

Mark sits on numerous Boards including the National Aquarium in DC, the Bridge Fund, the Coral Reef Alliance, the Tenzin Gyatso Institute, and the Rigpa Fellowship. He is Chairman of the Board emeritus of the International Campaign for Tibet.

Mark has a law degree from Georgetown and more recently a certificate in feature film screenwriting from University of California, Los Angeles (extension program). He is a passionate diver, loves sharks, and is committed to marine conservation issues.

Ellen Winsor Chaffin has a solid background in the fundraising, diving and hospitality industries. From 2004-2011, she served as Director of Operations and Training at Low Key Watersports and Savannah's Boutique, a luxury dive operator and training facility in St. John, US Virgin Islands.

From 2001 through 2004 she worked for The Philadelphia Museum of Art, initially as a Grants Associate and then as Manager of Annual Giving where she was responsible for raising more than \$1 million annually in general operating support. Specializing in the identification and solicitation of six-figure gifts from individuals, foundations and federal grants, Ellen has a strong background in event planning and coordination, stewardship and cultivation of individual and foundation donors, and developing long-term fundraising strategies for programmatic development.

Ellen received a B.A. in History of Art with honors from The Johns Hopkins University, and an M.A. in History of Art with a concentration in Medieval Art from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A strong advocate of conservation enterprise and eco-tourism initiatives, Ellen is an experienced underwater naturalist and scuba diving instructor and has been diving for over 25 years.



Palau celebrates its 10th Annual Shark Week March 14-21, 2012

Shark Week takes place annually during the grey reef shark mating season as hundreds of the sharks aggregate on Palau's reefs. In 2002, to take advantage of this ocean spectacle and celebrate the arrival of the sharks, the Micronesian Shark Foundation and Fish'n Fins developed Shark Week. Now, ten years later, this event continues to attract divers, shark scientists, filmmakers decision makers, marine enforcement officials, conservation advocates, and sport divers from around the world.



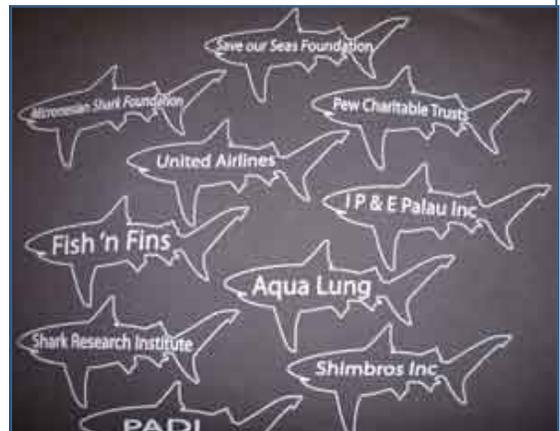
Palau Shark Week 2012 was officially opened by Palau's Vice-President who restated the importance of sharks to Palau. On September 25, 2009, Palau's president, the Honorable Johnson Toribiong announced at the UN summit in New York that the entire territorial waters of the Republic of Palau were a safe haven for sharks, making it the first world's first shark sanctuary. The importance of sharks to Palau is obvious as soon as you step out of the plane from the signs and banners highlighting the shark sanctuary to opportunities to dive with sharks.



During the week participants assisted researchers with data collection, and dived world-famous sites such as Blue Corner, Peleliu Corner and Shark City. After each day of diving, there are lectures, presentations and screening of documentary films, providing divers an opportunity to observe these magnificent sharks.

"My role was to provide scientific information about sharks and the role of wildlife tourism to Shark Week participants," said Jupp Baron Kerckerinck zur Borg, President of the Shark Research Institute. "I hope my lecture increased the divers' passion for sharks and aids in the long-term sustainability of shark populations."

An elegant ceremony to honor the closing of shark week took place at Fish 'n Fins. The evening events included a local gourmet buffet and speeches from some of shark weeks' honored guests: Johnson Toribiong, President of the Republic of Palau; Novat and Tova Bornavski of Fish'N Fins; SRI's Jupp Baron Kerckerinck zur Borg; Drew Richardson, President of PADI; and Angelo O' Connor Villagomez, Senior Associate of PEW.



Shark Week 2012 was organized by the Micronesian Shark Foundation and Fish'n Fins, and sponsored by Shark Research Institute, Save Our Seas Foundation, Pew Charitable Trust, PADI, United Airlines, Aqua Lung, IP & E Palau Inc. and Shimbros Inc.

