

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Dr. Anita George-Ares

Anita is a Women Divers Hall of Fame inductee. Her research at the Smithsonian resulted in the discovery of five new fish species. She was a research diver for National Geographic's Sleeping Shark Expeditions, Mote Marine Laboratory, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Anita contributes frequently to X-Ray International Dive Magazine.



John Ares

John is a professional photographer and has a Master's degree in Marine Sciences. While he has many photographic specialties, his passion is underwater photography. John's photographs and articles have appeared in many publications. John, an alumni PADI Course Director, teaches numerous Underwater Photography and Photoshop courses.

Creative Lighting in Underwater Photography: Using a Ring Light and Video Lights for Macro

Creative Lighting in Underwater Photography: Using a Ring Light and Video Lights for Macro. Strobes are the traditional method of lighting for underwater photography. However, to lighten our bags, we reevaluated the photographic equipment we bring when traveling. An underwater ring light used with video lights can make for striking macro photos. We will demonstrate techniques to help you get great results. You will learn how to use other divers to help with your lighting.

Diving Awesome Tulamben

Tulamben situated on the northeast corner of Bali, is a diving mecca. We will present an underwater tour of the fabulous USS Liberty Wreck that is a short swim offshore. We will also highlight the diverse fish and invertebrate species present in Tulamben's coral reef and muck environments. At the end of our presentation, we will present some options for exploring Bali's iconic sites topside.



Jonathan Bird

Jonathan Bird is a professional underwater cinematographer and photographer. He has shot and produced over 40 films for broadcast and education. His films have appeared all over the world, on networks such as National Geographic Channel, PBS, ABC, USA Network, Discovery and even the SciFi Channel. He is the host and director of Jonathan Bird's Blue World, a family-

friendly underwater science/adventure series on YouTube with over a million subscribers. He has directed three IMAX® films, including *Secrets of the Sea*, co-produced with legendary underwater filmmakers Howard and Michele Hall. He has won nine Emmy Awards, and published seven books of underwater photography.

Filming the Rarest Seals in the World

In April of 2024, after years of planning, I finally filmed an animal in the wild that I have dreamed about for 30 years: the Mediterranean Monk seal. As the most endangered seal in the world (estimated world population: 300) these animals are not easy to find, and rarely come into contact with humans so filming one underwater might take a miracle. Come see how this story ends!



Autumn Blum

Autumn Blum, CEO and Formulator for *Stream2Sea*, is an entrepreneur, cosmetic chemist, animal advocate and ocean warrior. She recently partnered with McCann Worldgroup and the University of Derby, UK, to create a groundbreaking sunscreen that nourishes coral reefs.

Coral Care: The Next Generation of Reef Safer* Sunscreens

What if there was a sunscreen that not only protected the reefs, but actually nourished them? Stream2Sea CEO and Formulator Autumn Blum will present the ground-breaking research behind Coral Care, an award-winning sunscreen tested and proven to nourish and support coral growth.



Barbara Buchanan

Barbara Buchanan is a photographer, videographer and published writer. She has worked on expeditions with archeologist on Blackbeard's shipwreck, Queen Anne's Revenge documenting for the Dive Down Project. She also filmed the wrecks of Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands. She is owner of Scuba Planners Dive Travel and has arranged many expeditions including the Japan trip with Wreck Diving Magazine where she also filmed the expedition.

Victory in the Skies

US Planes That Once Ruled the Skies during WWII

Their contrails faded, the fast and fierce US planes that once ruled the skies during WWII; Dauntless, Mitchell, Hell-diver, Commando, Corsair, Avenger and Wildcats are now lying on the bottom in watery grave near Roi-Namur Island in the Marshall Islands.

The Showboat

The Most Highly Decorated American Battleship of WWII

The USS North Carolina is the most highly decorated American Battleship of WWII. She served in every major battle in the Pacific Theater of Operations, earning her 15 battle stars. The battleship is honored with eight battle ribbons and her kill board displays 33 Japanese Ensign Flags and 1 Japanese National Flag. The 33 Ensign Flags represent the nine shore bombardments against Japanese held islands, and 24 downed enemy aircraft. The Japanese National Flag signifies the sinking of the Japanese freighter, *Eiko Maru*.

The Prinz Eugen still on the Edge of Glory Sunk Off Carlson Island

The Lucky Ship *Prinz Eugen* survived the Battle of Denmark Strait and two atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll, only to be towed to Kwajalein Atoll for repairs where she capsized and sank off Carlson Island in the Kwajalein Atoll.

