



David Shiffman: Why sharks matter: a deep dive with the world's most misunderstood predator

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Sharks are arguably the most feared predators in the world and possibly some of the most fascinating, indispensable, and threatened animals on our planet. In this book, marine conservation biologist David Shiffman explains charmingly, and using many personal anecdotes, why sharks matter. The book is organised into three sections containing ten chapters. Chapters 1–4 explain the biology and ecological importance of sharks and provide an overview of the threats they face. Chapters 5–7 present different ways we can protect sharks. In this section, Shiffman tackles the challenges of sustainable fishery and applies a holistic approach, including conservation associations, jurisdictions, fisheries, and trading regulations. The threat of shark fin trade is well-known, but the book also covers other fishing-related threats and potential solutions to mitigate them. The author claims that “there’s no doubt that sustainable shark fisheries can and do exist, but there is also no doubt that some species can’t withstand any fishing pressure”. Chapters 8–10 inform about how scientists and environmentalists are currently protecting sharks and could help them in the future; for example, through long-term monitoring of shark populations. Black and white pictures, as well as 16 colour plates, make this read more pleasant. Throughout the book, Shiffman communicates his

message with great clarity and passion, making this book suitable for marine animal enthusiasts and biology students. However, shark researchers seeking detailed and up-to-date information from the scientific literature will not find it here. The overarching goal of this book is to clarify several misconceptions about this misunderstood group by helping the reader overcome their fears. The outcome is to be praised because, while it accomplishes this function, it makes the reader fall in love with these fantastic animals.

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