SHARK A Multimedia Exhibit

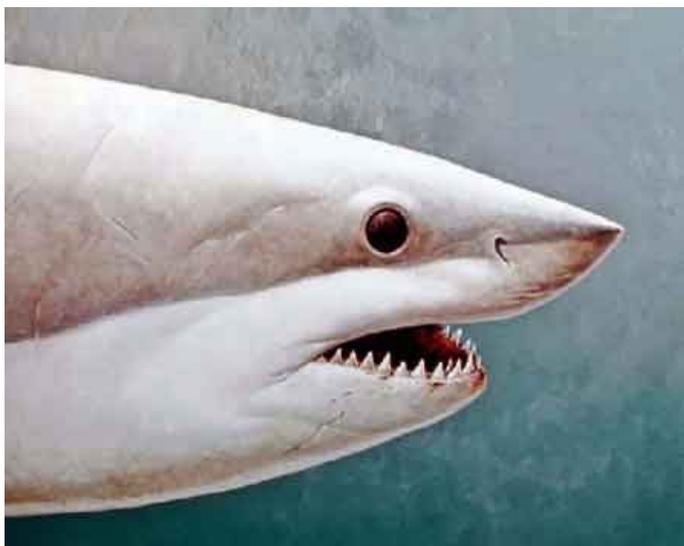
When: May 13 to November 4, 2012.

Where: Museum of Art | Fort Lauderdale - Nova Southeastern University, One East Las Olas Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

This major multimedia exhibit has been organized by the Museum of Art in association with Nova Southeastern University's Oceanographic Center and is guest-curated by acclaimed wildlife artist, author, and SRI Advisory Board member Richard Ellis.

This exciting exhibit blends art and science with historical, cultural and popular stories to illustrate our never-ending fascination with these apex predators. In addition to Ellis' own paintings, the show will feature the work of Winslow Homer, John Singleton Copley, Charles R. Knight, Guy Harvey, Stanley Meltzoff, Pascal Lecocq, Ila Porcher and many other well-known marine artists. The show includes sculptures by Victor Douieb and Damien Hirst, and photographs by Chris Fallows, Ron and Valerie Taylor, Rodney Fox and SRI Board member David Doubilet. There are also historical artifacts, sculptures in stainless steel, wood, tin, bronze, a live shark tank, movies, videos and a 50-foot-long Megalodon balloon.

Millions of years before humans first walked the earth, sharks were swimming in this planet's seas. They predate dinosaurs by about 200 million years and were revered by ancient human societies as gods. Sharks come in all shapes and sizes. There are angel sharks, basking sharks, blues sharks, bull sharks, gray sharks, lemon sharks, sleeper sharks, and tiger sharks, and many other species. They are found in every ocean in the world as well as in many rivers and lakes. In recent years, attention has turned to protecting these magnificent animals and the exhibition documents strides made these areas as well. This is a show not to be missed!





Shark Diving More Profitable Than Shark Finning — And Chumming Does No Harm

Ecotourism activities that use food to attract and concentrate wildlife for viewing have become a controversial topic in ecological studies. This debate is best exemplified by the shark dive tourism industry, a highly lucrative and booming global market. Use of chum or food to attract big sharks to areas where divers can view the dwindling populations of these animals has generated significant criticism because of the potential for ecological and behavioral impacts to the species. However, the debate has been largely rhetorical due to a lack of sufficient data to make any conclusions either way.

Five University of Miami (UM) Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science researchers, Drs. Neil Hammerschlag, Jerald S. Ault and Jiangang Luo, and graduate students Austin Gallagher and Julia Wester, combined efforts to tackle this issue. In a paper published in the British Ecological Society's *Functional Ecology** titled, "*Don't bite the hand that feeds: Assessing ecological impacts of provisioning ecotourism on an apex marine predator*," the team conducted the first satellite tagging study to examine the long-term and long range movement patterns of tiger sharks in response to dive tourism.



SRI President Jupp Baron Kerckerinck Zur Borg at Tiger Beach

Tiger sharks in Florida & Bahamas: "We studied two separate populations of tiger sharks: one that originated in Florida and the other in the Bahamas," says Hammerschlag. At the Bahamas site, nicknamed Tiger Beach, chum is widely used to attract sharks for dive tourism purposes. In contrast, shark feeding for ecotourism in Florida waters is illegal.

Chumming not affecting shark behaviour: The team hypothesized that Tiger Beach sharks would exhibit restricted movements around the dive site, especially when compared to tiger sharks tagged in Florida. However, what they discovered was totally different — Tiger Beach sharks did not exhibit restricted movements near the dive site. Instead, the Bahamas sharks occupied an area over 8500 km² in size — almost five times greater than Florida tiger sharks.

