

**CHAMPIONS  
OF THE  
WILD**

Part 1

## SHARKS



Long feared as ferocious, the magnificent shark rarely takes a bite out of a human. Indeed, sharks have more to fear from humans than we do from them. With a booming trade in shark cartilage – touted as the latest miracle cure for countless diseases – the world's shark population is being slaughtered at an unprecedented rate.

Underwater photographer Tim Calver was drawn to biologist and leading shark researcher Dr. Sam Gruber's world-famous research lab in the Bahamas, where he is now a free-diving expert (who can hold his breath under water for five full minutes), a specialist in capturing and freeing sharks for study – and a passionate defender of these misunderstood animals.

Endangered animals – and the champions who have dedicated their lives to saving them – feature in this spectacular series of 13 half-hour videos! Stunningly shot around the world, from the frozen ice fields of Canada's North to the jungles of Borneo, **Champions of the Wild** combines fascinating natural history with the intrigue of personal drama.

Director: **Jack Silberman**

Producers: **Christian Bruyère and Ian Herring** (Omni Film),  
**George Johnson** (NFB)

Executive Producer: **Michael Chechik** (Omni Film)

25 minutes

Order number: **C9197 096**

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VHS

C9197 096

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AS SEEN ON  
DISCOVERY  
AND  
ANIMAL  
PLANET

A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA RELEASE

# SHARKS

## Part 1

"Of all the myths in the world, one of the greatest myths is that sharks are bloodthirsty killers" says Dr. Sam Gruber, the world-renowned biologist.

From his research lab on the coast of Bimini in the beautiful Bahamas, Gruber has made it his life's work to dispel the "Jaws myth" created by Hollywood. Of 400 species of sharks, only 25 are known to have ever attacked humans. It turns out that sharks have more to fear from people than people have to fear from sharks. They are disappearing rapidly as they become victims of a world-wide slaughter for the vitamin market. Through their tireless research and extensive underwater photography, Gruber and Tim Calver are trying to protect the endangered species. They want people to appreciate the shark.

An encounter with a hammerhead shark changed the course of Dr. Gruber's life and work. Today, his shark research lab attracts students from all over the world. Calver, a Canadian photographer, wrote to Gruber requesting permission to come and take underwater photographs at the lab. Known as "waterboy" because of his diving expertise, he has become a valuable member of the team. A consummate free diver, he can hold his breath under water for a full five minutes, and dive to a depth of over 100 feet. Calver has become invaluable because of his expertise in capturing and freeing the sharks used for study.

### PRE-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Locate the Bahamas and Bimini Island on a map. Why would this area of the world be a good place to locate a research laboratory for the study of sharks? Discuss weather patterns and the environment of the area.

Create a master list of what the students already know about sharks. Ask them where they learned or acquired this information. How much of it has come from popular culture?

### POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Why do sharks need public relations managers?

Where are sharks located on the food chain of the ocean world? What would happen in the ocean environment if sharks became extinct?

How many different types of sharks are found in the oceans of the world? Why and how does their body design make them so successful in their environment?

Dr. Gruber's research methods include capture, tagging, recording of information and a visual identification and the release of the sharks back into their environment. What types of information do these research techniques give the scientists? How does this information further our understanding of the shark and its place in the environment?

## CHAMPIONS OF THE WILD



Champion:  
Tim Calver

**Champions of the Wild** is a spectacular 13-part series featuring endangered animals and the champions who have dedicated their lives to saving them.

Produced by  
Omni Film Productions Ltd

with the participation of  
Telefilm Canada,

in association with  
British Columbia Film,  
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of Canada, and  
with the participation of  
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and Rogers Telefund.



### WORLD WIDE WEB SITES:

Information and pictures about sharks  
<http://www.seaworld.org/sharks/pageone.html>

Dr. Gruber's shark page  
<http://www.wattcom.com/sharks/>

Sharks – information and conservation  
<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/admin/alumni/sharks/home.html>

### CHAMPIONS OF THE WILD SERIES:

**Part 1: SHARKS** (C9197 096): From their research station on Bimini Island in the Bahamas, Tim Calver and his mentor, Dr. Sam Gruber, are committed to changing the world's negative perception of sharks.

**Part 2: GORILLAS** (C9197 104): In the dangerous surroundings of Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park, Dr. Pascale Sicotte risks her life to protect one of the world's last remaining populations of mountain gorillas.

**Part 3: GRIZZLIES** (C9197 093): Wayne McCrory has spent the last 25 years passionately campaigning to protect the grizzly and rare white spirit bears of the British Columbia rain forest.

**Part 4: WOLVES** (C9197 103): Dr. Paul Paquet studies the harmful effects of wolves coming into contact with civilization and has succeeded in reintroducing wolf packs into the southern Alberta Rockies.

**Part 5: HUMPBACKS** (C9197 099): Dr. Jim Darling, a leading authority on humpback whales, follows the migration of these magnificent creatures in order to protect them in their Pacific environment.

**Part 6: PANDAS** (C9197 102): A self-proclaimed "pandaholic," Dr. Sue Mainka helps the Chinese make critical breakthroughs in raising captive pandas.

**Part 7: LEMURS** (C9197 105): Dr. Lisa Gould's mission is to protect the ring-tailed lemurs of Madagascar and to make the world aware of these obscure primates.

**Part 8: ORCAS** (C9197 100): Radical researcher and visionary Dr. Paul Spong, having researched killer whales for over three decades, helps us understand how humans affect orca habitat and behaviour.

**Part 9: POLAR BEARS** (C9197 095): Biologist and photographer Dr. Dan Guravich has a love affair with the polar bear. His thousands of photographs have profoundly influenced our understanding of the world's largest land-based carnivore.

**Part 10: DOLPHINS** (C9197 097): Diane Claridge and Ken Balcomb are leaders in the fight to free the planet's imprisoned dolphins and whales and return them to the wild.

**Part 11: SWIFT FOXES** (C9197 094): Clio Smeeton has dedicated her life to completing her parents' dream of reintroducing the once-extinct swift fox to its Canadian Prairie home.

**Part 12: RIGHT WHALES** (C9197 101): By policing the Bay of Fundy and educating those who use the world's waterways, Deborah Tobin and Dr. Moira Brown are dedicated to saving the northern right whales, the planet's rarest marine mammal.

**Part 13: ORANGUTANS** (C9197 098): Activist researcher Dr. Biruté Galdikas lives in the gruelling jungles of Borneo and Sumatra, fighting to save the increasingly threatened orangutan.