Glenn Butler

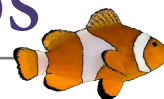
Glenn Butler has been involved in commercial, military diving, and aerospace medicine for the last 50 years. He is the author of 57 scientific publications, several popular books and holds 12 US and Foreign Patents. Glenn is a Fellow in Residence at the Explorers Club, A Master Mason and frequent speaker.

Using Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy to treat TBI / PTSD and Suicide Ideation

Combat Veterans and First Responders are killing themselves, men and woman trying to end their pain. They are most often suffering with the effects of repeated brain concussions, Traumatic visual and emotional experiences that result in actual brain tissue bruising and / or post traumatic stress all resulting in irritability, hyper-vigilance, decreased socialization with friends, spouse and family. Hyperbaric Oxygen has demonstrated improved results over psychotropic drugs and is effective almost immediately- Yet the VA refuses to use it - Why?/



Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Mike Carew

"Captain" Mike Carew is a 10 year veteran of the NYPD SCUBA Team (1983 to 1993), and has more than 50 years of diving experience. Currently running Captain Mike's Diving on City Island, NY, he offers dive instruction and certification, drawing from best practices and protocols of the NYPD SCUBA Team.

Experiences of an NYPD Diver

The unique experience of diving for the NYPD:

- Being prepared for emergencies.
- Handling unknown hazards.
- Navigating environmental / weather hazards and natural disasters.
- Addressing emotional / circumstantial stressors.
- Diving with zero visibility.
- Functioning as a team of divers.
- Understanding the physical demands / aspects.
- Making safety calls outside the chain of command.
- Having the proper equipment and tools.



Dr. David Charash

David Charash DO,CWS,FACFP,FUHM is a Dive Medicine Physician, Board Certified In Emergency Medicine and Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine. He has been involved in Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine for over 30 years. He has traveled the world in support of the Diving and Hyperbaric

Community. He has offered lectures, seminars and workshops relating to Dive Medicine, Dive Safety and Dive Technology. He is a DAN Instructor, DAN referral Physician and a member of the DAN Research team. He is the host of the Fitness in Diving Podcast. He was recipient of the DAN/Rolux Diver of the Year Award in 2022.

The Intersection Between the Diving Sciences and Diving

A brief historical perspective of the past developments as it relates to the origins of Diving and the many scientific developments that have lead to our knowledge in Dive Safety, Dive Technology and Dive Medicine will be discussed. Understanding the role and benefits of Science, Technology Engineering and Medicine are fundamental in our ongoing quest to our advancing Dive Technologies, it's impact on Dive Safety and how these innovations impact the diver. As a field researcher with Divers Alert Network, Dr Charash will share some of his field work that he has been involved with the past few years.



Bernie Chowdhury & Dr. Nasreen Haque

Bernie Chowdhury, author, *The Last Dive* (HarpCollins, non-fiction, 2000); diving since 1984; recreational and technical diving instructor; Explorers Club Fellow; 2001 BTS Diver of The Year for Education; 2019 recipient, Gene Ritter Aquatic Education Award for Extraordinary Service to Education, presented by the New York State Marine Education

Nasreen S. Haque, Ph.D. is a cellular and molecular biologist; recreational and technical diver; spelunker; and sailor.



Return to Iceland – 30 Year Anniversary Expedition

Bernie Chowdhury's planned 2025 Iceland Expedition is a follow-up to his previous exploration. In 1995, he organized and led an expedition that was the first to survey and map any of Iceland's underwater caves. The 2025 Expedition will incorporate different technologies and will include biological research.

Diving for Cures

The marine environment is a vast resource that is being tapped to find cures for various human diseases. Sponges, blood from marine animals, and microbes are all targets of exploration for cures. Some success has already been had and much more potential exists



Larry Cohen & Olga Torrey

Larry Cohen is a commercial photographer, his underwater photos have appeared in many publications. He is the USA East Coast editor for X-Ray Magazine. Larry is a former-president of the NYC Sea Gypsies and a founding member of The NY Underwater Photographic Society.

Olga Torrey is a fine artist and a Life member of the Art Students League of New York. She has taken her talent as a fine artist and applied her skills to photography both above and below the water.

The Many Faces of Mexico

Mexico offers a variety of underwater experiences. From the reefs of Cozumel, cenotes in the Riviera Maya, the Sea lions of the Sea of Cortez, or the Giant mantas around Socorro, Mexico.. Larry and Olga will show images from their travels on this compelling country's east and west coasts.

Susan Copelas



Susan Copelas is an underwater explorer, becoming the first diver in uncharted Antarctic waters on an expedition retracing Shackleton's journey in 2005. Founder of Celebrate Women Divers Day, as well as Dive the World Adventures, she leads diving expeditions worldwide. Susan partners with global organizations to lead environmental conservation efforts.

