

Your Shortcut to... Sharks

They live in every ocean in the world... they're been on our planet since before the dinosaurs... and lots of people are absolutely terrified of them. This is your Squiz Kids Shortcut to Sharks... the podcast where we dive into the who, what, when, where, why and how of the big news stories.

I'm Amanda Bower, and because Bryce is already at the beach, I have with me here today Dr. Adrian Gutteridge, a mad keen surfer from Brisbane who also happens to be a shark expert with the Marine Stewardship Council. Adrian, welcome to Squiz Kids!

(Adrian)

Adrian, today you're going to help me understand HOW you went from being terrified of sharks to studying them; WHAT are some of the weirdest and coolest things you've learned; and WHY so many sharks species are endangered.

Listen carefully... there's a S'Quiz at the end!

HOW

Adrian, many people are absolutely terrified of sharks, and apparently you were no different when you were little!

(story about surfing, fear)

You must really have loved surfing to keep heading out there! So, how on earth did you go from that level of fear, to doing a PhD on sharks?

(studying parrot fish, seeing a shark, appreciating their adaptations)

So you switched what you were focusing on at uni?

(story of changing habits at uni; studying harder)

I guess that's a great lesson—if you find something you're passionate about, it will be easy to work hard! So WHAT are some of the weirdest and coolest things you've learned about sharks?

WHAT

What is one of the biggest differences between sharks and other fish?

(What exactly IS a shark; give birth to live young; one 90cm shark that gives birth to a 45cm baby - like having a 9 year old; cannibalistic pups)

What's the weirdest shark out there, do you think?

(Cookie cutter shark)

What can humans learn from sharks?

(dermal denticles inspiring swimmer design)

It's so clear talking to you that you really appreciate and love sharks. What would you say to kids like are just like you once were - deathly afraid of sharks?

(More than 600 species; most have no interest in "hairless land monkeys" - love this phrase. More likely to die walking to the beach. etc.)

Now, we think of sharks as being at the top of the ocean's food chain - all-powerful predators. But about half of all shark species are endangered. WHY on earth is that?

WHY

So Adrian, are sharks endangered because humans are killing them?

(Sharks as by-catch; sharks caught because they eat what tuna eat)

And why does that matter, if we have fewer sharks in our oceans?

(eco-system... fewer sharks throws everything out of balance. Analogy of lions in the jungle)

Which sharks are in the greatest danger right now?

(Talk about your faves, hammerheads, here)

So what can regular people do about all this? We don't run a fishery, so how can we help?

(Look for the blue tick; don't eat shark fin soup; etc).

Squid E the Newshound would want me here to point out that the non-profit behind the blue tick, the Marine Stewardship Council, has sponsored this podcast - why are you working with them?

Answer....

THE S'QUIZ

This is the part of the podcast where you can test how well you've been listening. Adrian, will you hit us with number one?

1. What kind of fish was I supposed to be studying when I got distracted by a shark?
(Parrot fish)

2. How many shark species are there in the world today? (More than 600)

3. What can you do to help sharks? (Don't eat shark fin soup, and look for the blue tick on seafood at the supermarket)

That's all we have time for today. Thanks for joining us as we explored the who, what, how, where, when, and why of sharks. Adrian, thank you SO much for joining us on Squiz Kids Shortcuts. Will you do the honours?

Now get out there, and have a most excellent day!

Over and out.