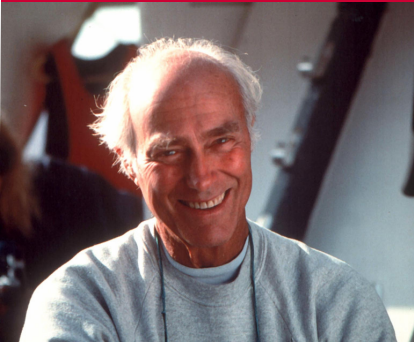


# Shark Research Institute Newsletter



Shark Research Institute Global Headquarters  
P.O. Box 40, Princeton, New Jersey 08540, USA

## Lifetime Achievement Award To Stan Waterman, SRI President



On March 2 & 3, 2001, the Boston Sea Rovers held their 47<sup>th</sup> annual Boston Sea Rovers Clinic and Evening Film Festival at the Fairmount Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston, MA.

A capacity crowd of 3,000 people attended the Saturday evening film event. Boston Sea Rover President Dave Morton gave a brief account of Stan Waterman's career as an underwater filmmaker and industry pioneer, and then presented Mr. Waterman with the Boston Sea Rovers' Lifetime Achievement Award. In honor of the event, Mr. Waterman was given a special glass award bowl with the inscription: *Ambassador of Good Will for the World's Oceans and All Its Inhabitants. If they could speak, they would say "THANK YOU"*. This is only the second time in the 47-year history of the Boston Sea Rovers that a Lifetime Achievement Award has been given. Mr. Frank Scalli was the other honoree.

Mr. Waterman has been an honorary member of the Boston Sea Rovers since 1961, and made history by being the only person to be named Boston Sea Rovers' Diver of the Year twice: in 1967 and again in 1989. This year, Mr. Waterman presented his film *A Quick Trip* at the Sea Rovers' evening film festival, and *The Moray Wheels*, a film about handicapped divers, during a daytime seminar.

Stan Waterman's career spans nearly 50 years in the scuba diving industry and he has produced documentaries, television series and films for National Geographic, ABC and ESPN, but is best known for his work in commercial film. He collaborated with Peter

Gimbel on the classic shark film, *Blue Water, White Death*, and with his close friend Peter Benchley on *The Deep*, where Mr. Waterman was co-director of underwater photography and second unit. Mr. Waterman is also President of the Shark Research Institute.

(Editors' Note: Mr. Waterman is planning a dive tour to Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia June 2 – 15, 2002. Approximate cost is \$5995 per person. For more information, contact [waterman@nerc.com](mailto:waterman@nerc.com).)

## White Shark: Demystifying the Man Eater by Dean Fessler



The white shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*, has generated more fear and fascination than any other shark species. Simply put, this sharks' binomial nomenclature translates into "jagged toothed flesh eater". It was this image that caused humans to hunt the species to the brink of extinction.

Fortunately, humans' constant fascination with the white shark also resulted in a generation of marine scientists and documentary filmmakers passionately committed to documenting white shark behavior and uncovering the secret life of this magnificent fish. The first film to challenge popular misconceptions about white sharks was the classic *Blue Water White Death*. In the film, SRI President Stan Waterman, Ron and Val Taylor, and Peter

Gimbel travel the world in search of white sharks. In addition to illustrating the rarity of white sharks, the film also shows the shark – not as a man-eater – but as a majestic animal simply trying to survive in the marine environment. Now, decades later, the crucial role of the white shark in maintaining a healthy ocean ecosystem is widely appreciated. As a result, the white



photo by E. Goude

shark has 'protected species' status in several countries, including the United States and South Africa. Today, the rapidly-growing number of shark enthusiasts and curious divers have spurred the development of shark ecotourism. For those ecotourists, encountering free-swimming sharks in their own environment is the primary objective!

Shark ecotourism has resulted in numerous observations of white shark behavior, similar to that of "spy hopping" in cetaceans, in which sharks break the surface and look at people on a boat. White shark and human encounters often appear to be based on mutual curiosity, rather than predator versus prey, and numerous witnessed accounts of white shark behavior suggest cooperative hunting strategy and possibly even play behavior.

The Shark Research Institute is organizing white shark expeditions to areas of South Africa where encounters with white sharks are frequent. Divers observe the sharks from the safety of a protective cage and from the boat deck, in an area less than 30 minutes from shore. Participants assist in identification of individual sharks by comparative photo analysis. When possible, tissue samples of the sharks are gathered for DNA analysis. In addition to white sharks, participants observe marine mammals and other species of wildlife in a pristine wilderness that offers numerous photographic and video opportunities. A special film expedition, led by Stan Waterman, is also being planned. The expedition, with one of the pioneers of shark cinematography, will be an experience of a lifetime! For more information, contact SRI at (609) 921-3522 or Dean Fessler at dean@sharks.org.