1 year. 3 Oceans Mantas spanning the Globe and How you can make a difference in their Preservation

Ever wish you could just swim next to a manta, to glide along weightless in the ocean? Mantas are being threatened with extinction, however you can easily help scientists gather information that will help them determine needs, and help drive policies and practices necessary to conserve mantas. In this presentation, I will show photos of various species, around the globe tell stories about diving along-side them, eye to eye, for that one bucket list moment.

All Diving Issues are NOT Necessarily DCS- what to know so it doesn't happen to YOU

There are a lot of awesome dive destinations on the other side of the world. It takes forever to get there doesn't it? Once you get there you want to dive-in. But are you really on your "A" game and ready to do that? Come, hear about a near-death experience and savvy things you can do to hop-in and dive minimizing your risks from travel.



David Doubilet & Jennifer Hayes

David Doubilet has spent a lifetime photographing our fragile underwater world since, at 12, he first put his Brownie *Hawkeye* camera in a rubber anesthesiologist's bag. His personal and professional challenge is to capture the essence of our planet's oceans from the smallest plankton to the largest predators and to make an image that can make a difference. David's is a contributing author and photographer for the National Geographic Magazine where he has photographed over 80 stories since his first assignment in 1971. He is a feature columnist, contributing editor and author of numerous books on the sea.

Jen Hayes is an aquatic biologist, writer and photographer specializing in natural history. She is the author of numerous articles on marine environments, with images appearing in countless books, magazine publications. Jen Hayes and David Doubilet collaborate on project development, story production, featured articles and books. National Geographic assignments have taken them to Cuba reefs, the beauty of Tasmania's waters, great white sharks, the bounty of Delta and a current Indonesian project.

Beneath the largest border

David has published 80 stories for National Geographic magazine and is working on his 81st. Join him for the story behind the Nat Geo stories. Using imagery to balance hard truths against more than conservation hope on paper - but places where conservation is happening.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Christopher Drew & Henry Tippens Richan

Christopher Drew is a founder of Scuba.Tech and videographer with Dive Voyager Expeditions. He loves instructing and filming on NJ&NY-area shipwrecks.



Henry C. Tippens Richan wears many hats at Scuba.Tech, serving as Board Secretary and Photogrammetry Specialist. He helps manage explorer team ROV operations, scuba diving operations, collects and processes valuable survey data.

Science, Survey, and Scuba: Cameras and Marine Creatures!

Examine the latest advancements in marine exploration imaging with Scuba.Tech's open-source Triscopic Camera Array. Learn how modern photogrammetry enhances underwater surveys of shipwrecks and marine life health. Join us, and gain insights from animal health professionals, on work-flows you can adopt for your own projects to help understand our oceans

"Butch" Hendrick

With 55+ years teaching thousands of sport and public safety divers worldwide, Butch created ground-breaking programs including "Rescue Diver" and "Field Neurological." This father of diving rescue invented the rescue throw rope bag, the do-si-do and in-water mouth-mouth procedures, the right-hand release weight standard, and the 90% contingency diver.

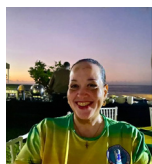


How Do We Make All of Us Safer at Every Level of Div-

talk is for dive professionals and divers of all levels. Only divers, no matter what their level, who want to be safer and continue to enjoy diving for the rest of their lives, should attend. Five little things we need to do before every dive to improve diver safety Five little things we need to do before every dive to reduce underwater accident or injury to ourselves, our students, or divers we are guiding. Five little things we need to do to avoid legal procedures involved in a dive/underwater incident.

Jennifer Jones

Jennifer Jones is a Senior Research Scientist in the biotech industry and a recreational diver. She is the Team Scientist within DWP-Cares (Diving with a Purpose-Collective Approach to Restoring Our Ecosystems), executive board member of NABS, and is a member of the NABS Science and Education Committee. Jennifer utilizes her scientific background and love for diving to help educate others on the importance of ocean conservation.



Healing Our Oceans One Advocate at a Time (DWP-CARES)

Scuba diving provides firsthand access to some of the most breathtaking and biodiverse ecosystems on the planet while providing a front row seat to their deteriorating health. DWP-CARES provides recreational divers the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for ocean conservation while learning how to actively contribute to the monitoring, protection and restoration of marine ecosystems.

Steve & Maureen Langevin

Steve & Maureen are instructors, USCG licensed Captains, and own Dive Voyager Expeditions, a company specializing in scuba instruction and documentaries. Maureen is a member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame. Together they educate divers, non-divers and young



people about our maritime history and our amazing undersea world.