"Not only did we discover that ecotourism provisioning did not affect tiger shark behavior, we found that tiger sharks undergo previously unknown long-distance migrations up to 3,500 km into the open Atlantic. These apparent feeding forays follow the Gulf Stream, an area of high biological productivity that concentrates shark prey," said Ault.

Shark diving more profitable than shark finning: "Given the economic and conservation benefits we believe managers should not prevent shark diving tourism out of hand until sufficient data were to demonstrate otherwise," added Hammerschlag.

Shark finning, the practice of catching a shark, slicing off its fins and then disposing of the body at sea, is resulting in immense shark population declines worldwide. Fins are sold to support the growing demand for shark fin soup, an Asian delicacy. In a 2011 study by UM's Gallagher & Hammerschlag, they showed that shark dive tourism generates more money to local economies than does killing the sharks.

*British Ecological Society, <http://www.wildlifeextra.com/go/news/shark-chumming.html#cr>

Upcoming Events

May 11, 2012: *Fintastic Friday 2012: Giving Sharks a Voice.* WhaleTimes and SRI have teamed up to raise awareness of the plight of sharks through a new holiday: Fintastic Friday is celebrated annually on the second Friday in May.

May 13 to November 4, 2012: *Shark!* An exhibit curated by Richard Ellis at the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale. (See page 6)

May 13, 2012: *SRI Spring Auction.* Enter auction and view catalog on www.sharks.org

May 17-19, 2012: *World EcoSummit.* This two-day event hosted by the World EcoAlliance will present forums on the State of the Oceans, ECONomic Sustainability, Sustainable Tourism and the Rainforest Initiative. Venue: San Jose, Costa Rica. www.worldecosummit.com

June 23-September 3, 2012: *Megalodon, The Largest Shark That Ever Lived.* An exhibit at the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, New Jersey. (See page 11)

June 24, 2012: *Riverdale RiverFest,* Riverdale Avenue at West 263rd Street, Bronx, NY. Noon to 6 pm.

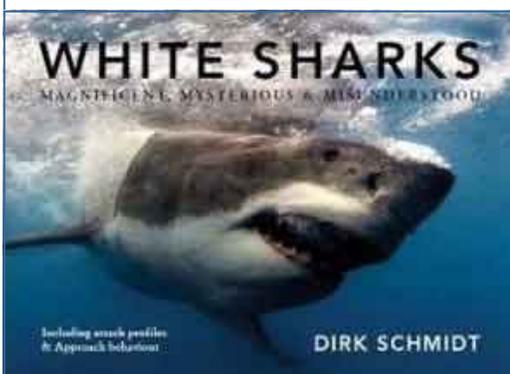
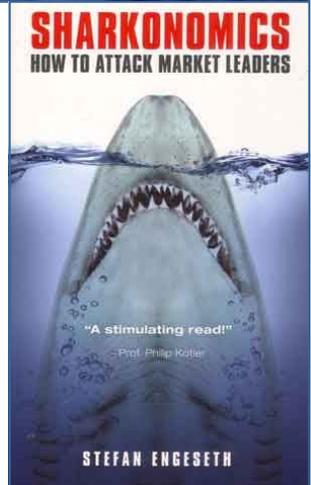
August 5, 2012: Start of SRI's *Annual Shark Celebrity Auction.*

August 8-14, 2012: *American Elasmobranch Society Annual Meeting at the World Congress of Herpetology,* Venue: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. <http://www.wch2012vancouver.com/>

March 3-15, 2013: CoP16: *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) 16th Conference of the Parties.* Venue: Bangkok, Thailand.

Members' Bookshelf

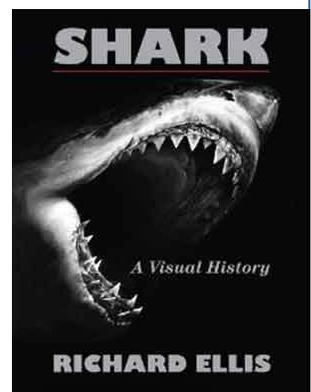
***Sharkonomics*, by Stefan Engeseth, Foreword by Chris Fallows. 175 pages Available through Amazon.com for \$10.49 or \$9.99, Kindle** Engeseth, one of Europe's most creative business thinkers and a top-ranked speaker, draws parallels between the survival strategies of sharks and the marketplace. "Genuinely surprising and provocative"...David Magliano, Former Director of Marketing, London 2012 (Olympics).



