



CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION
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Your connection to wildlife

Bulletin

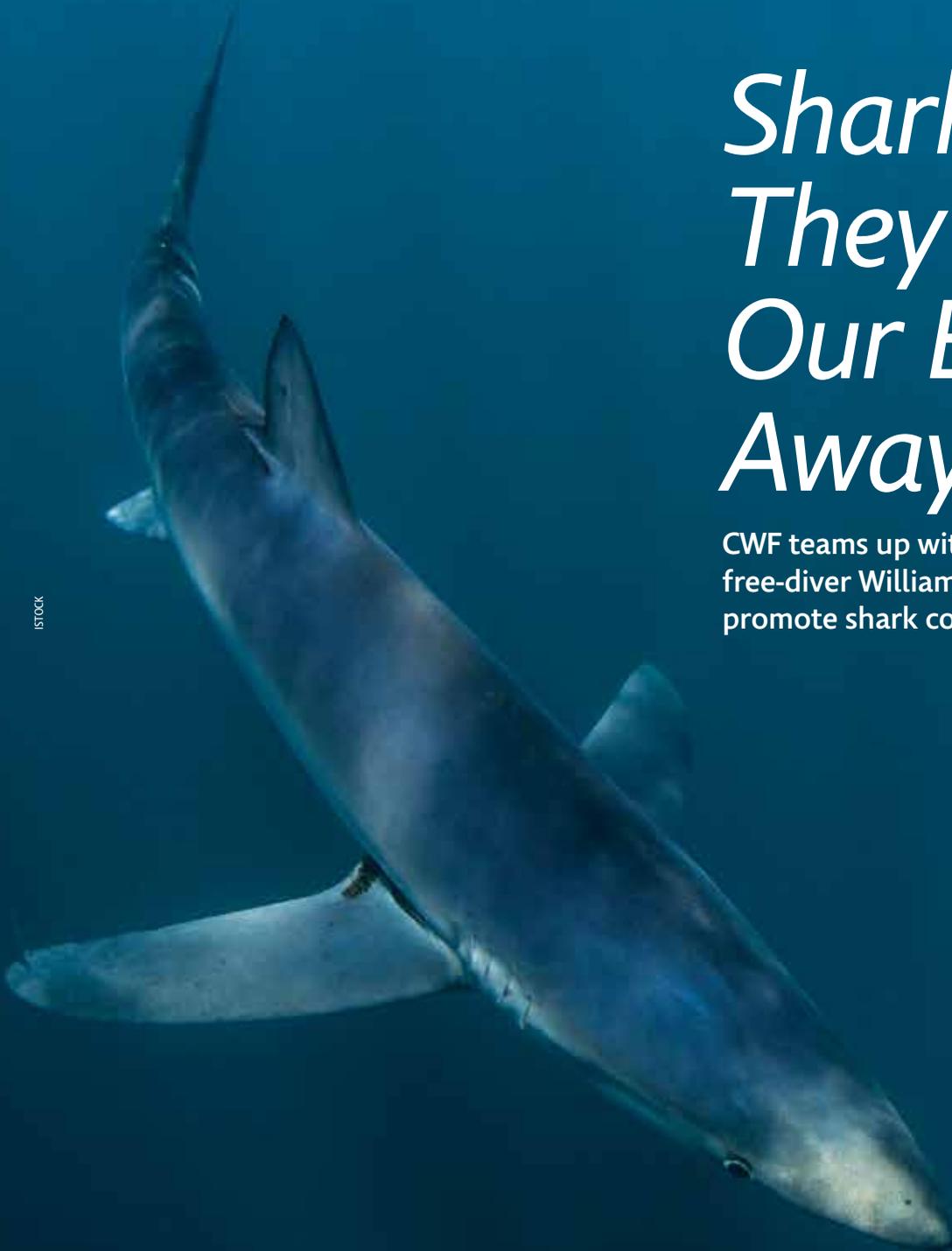
NEWS FROM CWF
MAY + JUNE 2014

Sharks? They Take Our Breath Away

CWF teams up with champion
free-diver William Winram to
promote shark conservation



ISTOCK



Sharks? They Take Our Breath Away...

Sharks are not normally top of mind when people think about conservation in Canada. Yet Canada is home to more than two dozen species of sharks. They inhabit all three of its oceans, and many are at risk.

More importantly, shark conservation is a major issue, both in Canada and on a global scale. That's why CWF invited William Winram earlier this year to be part of Wild About Sharks, an exclusive CWF shark-conservation education tour that stopped at schools and colleges in Ontario and Quebec in February.