Diving Antarctica - the Great Southland

The expedition begins at Argentina's southernmost point, then crosses the treacherous Drakes Passage like many famous early explorers. After over a day at sea, they pass through the South Shetland Islands destined for the Northern shores of Antarctica. Spectacular landscapes and life await above and below the frigid waters. Includes bonus footage from the deep south region of the Weddell Sea.

A Shipwreck's Secret

New Jersey shores are a popular destination, but what lies off the coast at the bottom of the ocean is what draws divers from all over the world; shipwrecks! Captains Steve and Maureen Langevin cruise offshore to one of their favorite shipwrecks, visibility reaches 80 feet. Steve videotapes, inside and out, to his surprise, something unexpected comes into view, kicking off a 3 year adventure to recover the large artifact from the ocean floor.

Lost at Sea – Texas Tower Disaster

January 15th, 1961 a USAF radar defense platform at the edge of the continental shelf 60 miles east of Belmar, NJ was pounded by a horrific storm. She collapsed beneath the monstrous waves crashing to the ocean floor, 180 feet down. Hear from the USCG Captain who attempted rescue and visit the wreck as she lies at the bottom of the ocean.

Mike Levitt & Chris Bain

Mike Lavitt started diving in New Jersey in 1977. He has made hundreds of dives in New Jersey, Lake Michigan, Bali, California, Canada, the Caribbean, Florida and Mexico. He chairs the Jersey Council of Divers & Clubs. He is a former assistant scuba instructor and a published diving author.

Chris Bain, has been diving New Jersey for well over 30 years, including a 10-year stint crewing on the dive boat "Porthole". He is a past president of MUD, the oldest continually operating dive club in New Jersey.

New Jersey Offers All This Diving

If you've dove warm, clear water and are interested in the challenge of Northeast diving with its great wrecks and lobstering, you should attend this seminar. Learn the simple steps that can make your first dive in New Jersey or New York waters safe, fun and

Take the Plunge: Warm Up to Northeast Diving

New Jersey doesn't top most people's dive destinations list, but maybe it should! The state offers a unique combination of thousands of historic shipwrecks, great underwater photography and world-class spear-fishing and lobstering. Wreck diver Mike Lavitt and diver/photographer Chris Bain share their Jersey diving experience.

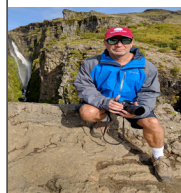
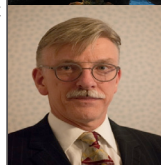
Barry Lipsky, Michael Salvatorezza, Christopher Weaver

Barry Lipsky is president of the Long Island Dive Association.

Michael Salvatorezza and Christopher Weaver have been diving the waters the world since 1978. They have presented their work numerous times at Beneath the Sea, and all of the major dive conferences, and have published more than 200 articles in numerous magazines, including National Geographic Adventure. Their work has been used to support a variety of research and educational programs. Their expeditions have taken them from the Arctic to the Antarctic and many places in between.

Vessel Incident Survival When Living on Board

Liveaboard dive vessels operate throughout the world providing the ability to explore the most beautiful and remote dive locations. There is no better way to experience the underwater world. Despite decades safety, several recent incidents have demonstrate the need for liveaboard divers to protect their personal safety. In this session, the Long Island Diver's Association will present a comprehensive review of safety protocols to improve your odds of survival in the unlikely event of an onboard emergency. Learn what safety equipment and procedures



should exist on board the vessel, what equipment divers can bring with them to improve their own safety, and how to rehearse emergency procedures for evacuating a liveaboard experiencing an incident.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Brian Nadwidy

Brian is a technical diver hailing from Cranbrook, British Columbia. Certified in 1980 he has been a technical diver since 1996. While living in Halifax, Nova Scotia in the late '80s he developed a love of shipwrecks and has pursued this passion all over the world. He is a Lifetime Member of the Alberta Underwater Council and a Member of the Explorer's Club.

The City of Ainsworth wreck-Deep Canadian history

The City of Ainsworth was a stern-wheeler launched in 1892 in Kootenay Lake in British Columbia, Canada. It was built to serve a mining boom in the area as there were no roads or railroads. In November 1898 it foundered in a storm and sunk with the loss of 9 lives. It was discovered in 1990 at a depth of 360 feet (110M) by the Underwater Archaeology Society of BC. Members of the Cambrian Foundation conducted 2 dives on her in 1997. Since then it lay undisturbed by divers until 2023 when the deep diving group, VexNow, conducted a series of dives followed by more in 2024.