***White Sharks* by Dirk Schmidt. 308 pages Available through Amazon.com. Price not listed but based on South African sale price it should sell for about \$35**

A review of many issues surrounding the white sharks. Besides covering interesting biological facts it focuses more on the behavioral aspects of these sharks, discusses and analyses several shark attacks in context with approach behavior, and the pressure these magnificent apex predators are facing to survive as a species.

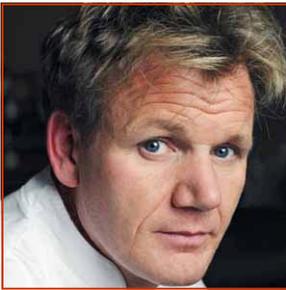
***Shark, A Visual History*, by Richard Ellis, paperback, \$24.95 through Amazon.com** Ellis chronicles and debunks the myths about sharks throughout history. Through hundreds of full-color images Ellis proves the necessity of preserving these majestic creatures. Ellis adeptly turns these sleek, efficient hunters from monsters of the deep into rare, beautiful forces of nature.



Costa Rica Fines Taiwanese Shark Poacher

In March 2011, Costa Rica announced the creation of a large new marine protected area (MPA) around Cocos Island National Park. The MPA – called the Seamounts Marine Management Area – encompassed a group of deep seamounts located 35 miles south of Cocos, plus other important waters for shark and tuna nearby.

The same month, the Taiwanese fishing vessel *Hung Chi Fu* was unloading its catch at a commercial dock in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, when fishing inspectors found the shark fins on the vessel. In April 2012, a tribunal determined that the captain's violation of Costa Rica's fishing laws corresponded to 70 median salaries, or \$56,000, of which 50 percent will be paid to the Fishing Institute (INCOPECA) and the rest to the Coast Guard service. Around \$36,000 will go to cover the cost of the ship's arrest, and the rest of the fine consists of the gross profits the shark fins yielded. Captain Tsai Yu Jen will now have to pay 62 million colones, about \$124,000 in fines.



Gordon Ramsay

Costa Rica has earned a notorious reputation for illegal shark finning. In 2011, celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay was doused in gasoline and held at gunpoint in Costa Rica as he filmed a new TV documentary about illegal shark finning. "It's a multibillion-dollar industry, completely unregulated," Ramsay reported.

"We traced some of the biggest culprits to Costa Rica. The day before we got there, a Taiwanese crew landed a haul of hammerhead sharks – police searched the boat and found bales of cocaine. These gangs operate from places like forts, with barbed-wire and gun towers. At one, I managed to shake off the people keeping us away, ran up some stairs to a rooftop and looked down to see thousands of fins, drying on rooftops for as far as the eye could see. When I got back downstairs, they tipped a barrel of petrol (gasoline) over me," Ramsay said. "Then these cars with blacked-out windows suddenly appeared from nowhere, trying to block us in. We dived into the car and peeled off."

"Later in the trip I got hold of a guy called Enrique who manages 350 boats and is the third-largest supplier of shark fins globally," said Ramsay. "We talked our way onto one of his fishing boats. In a quiet moment I dived from the boat to swim with marlin. I swam under the keel and saw this sack tied to it. I opened it and it was full of shark fins, huge ones from 20-year-olds. How they do it is quite upsetting. They shock them with an electric prod, but the shark is still moving while they cut it up and throw it back dying into the water. No wonder they wanted to hide the evidence. The minute I threw this bag on deck, everyone started screaming and shouting. Back at the wharf, there were people pointing rifles at us to stop us filming. A van pulled up and these seedy characters made us stand against a wall. The police came and advised us to leave the country."

Asian Triads (organized crime groups) have a significant interest in the nefarious trade. A few years ago a sting operation on illegal shark finning industry was conducted by the South African police. The documentary, *Cape Dragons*, is one of the few that have filmed some of the thugs and murderers running the sharkfin trade, a trade whose profits are second only to that of the illegal drug trade.

News from Kota Kinabalu

On May 6th, the New Straits Times reported that a proposal to protect all species of sharks found in Sabah, Borneo, Malaysia has been submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry (federal government), and agriculture agencies in the peninsula. The amendment to the Fisheries Act was proposed to stop the further decline of the shark population. "The move is necessary because it involves dive tourism," said Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Masidi Manjun. "Diving is among Sabah's most popular tourism products with receipts of RM237 million last year, said Manjun. Many divers come here to see sharks and will go to other countries if they become extinct," he added.