## Global Shark Attack File

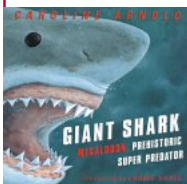
*SRI maintains the GSAF as a resource for researchers, medical personnel and the media who require accurate information about these incidents*

- **NEW ZEALAND:** Dr. Michael Hogan was kayaking 1.5 km from shore between Sandy Bay and Whananaki on Northland's east coast on Saturday January 6, 2001 when his kayak was lifted from the water and he was dumped in the sea. Dr. Hogan was not injured. At first he thought he hit a rock, but tooth impressions in his bright yellow kayak suggested that a white shark was involved. The bite punctured both sides of the tough plastic hull and measured 45 cm from top to bottom jaw. Department of Conservation marine scientist, Clinton Duffy, speculated that the shark saw the silhouette of the kayak and mistook it for a small whale or large dolphin. Shark attacks are rare in New Zealand; the last fatal shark attack occurred in 1976.
- **CUBA:** Soile Hamalainen (55) from Pickering, Ontario, Canada, was 20 m from shore and swimming with her husband, Tano, on Saturday January 27, 2001 when she felt something slam against her side. The shark took the woman's arm in its mouth and submerged, pulling her underwater. Her husband grabbed the shark's fin and kicked the animal until it released his wife. The woman's arm was lacerated to the bone, and she returned to Canada where she underwent two surgical procedures to repair the damage to her upper arm.
- **AUSTRALIA:** At 4:15 PM February 3, 2001 Mark Butler (40) was surfing at Broome's Head, NSW when he was bitten by a shark. The shark made a single bite, lacerating the surfer's leg. Butler, who was alone in the water, reached shore unaided. He tied his leash around his leg as a tourniquet then walked 500 m to the nearest house and asked for help. The surfer was airlifted to Lismore Hospital where he was listed in serious, but stable, condition. Due to the tooth impressions in the surfer's board, it was speculated that a tiger shark was involved in this incident.
- **BRAZIL:** On March 6, 2001 a shark killed a man (20) off Boa Viagem Beach, Recife, Brazil. His body washed ashore two days later. "The front of the thorax and all internal organs were missing" said Dr. Jorge Mota of the Institute of Legal Medicine. It was not known if the man

was swimming beyond the coral reefs that run along the coast of the city, located 1,700 miles northeast of Sao Paulo. (Recife is the Portuguese word for reef.) The Pernambuco state government warns bathers not to go beyond the reefs and banned surfing in the area in 1999 after a young man lost his two hands in a shark attack off Boa Viagem Beach. This was the 33rd recorded shark attack on Pernambuco's southern coast and the 11th fatality since 1992. The species of shark involved in this incident is not known.

## SRI NOTES

### For Megalodon Fans



**Giant Shark: Megalodon, Prehistoric Super Predator** by Caroline Arnold, Laurie Caple (Illustrator). (Ages 9-12). Well researched text enriched by Laurie Caple's superb illustrations. \$12

from Amazon.com.

**Megalodon – the movie.** A submersible is repairing the world's largest oil rig off the coast of Greenland when it encounters Megalodon, the giant shark described as "60 feet of prehistoric terror". *Megalodon*, an action-adventure motion picture about an oil rig that causes a fissure into another sea beneath the ocean floor, is being filmed in a warehouse at Riverview Studios near SRI Headquarters in Princeton. Scenes inside the sub are being shot this month; the exterior of the sub, the oil rig, the ocean and the shark are all being created by computer. The film, produced by Pat Corbitt and Stanley Isaacs, stars Al Spienza (The Sopranos) and Jennifer Sommerfield (The Perfect Storm). It is scheduled for release in the fall.

### GALÁPAGOS NATIONAL PARK -PRESS RELEASE

**Puerto Ayora, 17th March 2001**

**The highest official of the Merchant Marine has caused a serious setback to the work of the Galápagos National Park in protecting the Marine Reserve**

Three fishing boats belonging to the Manta industrial fleet have been captured, as a result of the patrolling carried out by the Galápagos National Park on board the motor vessel "Sirenian" inside the Marine Reserve.