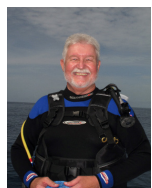
Rob Neto

Rob Neto has been cave diving for more than 20 years. He is the author of the international bestselling book, Side-mount Diving The Almost Comprehensive Guide, as well as the award-winning Beyond thrillers. He has also published the first books in two more series about his underwater cave explorations, Beneath the Jungle of Cozumel and The Hidden Riv-

Beneath the Jungle of Cozumel:

Exploring the world of underwater caves on the island

Join Rob Neto as he embarks on his journey Beneath the Jungle of Cozumel. Dive into the cenotes with him as he tells the tales of his explorations. Rob first visited the island of Cozumel, Mexico in 2011. At the time, he had no idea it would be the first of many trips he made to the island to dive the caves beneath the jungle. That first trip was the beginning of a lifetime project of cave exploration. Listen to Rob discuss some of the good times as well as the struggles during his explorations both on and below the surface. He will discuss his exploration techniques and how they have led to him to discovering and mapping more than 10 miles of passages that were previously unknown and how he led a team of divers to almost triple the known length of the longest underwater cave Beneath the Jungle of Cozumel.



Dan Orr

Past President of Divers Alert Network (DAN). President of Dan Orr Consulting, LLC, providing diving and safety expertise to the global diving community. Author (with Betty Orr) of 101 Tips for Recreational Scuba Divers (Best Publishing), Scuba Diving Safety (Best Publishing), and hundreds of articles on diving safety. Recipient of numerous awards including BTS Diver

of the Year, NOGI Award (Sports/Education), DEMA Reaching ut Award, NAUI Lifetime Achievement Award, Sea of Change Lifetime Explorer Award.

Mistakes Divers Make

A look at the mistakes divers make that can seriously compromise their safety and the safety of those they dive with. This seminar also includes case histories of diving accidents with a discussion of how they could have been prevented

Safety Issues for the Older Diver

A discussion of the aging process and how changes may affect a diver's safety. This seminar contains important information for not only the older diver but for divers of all ages.



Julie Ouimet & Michel Labrecque

Explorers Club, Fellows of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society and Associate Members of the Boston Sea Rovers. Michel is a licensed boat captain and in 2016 he was named a PADI Ambassador. Julie is a member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame.

Anticosti :

a nearby gem in the Gulf of St. Lawrence

Your heart beats fast, you are charmed and overwhelmed. It's love at first sight! The island of Anticosti has this effect. Located in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in Quebec, Canada, its 300 miles of coastline are virgin and unexplored. Its waters are rich and surprising. We like to call it the *Lembeh* of the North, not to mention reports of over 400 lost ships!



Dare to explore:

if there is water, there must be something to discover

There are still many areas of our blue planet that are not regularly visited or overlooked by divers. We have explored some unexpected and emerging locations, hoping to become part of the few, and maybe even the first, to discover what lies beneath places that few have even heard of. Gems, fails, what have we found? What are the rewards, challenges and pitfalls of exploring remote and unknown places?



Lizeth Perez Marin

Lizeth de Lourdes Pérez Marin is a multilingual professional with a Master's degree in International Strategic Leadership and a Bachelor's degree in International Business. Currently, she serves as the Promotion Manager at the Quintana Roo Tourism Board (CPTQ). With extensive experience in the travel and tourism industry, she has previously worked as

a Contracting Manager at Hotelbeds Group, the world's leading B2B travel service provider. Lizeth also held the position of Deputy Director at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs in Quintana Roo, further showcasing her expertise in strategic leadership and international collaboration. This profile reflects her dedication to fostering global partnerships and her ability to navigate diverse professional environments with excel-

Discover the Underwater Wonders of the Mexican Caribbean:

A Diver's Paradise

Explore the breathtaking dive sites of the Mexican Caribbean, including unique cenotes, vibrant coral reefs, and the fascinating Underwater Museum of Art. Learn about the region's rich marine biodiversity, historical discoveries, and the must-visit spots for an unforgettable diving



Nathan Perisic

Nathan Perisic is a marine biologist with over 10 years of experience in shark research, conservation, and eco-tourism. He has led ground-breaking studies on tiger sharks in the Maldives, integrating science and sustainability. Nathan is passionate about empowering eco-tourism ventures to drive impactful marine research and promote ocean conservation.

Harnessing Eco-tourism for Shark Science and Conservation

Shark eco-tourism is often seen as a tool for marine conservation, but its potential to fund and facilitate ground-breaking research remains under-explored. This seminar highlights Nathan's experience leading shark research projects in the Maldives, where a dive center supported initiatives such as tiger shark monitoring, manta and whale shark identification, and behavioral studies. By integrating eco-tourism with marine science, our understanding of shark ecology increased, while fostering sustainability and local engagement. Through case studies and practical insights, Nathan will demonstrate how eco-tourism ventures can pioneer self-funded research, contribute to conservation, and inspire global action for shark protection.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Erin Quigley

Specializing in post-production techniques tailored for underwater photographers, Erin brings a wealth of expertise and creativity to every session. Creator of the Go Ask Erin website and a member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame, Boston Sea Rovers, and Ocean Artists Society, Erin is also a regular contributor to Scuba Diving magazine and teaches workshops around the globe.