Field Expeditions

WHALE SHARKS — Cancun, Mexico

July 30 to August 3, 2012 : August 4 to August 8, 2012.

At present, these are the only open SRI expeditions.



Jennifer Schmidt, Ph.D., Director of SRI's DNA study, is the expedition leader. She will once again be taking divers to the Afuera, the great massing of whale sharks off the coast of Mexico. Snorkeling only; no scuba because the sharks are feeding.



Cost is \$1,200 per person. There is only one space left during the first week, and there are several spaces available on the second week. If you'd like to come along, call SRI HQ at 609-921-3522 as soon as possible.

Photo by Keith Pamper

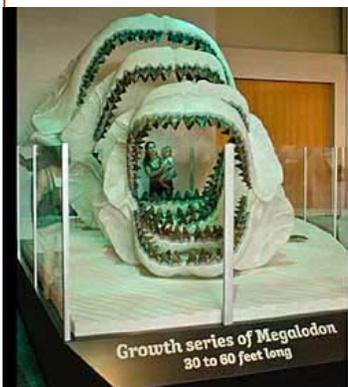
Meet Megalodon - The Largest Shark that Ever Lived



June 23 to September 3, the largest shark that ever lived will be taking over Adventure Aquarium in Camden, New Jersey. The 5,000-square-foot exhibit highlights the evolution, biology and misconceptions of Megalodon, an enormous prehistoric shark that once cruised all the world's oceans. Related to the modern great white and mako sharks, Megalodon was a dominant marine predator for 15 million years before vanishing 2 million years ago. The exhibit includes a 60 foot-long metal sculpture replica of an adult Megalodon, a full set of 47 Megalodon teeth and many interactive components.



The show, created by the Florida Museum of Natural History, also has an excellent educators' guide: <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/education/guides/megalodon-guide.pdf>



2,073 Shark Fins Confiscated



Confiscated shark fins.
Photo: Courtesy LDWF

According to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Rick Nguyen, 37, of Buras, La., and Hung Anh Tiet, 29, of Dallas, Texas, were arrested by the Louisiana DWF Enforcement Division on April 8 after agents confiscated 2,073 shark fins from the pair. The men are charged with over-the-limit of sharks taken commercially, shark "finning" and intentional concealment of illegal fish.

When agents stopped their boat, *the Lady Lyanna*, in Tiger Pass. They found 11 sharks on the deck, and discovered 12 sacks of fins in a hidden compartment. According to the agent, the fins came from 518 sharks whose bodies were not onboard — meaning the men had illegally taken 529 sharks.

Over-the-daily-limit of sharks taken commercially and "finning" both net up to \$350 in fines and 60 days in jail. Intentional concealment of illegal fish nets up to \$950 in fines and 120 days in jail. More penalties could be levied against Nguyen and Tiet, as they face up to \$26,450 in civil restitution penalties, based on an estimated \$50 per shark.

White Sharks Killed in Baja

Laguna Beach, CA (April 25, 2012) - Erik Cutter is the publisher of *Baja Life Magazine* and an avid fisherman with more than 35 years experience in Baja California. While in Loreto, Cutter heard stories about the killing of numerous white sharks off Isla San Ildefonso, an island located 40 miles north of Loreto, Baja California Sur, Mexico. Isla San Ildefonso is a steep and barren island and it is known for big fish, large pelagics and untouched dive sites. It lies six miles north of Punta Pulpito and east of Bahia Concepcion at 26°38'N, 111°26'W.

"Commercial fishing has become so difficult in the Sea of Cortez that several of the few remaining commercial fishermen are so desperate that they are now targeting the ocean's greatest predator, the white shark," he said. "According to a very reliable source, at least 13 mature white sharks between 16 and 22 feet long, some estimated to weigh more than 2,200 pounds, have been slaughtered for their fins and their jaws."

Cutter said the sharks are baited with a large dead fish such as a yellowtail with barrels attached so that the shark eventually drowns. Once the fishermen retrieves a shark, sometimes it still barely alive, the shark is beaten to death with a bat, then finned and its jaws carved out. The jaws reportedly fetch \$1,500 each and are being sold by the local fishermen.

"The economic reasons are obvious, but certainly, they don't justify the indiscriminate and illegal killing of these amazing sharks," said Cutter. "I am very upset by this because I have worked for many years to educate local fishermen to protect their fishery, one that Jacques Cousteau once called, 'The Aquarium of the World'". The Loreto-based non-profit, Eco-Alianza Loreto, also encourages local fishermen and youth to protect what they have left of their critical marine resources. Unfortunately, lack of enforcement by federal officials and the poor economy are driving fishermen to this destructive extreme."