To obtain the full press release and to find out what you can do to help contact SRI Field Director Alex Antoniou at [antoniou@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:antoniou@rci.rutgers.edu)

## SRI Expeditions for 2001

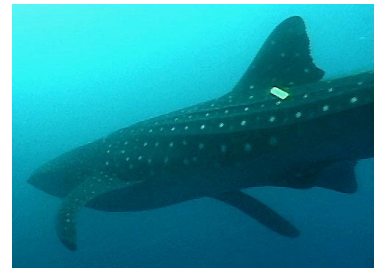
Spaces still available on the following expeditions:

### Utila, Bay Islands Honduras:

July 7 - 14  
December 22 - 29

### La Paz, BCS, Mexico:

September 1 - 8  
September 8 - 15  
September 29 - October 6



**For More Information Call or Email  
Dr. Alex Antoniou at (908) 510-8046  
[antoniou@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:antoniou@rci.rutgers.edu)**

## Upcoming Events

- Beneath the Sea 2001, the largest consumer dive show in North America, will take place March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> (Friday night 6 to 9 PM, Saturday 9 AM to 5 PM and Sunday 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM) at the Meadowlands Convention Center in Secaucus, New Jersey. The show includes more than 300 exhibitors from all over the world, 59 seminars by specialists and experts, workshops, diving demonstrations, exotic destination presentations, silent auction, Ocean Pals, Women Divers Hall of Fame, social events, evening film festival and Awards Banquet. Alex Antoniou will be presenting two seminars: at 11 AM on Saturday and Sunday at 2 PM. Members are encouraged to visit SRI at booth 106 to meet with some of our field researchers and learn more about SRI's upcoming projects. For more information call (914) 664-4310, or visit Beneath the Sea's web site at <http://BeneathTheSea.org>.
- The American Littoral Society will host its annual symposium on Friday April 20, 2001 from 7:30 to 10 PM at the Sandy Hook Theater, Sandy Hook, New Jersey. Two presentations are scheduled: *Horseshoe Crabs - Prehistoric Bluebloods*, and *Whale Sharks - Endangered Gentle Giants*, by Alex Antoniou and Marie Levine. With "amazing visuals and fascinating facts" the audience will be introduced to whale sharks: what they are, where they are and why they are endangered. For tickets (\$10 adults, \$5 students, children under 12 are free), contact ALS at (732) 291-0055.

## SRI receives continued support

SRI thanks the following sponsors for their continued support:

- **Amphibico, Inc**
- **Berger Bros. Camera & Video Exchange**
- **Draeger DiveAmerica**
- **JBL Enterprises Inc.**
- **PADI, Project AWARE Foundation**
- **Microwave Telemetry, Inc.**
- **United Success Associates, Inc.**
- **C2 Educational Expeditions**



WE'RE ON THE WEB  
WWW.SHARKS.ORG

## DO PEOPLE NEED ANOTHER REASON TO STOP EATING SHARKS?



WASHINGTON, March 2, 2001 / U.S. Newswire / - One in 10 women of childbearing age in the United States are

at risk of having newborns with neurological problems due to in-utero mercury exposure, according to a government study released today. Fetuses are exposed to mercury in the womb primarily because of their mothers' consumption of fish, and are highly susceptible to related health problems.

"These new findings amount to an estimated 375,000 babies being born each year at-risk of neurological problems due to exposure to mercury in the womb," said Michael Bender, executive director of the Mercury Policy Project. "Data in the Centers for Disease Control report indicate that at least 10% of women of childbearing age have levels of mercury in their bodies that exceed what the EPA considers acceptable and this translates to nearly 6 million women."

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report provides results from the first nationally representative sample of mercury in human blood and hair in the U.S. Earlier reports were based on estimates of human fish consumption. The study results are contained in the March 2, 2001 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. "New studies show that far more women are at risk of exposure to methylmercury than previously thought," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, director of food safety at the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

Mercury is released into the atmosphere by air pollution from power plants, waste incinerators and industrial processes. It is emitted into the air and then deposited into oceans, lakes and streams where it is ingested by fish, and then by humans and wildlife. Water pollution caused by air emissions of mercury has prompted public health agencies in 40 states to warn people -- especially women of childbearing age and young children -- to limit or cease consumption of certain species of mercury-contaminated fish.

In mid-January, the Food and Drug Administration issued new consumer guidance warning pregnant women to not eat certain predatory fish like swordfish and **shark**. Six states -- including Vermont, New Jersey, Minnesota, Connecticut, Maine and, most recently, New Hampshire -- also warn pregnant women to limit consumption of canned tuna to no more than one or two cans per week. The CDC report is available on the web at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5008a2.htm>

*Editors note: Methylmercury attacks the nervous system and the brain. Research has shown that the fetal brain is from five to ten times more sensitive to methylmercury than an adult's because the chemical interferes with the division and migration of forming cells in the brain. It crosses the placental barrier and can cause fetal brain damage without any symptoms in the expectant mother. The level of methylmercury in fetal blood is frequently twice as high as the level in the expectant mother's blood. Symptoms infants experience include mental and physical disabilities and delayed development of motor and verbal skills. Autopsies have also found elevated levels of mercury in the brains of people who suffered from Alzheimer's disease and Lou Gehrig's disease.*