Smarter Editing with AI

An insightful seminar exploring the incredible power of AI in both Lightroom and Photoshop. You will Learn to edit smarter with tools that remove backscatter in a single click, harness the amazing new Lens Blur feature in Lightroom, and dabble in Photoshop's Generative Fill for jaw-dropping creative possibilities.



Alex Rose

Alex Rose is a biologist, diver, musician, and underwater photographer. She is the Science Editor of Ocean Geographic Magazine, the Managing Editor of Ocean Geographic Explorers, and founder of ocean conservation company Blue Ring.

Exploring With Purpose

From a book launch to an Arctic expedition to diving in Japan, Ocean Geographic has been making some exciting moves. Join us to learn more about SOULS (Stories of Our Underwater Legends) and to explore some fascinating locations that will inspire you to experience more of the world.



Mark Rausch

Founder of Poseidon Handicap Scuba Adventures, Mark is a Native of the State of Michigan a retired Healthcare Engineer, a Professional Engineer, and US Air Force veteran. Mark holds a master's degree in Healthcare Administration, is certified as a Project/Program Manager, and lectures at the School of Nursing, University of Michigan. Mark

is also a doctoral student studying disability and leadership in the recreational sport of scuba diving. He holds many certifications of leadership in the diving industry. After Mark's son was born with a disability (and subsequent passing) he has traveled the world sharing the Handicap

Therapeutic & Psychological Benefits: The impact of diving on mental well-being, mobility, and confidence-building.

A most profound aspect of scuba diving is its ability as a natural therapy for individuals with disabilities. Underwater, the body experiences buoyancy, reducing pressure on joints and muscles, that allows for greater mobility and pain relief. The rhythmic breathing of scuba diving is similar to meditation. Many adaptive divers, veterans and trauma survivors, have reported significant improvements in their mental health. Diving gives individuals with disabilities a release from physical limitations, boosting confidence. For individuals with spinal cord injuries, amputations, or neurological disorders, diving has been shown to enhance muscle strength, coordination, and circulation.



Michael Rothschild

He is an otolaryngologist-head & neck surgeon - past president of the American Bronchoesophagological Association and the NY Pediatric Society. He is a Scuba Board medical moderator, a technical rebreather diver, and past-president of the Big Apple Divers. Michael has published many articles on underwater photography and in the medical literature.

Artificial Intelligence in Underwater Photography

In generative AI, text or images are produced based on original content and user prompts (e.g. ChatGPT) In this seminar, Michael discusses this technology in underwater photography, where it can enhance images in ways previously impossible. He will cover specific software, techniques and associated ethical issues.

Ear, Nose and Throat Problems in Scuba Diving

Many divers have ear or sinus issues, and it can be difficult to determine the source of these symptoms. There is often confusion about the anatomy and physiology of conditions like barotrauma, swimmer's ear, sinus squeeze, perilymph fistulas and inner ear DCS. This seminar will cover these troubling problems.

Michael Salvatore & Christopher Weaver



Michael Salvatore and Christopher Weaver have been diving the waters the world since 1978. They have presented their work numerous times at Beneath the Sea, and all of the major dive conferences, and have published more than 200 articles in numerous magazines, including National Geographic Adventure. Their work has been used to support a variety of research and educational programs. Their expeditions have taken them from the Arctic to the Antarctic and many places in between.



Science Fiction and Horror Under the Water

Eco-Photo Explorers specializes in underwater exploration and photography. While many of the creatures they photograph are beautiful, some of them seem like they come right out of a Hollywood Sci-Fi or Horror film. Join us for a fun and entertaining program as we reveal these underwater organisms and their Hollywood doppelgangers.

This program will be sure to bring back memories of Sci-Fi and Horror films from the past and present...along with a few surprises!

