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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



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GLOW-IN-THE-DARK
PUTTY

KIDS

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Ocean!
SPECIAL!

4 MEGA
POSTERS



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TRIP TO
NEPAL

SHARKS

ROCK!

*Up close with our
fierce fishy friends*



SECRETS
OF THE
LOST
CITY!



75 PRIZES
INSIDE!




KUNG FU
PANDA
KICKS
BACK!



We ♥ sharks!

NG Kids cruises the world's oceans in search of some of the shark's biggest *fins* – sorry, fans!

 Sharks. They're massive, merciless eating machines, right? Er, wrong! In spite of all the scary shark encounters shown in films and on TV, a human is more likely to get squashed by a drinks machine than killed by a shark! In fact, we'd all be in a LOT of trouble without sharks... As the ocean's apex (top) predators, sharks control the numbers of their prey, making sure these animals don't overpopulate and reduce the amount of animals further down the food chain. It's the tiny creatures and plants at the bottom of this chain that produce 80% of our oxygen, so sharks even help us to breathe!

SOS – Save Our Sharks!

So it's a big worry that humans are dramatically reducing shark numbers, with 50 of the 500-plus species now in danger of extinction. Fishing, especially for the Asian delicacy of shark fin soup, is the most serious cause, killing many millions of sharks every year. But pollution, loss of shark habitat and accidental catches in nets or on hooks meant for other fish, all play their parts.

The good news is, more and more people across the world are now passionate protectors of these fantastic fish. NG Kids meets some of these super shark buddies...

DID YOU KNOW...?

Sharks have lived in the oceans for 450 million years. The biggest was the megalodon, which was twice the size of a great white shark!

THE HUMAN FISH



William Winram is a world champion freediver – someone who dives under the sea, without scuba equipment. This skill allows William to study shark behaviour for his conservation work. And as he can move so freely underwater, he's had some amazing encounters!

"On a dive, close to Durban, South Africa, a tiger shark bumped me with its nose, which is what sharks do when they're trying to work out what you are," William tells NG Kids. "I pushed her head down, and she swam off. Then she came back towards me. This time I caught hold of her dorsal fin, and she gave me a ride, diving to about 20 metres down. She flicked her tail, which I took to mean 'let go!'; so I did, and swam back to the surface. Then, back she came, and let me do it again – and again! We must have dived together a dozen times."



Freediver William gets up close with a shark!



Dr Gruber with a 'hypnotised' shark

THE SCIENTIST



South African marine biologist, Alison Kock, has dived with – and studied – sevengill and great white sharks hundreds of times. “Although sharks face so many man-made problems, it’s fantastic to see how many more people are aware of what amazing and important

animals sharks are,” she says. Alison’s never had a scary moment, but husband Morne, an underwater cameraman, once had his nerve tested. “A curious great white bumped him around a bit, and pushed him down onto a reef!”



