



# Sharks and People: Exploring Our Relationship with the Most Feared Fish in the Sea

*Thomas P. Peschak*

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At once feared and revered, sharks have captivated people since our earliest human encounters. Children and adults alike stand awed before aquarium shark tanks, fascinated by the giant teeth and unnerving eyes. And no swim in the ocean is undertaken without a slight shiver of anxiety about the very real—and very cinematic—dangers of shark bites. But our interactions with sharks are not entirely one-sided: the threats we pose to sharks through fisheries, organized hunts, and gill nets on coastlines are more deadly and far-reaching than any bite. In *Sharks and People* acclaimed wildlife photographer Thomas Peschak presents stunning photographs that capture the relationship between people and sharks around the globe.

A contributing photographer to *National Geographic*, Peschak is best known for his unusual photographs of sharks—his iconic image of a great white shark following a researcher in a small yellow kayak is one of the most recognizable shark photographs in the world. The other images gathered here are no less riveting, bringing us as close as possible to sharks in the wild. Alongside the photographs, *Sharks and People* tells the compelling story of the natural history of sharks. Sharks have roamed the oceans for more than four hundred million years, and in this time they have never stopped adapting to the ever-changing world—their unique cartilage skeletons and array of super-senses mark them as one of the most evolved groups of animals. Scientists have recently discovered that sharks play an important role in balancing the ocean, including maintaining the health of coral reefs. Yet, tens of millions of sharks are killed every year just to fill the demand for shark fin soup alone. Today more than sixty species of sharks, including hammerhead, mako, and oceanic white-tip sharks, are listed as vulnerable or in danger of extinction.

The need to understand the significant part sharks play in the oceanic ecosystem has never been so urgent, and Peschak's photographs bear witness to the thrilling strength and unique attraction of sharks. They are certain to enthrall and inspire.

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