Wild Alaska: Diving Prince William Sound

The Alaskan wilderness is known for rugged snow-capped mountains, dense forests, captivating waterfalls and myriad wildlife. In this beautiful but harsh frontier land, few people venture below the waves to experience the underwater beauty of this the 49th state. Join Eco-Photo Explorers as they dive the cold waters of the Prince William Sound to uncover its secrets. Along the way, the viewer will join the search for Salmon Sharks, Giant Pacific Octopus, colorful marine invertebrates and schools of Salmon swimming in frigid rivers fed by melting glaciers

Baja: Secrets of the Sea of Cortez

Between the Baja Peninsula and the mainland of Mexico lies the fabled Sea of Cortez. For decades, fisherman have known about the marine riches that abound in these waters. Today, SCUBA divers can explore beneath the waves of this dazzling marine paradise and witness the underwater marvels for themselves. Jacques-Yves Cousteau once characterized the Sea of Cortez as "The World's Aquarium", and for good reason. The Sea of Cortez is known for big animals, mesmerizing reefs and heart-pounding adventure. Join Eco-Photo Explorers as they dive with playful Sea Lions and Guadalupe Fur Seals, explore fascinating shipwrecks and journey to colorful reefs teeming with marine life.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bio



James Sears

James Sears has spent more than 45 years pursuing his passion for diving. He has served as New York State Divers Association web master, digest editor and since 2003 its President, sharing his enthusiasm for wreck diving, UW photography, marine archeology and history with others through diving and Freighter Wrecks of The St Lawrence presentations.

Freighter Wrecks of The St Lawrence

Over the last 250 years work has been done on the St Lawrence River to make passage of ever larger vessels possible. Even though these changes have made travel on the river easier and safer, the River has still claimed hundreds of vessels including quite a few large freighters. This includes the largest wreck in the entire Great Lakes system. We'll take a quick look at the history of the St Lawrence canal system and explore some of these modern wreck sites.



Paul Sieswerda, Scot Albertson & Bob Hyldborg
Paul J. Sieswerda, President of Gotham Whale,

grew up inspired by his father, Paul Sieswerda Sr., whose unique connection to marine life laid the foundation for this impactful organization. Paul Sr. famously brought home a sick seal, rehabilitated it in the family's bathtub, and released it to the New England Aquarium. PJ has carried forward his father's legacy, leading Gotham Whale's mission to document and protect the marine life of the New York Bight. Through his leadership, Gotham Whale has cataloged over 400 humpback whales and built a community dedicated to marine conservation.



Scot Albertson is Gotham Whale's dynamic Social Media Promoter, known for weaving compelling narratives that connect people to the organization's mission. With a talent for storytelling and a passion for marine conservation, Scot has significantly expanded Gotham Whale's digital presence on Podcasting and YouTube platforms. His creative campaigns amplify the organization's message, building bridges between diverse audiences and the vital work of protecting marine life.



As the Executive Director of Gotham Whale, Bob Hyldborg brings his unique ability to inspire and unite teams to advance marine advocacy and education. With a lifelong commitment to storytelling and leadership, Bob has strengthened Gotham Whale's programs, volunteer networks, and community partnerships. Under his guidance, the organization has enhanced its research, advocacy, and education efforts. Bob's dedication reflects his personal mission to elevate the legacies of others while creating lasting impact through shared stories.

From Bathtub to Ocean:

Storytelling as a Catalyst for Marine Conservation

This engaging seminar will highlight Gotham Whale's journey from its humble beginnings to its impactful mission. Through compelling narratives and practical storytelling techniques, the audience will learn how to create meaningful connections, inspire action, and foster collaborations that protect our oceans. The seminar kicks off with an emotionally captivating narrative (the seal in the bathtub), drawing attendees in with the human connection to marine life. The storytelling techniques and conservation strategies provided are applicable beyond marine advocacy, benefiting attendees' personal and professional endeavors. The session invites audience participation, fostering a sense of involvement and leaving them motivated to take action.

This seminar isn't just about Gotham Whale's story—it's about empowering attendees to become effective storytellers and advocates for the ocean and the causes they care about most.



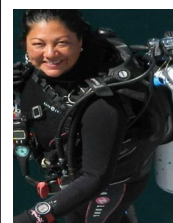
Jennifer Sellitti is a lawyer, diver and shipwreck hunter. A criminal defense attorney by profession, she spends her spare time co-operating D/V Tenacious, a vessel that locates, dives, and salvages artifacts from shipwrecks in the North Atlantic. Jennifer is an associate member of Boston Sea Rovers and a NJ Maritime Museum trustee.

The Adriatic Affair: Discovery of the 1855 French Passenger Steamship *Le Lyonnais*

The sailing vessel Adriatic collided with the steamship *Le Lyonnais* on November 2, 1856, in a maritime hit-and-run. Adriatic's captain rendered no aid and left the steamship to fend for herself. 114 people died in the disaster. In 2024, Jennifer and a team of explorers discovered *Le Lyonnais* after a decades-long search. This presentation tells the story of *Le Lyonnais*, her loss, and her discovery.