THE LITTLE MERMAID

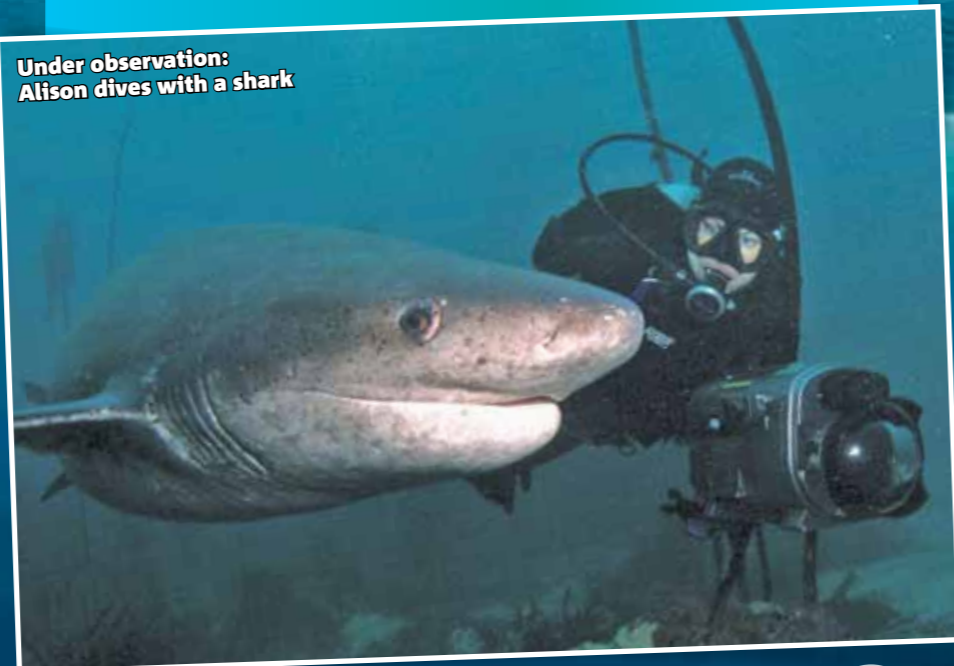


At just nine years old, Ella Addison has already been diving with sharks for five years! She admits she was a little nervous on her first dive when she swam with 12 whopping whale sharks, some of them over 10 metres long, near her home in Widenham, South Africa. “Their mouths were so big! But my dad told me they just eat plankton,” she says. Ella, who has been made the first-ever Shark Cherub by shark protection campaigners, Shark Angels, has since swum with black tips, tiger and hammerhead sharks. “Sharks aren’t scary, and they’re not all going to eat you,” Ella tells NG Kids. “But they’re not like little teddy bears that you can hug either. You have to stand your ground and push their noses away when they come too close.”



Pictures: The Hypnotist © Dr Samuel Gruber, The Scientist © Morne Hendenburg / Shark Expeditions © James Morgan Photos, The Little Mermaid © Shark Angels / Shutterstock © Mark Addison, © Mark Addison / NGC / Vincent Vacco / Shark Men California Nat Geo Wild (Sky, 528, Virgin Media 238).

Under observation: Alison dives with a shark



THE HYPNOTIST



Often called ‘animal hypnosis’, tonic immobility is a trance-like state which sharks can be put into with expert handling. It was discovered by Dr Samuel Gruber, a shark expert for 50 years, who has led many National Geographic research projects. “People have known about using the method on other animals for thousands of years,” says Dr Gruber. “But not many people go around trying to turn sharks upside down! With sharks completely still in the water, Dr Gruber has been able to learn a jaw-some amount about the animals, and has even proved that they’re more intelligent than cats. “They have large brains – and teach each other behaviours. One shark can do something, and another will observe it, then copy it.”



Enal on a wild shark ride!

THE PLAYMATE



In the village of Mola, among Indonesia’s Wakatobi island group, the Bajau Laut tribespeople live in houses on stilts, over the sea. Many of these have surrounding plots of water marked out with nets, where families keep fish they’ve caught – until they’re ready to eat them. But, one day, Enal’s dad brought him home a new friend to play with – this tawny nurse shark! “I watched other children try to catch hold of the shark,” explains British photojournalist James Morgan, who took this photograph last July. “None of them could. So Enal showed them how it’s done – it looked like a really wild ride!”



DID YOU KNOW...?
A shark’s teeth are constantly falling out and being replaced. Some of these predators get through 30,000 teeth in a lifetime!

Brett and his crew tag a great white shark



THE SKIPPER



Captain Brett McBride spent a year sailing the Pacific Ocean tagging great white sharks, as shown in the National Geographic Channel series, *Shark Men*. By fitting these huge fish with satellite tags and returning them to the sea, data about how these sharks live can be collected. But on one tagging trip, a blunted hook got stuck in a shark’s throat, so Brett put his arm through its open gills to free the hook! “The gills felt like rough sandpaper,” says Brett. “But my concern was for the poor shark. And with the adrenaline, I didn’t feel a thing... until later!”

Stay sea safe!
These shark experts have many years’ experience of interacting with sharks. But if you see a shark, gang, never approach or try to touch it.

Go to sharkangels.org to find out more. You can also watch Ella in underwater action at ngkids.co.uk!

Save our sharks! While just 8 to 12 people are killed in shark attacks every year, the United Nations estimate that 10 million sharks are killed annually for their fins or in nets – although some conservation groups put this number as high as 100 million sharks.