Deep Freedive for Sharks

South Africa's free-diving champion and former world record holder Trevor Hutton and Lesley Rochat, SRI's Director of Media Productions and Director of AfriOceans Conservation Alliance, have teamed up in high profile campaign — *Deep Freedive for Sharks* — to call attention to plight of sharks. "I have a strong desire to bring freediving back to South Africa while at the same time I care about what is happening in our national waters and wish to use the event to draw international attention to the threats our shark populations are facing," said Hutton.

In early June, Hutton will attempt to break a series of national freediving records with dives in the pelagic zone, 36km off South Africa's east coast. The campaign will shine a spotlight on current issues such as 14 tiger sharks caught in the KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board nets at Scottburgh on April 25, the illegal catching of white sharks by anglers along the coast, foreign fishing, including local vessels ruthlessly decimating local shark populations and inadequate compliance.

The campaign has multiple components: the free-diving events, a supporting book project, and a documentary film linked to the shark protection lobbying initiative that AfriOceans is driving called "WANTED! DEAD or ALIVE?" The campaign will also collect handprints from people from all over the world, which will be presented the Minister of the Department of Environmental Affairs during a public protest planned later this along with signatures collected in a supporting petition.

Of the more than 100 sharks species found along the South African coast, only three are fully protected. The campaign's objective is to gain full protection for a number of charismatic shark species of high eco-tourist value, which currently have no protection such as the tiger shark, and cowshark.

<http://www.deepfreediveforsharks.com/>



Huge White Shark Caught in Mexico



On April 22, two commercial fishermen from El Choyudo (28°19.02'N, 111°27.56'W) in Baja California netted a white shark said to weigh more than 900 kg, according to local news reports. The shark was dead when it was brought to the surface. The fishermen, whose 22-foot panga is powered by a 75-horsepower outboard, required an hour to tow the carcass three kilometres to the coast.



About 50 people helped drag the shark onto dry sand. Milenio News reported the length of the fish to be six meters, or 19.8 feet. Guadalupe Baltazar say that never in his life had seen an animal of that size but they confessed that on March 13 some friends took a white shark that was about four meters and about 450 pounds.

Federal Environmental Protection (Profepa) learned of the incident next day. "Supposedly became entangled in a net near the beach; The white shark is an endangered species and is protected by the authorities", said Sergio Luviano, deputy of Natural Resources. "We will investigate the conditions under which the shark was caught." Profepa noted that there have been reports of white sharks in that area of the Sea of Cortez, but most are three to four metres in length.

U.S. Federal Register Notice — Re: CITES COP16 proposals

The United States, as a Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES), describes proposed amendments to the CITES Appendices (species proposals) that may be submitted for consideration at CoP16 (the upcoming Convention of Parties scheduled for Bangkok, Thailand, March 3-15, 2013).

Mako shark (*Isurus paucus*)
Inclusion in Appendix II.

Shortfin mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*)
Inclusion in Appendix II.

Porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*)
Inclusion in Appendix I or Appendix II.

Scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*),
great hammerhead shark (*S. mokarran*),
and smooth hammerhead shark (*S. zygaena*)
Inclusion in Appendix II.

Oceanic whitetip shark
(*Carcharhinus longimanus*)
Inclusion in Appendix I or Appendix II.

Bigeye thresher shark (*Alopias superciliosus*),
common thresher shark (*A. vulpinus*),
and pelagic thresher shark (*A. pelagicus*)
Inclusion in Appendix II.



Comments and information on these proposals must be submitted by June 11, 2012 by one of the following methods:

1) *Federal eRulemaking Portal*: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-R9-IA-2011-0087.

2) *U.S. mail or hand-delivery*: Public Comments Processing; Attn: FWS-R9-IA-2011-0087; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

Email and Faxed comments will not be accepted.

NOTE: An Appendix I listing indicates the species is threatened with extinction and international trade in these species (or parts thereof) is prohibited. In exceptional cases (scientific research), trade may take place when both an export and import permit are issued.

Appendix II lists species that are not necessarily now threatened with extinction but that may become so unless trade is closely controlled. It also includes so-called "look-alike species", i.e. species of which the specimens in trade look like species which are listed on Appendix I or II. Permits or certificates are granted if the relevant authorities are satisfied that certain conditions are met, above all that trade will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.