Dora Sierra-Palma

Dora Sierra - Palmer owns and operates Rocio del Mar and Quino el Guardian, also known as Mexico Liveboards. She pioneered liveboard trips to the Sea of Cortez, created Heroes del Mar, and helped to bring citizen science to Socorro. Experience the romance of diving in Mexico with Dora through her presentations.



An International Dive Adventure with a Domestic Flight

Did you know you can experience international diving by flying to Phoenix, Arizona? The Sea of Cortez is a stunning and vibrant underwater world called the world's aquarium by legendary oceanographer *Jacques Cousteau*. It is home to an impressive array of marine life that will leave even the most seasoned divers and nature enthusiasts awestruck. From the tiniest, most elusive creatures to the largest, most majestic animals in the ocean, the Sea of Cortez offers an unparalleled experience. Whether you're a macro photographer, a thrill-seeker, or simply looking to soak up the beauty of the sea, this destination has something to offer everyone.

Yana Stashkevich



Experienced technical CCR, cave, mine, and wreck diver Yana Stashkevich is an exploration diver, and presenter. She was a member of the Vaggfjellan XI expedition exploring the cave system located beyond the Arctic Circle, and a diver on the Underwater Filming & Research (UFR) project team documenting the wrecks in Greece. Currently, Yana is involved in deep wreck exploration projects in the Aegean Sea, and in promoting the maritime heritage of Greek waters. Balancing a career as a full-time global marketeer, UK-based Yana is passionate about inspiring people to push their boundaries and pursue their passion.

Vickers Wellington Project: the hidden gem of the Aegean depths | The lesser known wrecks of the Aegean

Yana recounts her adventures from Greece where she took part in deep wreck identification dives, including a Vickers Wellington Bomber, a time capsule believed to be the best-preserved airplane wreck of its class. The crew skillfully ditched the aircraft after being shot down and were rescued by the locals. The wreck now rests at 74m. Join Yana's talk to be immersed in the thrilling story of exploration, discovery, and time travel.

Diving into the industrial underground: UK mine diving

Yana explains her love for exploring Great Britain's flooded mines. Flooded mines are industrial time capsules that once were the core of the UK economy, providing livelihoods for thousands of people and communities.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Woodrow Tinsley III

Woodrow Tinsley is the training officer for the CREST Police Dive Team in Central Connecticut. He is a peer counselor, crisis interventionist, and hostage negotiator. After achieving his master's of social work degree, Woody was accepted into a trauma-informed care PhD program. He is also a PADI Master Instructor.

Buddy Checks-

The Importance of Peer Support in Public Safety Diving.

This presentation is the culmination of several research projects regarding the importance of mental health care for public safety divers following exposure to traumatic incidences. As there is a marked increase in reports of post-traumatic stress in the public safety community at large, it is critical that the small community of public safety divers take the initiative to learn to identify worrisome signs and symptoms while responding appropriately.

Peter Venoutsos



Peter Venoutsos has been a certified diver since 1976 and a commercial diver since 1983. His experience includes working with private underwater engineering firms, the Federal Government, and the US Navy. His interests include underwater photography, shipwrecks & cave diving, with the goal of promoting diving around the world.

Mastering Macro

The closer you look at nature the more beautiful it becomes. In this presentation we will be covering some of the basic and advanced technics to help you improve your photography. Subjects covered are from point and shoots to advanced DSLR's with an emphasis on lighting.

Cristina Zenato & Kewin Lorenzen



A professional diver since 1994, Cristina is an active shark behaviorist and ecologist, cave and ocean explorer, a champion for conservation, speaker and writer. A member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame, and The Explorers Club, she spends her time teaching below and above the water. Her work can be summarized in Exploration-Education-Conservation.



Kewin is an underwater photographer and cinematographer specialized in capturing compelling images in caves and with sharks. His passion is showcasing their extraordinary vastness while simultaneously bringing the viewer's eye into the magnifying lens. Together with a passion for

creating unique artistic images, Kewin has filmed TV programs, explored

If Sharks Could Talk

Anthropomorphism attributes human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human creatures, creating misinterpretations of their behavior. Cristina will address some of the concerns raised by anthropomorphic interpretations she has observed through her thirty years of experience with sharks and provide a different point of view as if coming from sharks themselves.

Behind The Dream

Life unfolds in a myriad ways as we navigate its complexities. Through their underwater creative art, Kewin and Cristina invite the viewer to enter and interpret the story behind the dream as a personal journey. During this presentation they will share their techniques, skills and planning required on the field to achieve these images.

Macroing Sharks

We often see stunning images of giant tiger sharks and formidable great hammerheads, but what happens when we use a macro lens to capture the details of a 20 foot apex predator? Kewin will share his journey and the tools he utilizes to photograph some of the biggest sharks in the world.

Notes