Chances are you haven't heard of Winram, but he's got a story to tell. His claim to fame is holding a world record for free-diving, the sport of descending under water without scuba gear and then swimming to the surface on a single breath.

Winram's record is 154 metres, which means he can hold his breath for a long time — a remarkable ability that's of great value to scientists tagging sharks for study, because the noise of scuba gear frightens off the animals. And his experience as both an athlete and a shark researcher has made him a strong — and fascinating — spokesman for shark conservation worldwide.

"I have been diving most of my life and observed first-hand the decline in the health of our oceans, the reduction in biodiversity and the loss of many species of sharks," says Winram, who is featured in the recent Imax 3D film *Great White Shark*. "It is my hope that, as people learn more about sharks and

replace their fear with knowledge and respect, we will see increased support for shark protection."

Winram, who was born in Vancouver, has 25 years of experience diving with sharks and has swum with more than 20 different species. He is one of a handful of people who dive freely with great whites — without the use of protective devices. He has also founded the Waterman Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to ocean conservation, and is an "oceans ambassador" for the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

These experiences, along with slides and videos, formed the backbone of Winram's Wild About Sharks tour, which included a stop at the Canadian Wildlife Health Centre's wildlife ambassador dinner in Toronto. Audiences were spellbound by his stories and, more importantly, provided with an even deeper message about the value of conservation — a vital part of CWF's mandate.

"Our connection to marine wildlife is too easily forgotten, and the necessity of clean and normally functioning oceans can be taken for granted," says Sean Brilliant, CWF's manager of marine programs. "CWF is pleased to work with William Winram to contribute to scientific knowledge, inspire conservation and dispel myths about our most maligned marine wildlife species."

For more information about William Winram, visit CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca and click on the homepage Wild About Sharks link.

CWF PROFILE

Bob Morris FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Bob Morris has lived his entire life in Nanaimo, B.C., and grew up exploring the region's natural treasures. In his early years, he spent his free time hiking and camping with friends and learning about the outdoors with the Boy Scouts.

Today, Bob is first vice-president at CWF, a role he has come to through years of engagement with local conservation groups and, since 1994, direct involvement with the federation. Among his accomplishments is his work with the Vancouver Island Marmot Recovery Team, which helped foster the recovery of endangered populations through various efforts, including captive-breeding programs at the Calgary and Toronto zoos.

Looking forward, Bob says that one of CWF's most important roles has been working with governments to promote conservation in the face of development pressures. "We can't stop progress," he says. "But we can at least recommend solutions that have the least impact."

He is also a strong proponent of getting young people engaged with the outdoors so that they can enjoy the experiences he knew growing up. "The more that people can get involved, the better it will be," he says.

Project Highlights ...your donations in action*

Endangered species continue to be a major focus for CWF. Here are some of the projects we're supporting through our Endangered Species Fund. Thank you to everyone who has contributed.

\$24,930

To the Vancouver Aquarium for the second year of a project to develop data on the extent and types of Steller sea lion entanglements in fishing gear. The program will also test and refine methods to safely free sea lions.

\$10,200

To Nova Scotia's Clean Annapolis River Project Society to continue research into the ecology of wood turtles in the Annapolis River watershed and to investigate threats to the species. The work will include targeted searches, radio telemetry, habitat characterization and population assessment.

\$8,732

To Nova Scotia's Acadia University to determine if an inferred new population of striped bass exists in the province. The research will verify if this is the case by tagging and tracking mature females, determining movement patterns, doing genetic testing and searching for the distance to spawning ground.

\$17,000

To St. Mary's University in Halifax to investigate the cause of population decline of belugas in the St. Lawrence Estuary. Through genetic analysis, the research aims to determine if a specific gene, which is related to cancer susceptibility and reproduction, is playing a role in the population's failure to recover.

\$20,000

To York University for research into the feeding ecology of polar bears in the southern portion of Hudson Bay and James Bay. The work will monitor current developments in polar bear diet and body condition, as well as aid in predicting future shifts.

*This is just a selection of recently funded projects. For more information on projects funded by CWF, visit CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca/funded-projects.



Your Shot

Congratulations to Debbie Oppermann. She won February 2014's By Popular Vote monthly photo contest with this charming image on the theme "Love Is in the Air." The themes for the March and April contests are "Enchanted Trails" and "In Bloom," respectively.

Visit WildPhotoContest.ca for your chance to win a CWF prize package valued at \$100.



Connect

For more online wildlife news, tips, facts and photos, sign up for CWF's free monthly newsletter, *Wildlife Update*. Visit CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca and enter your e-mail address under "Get CWF News." You can also follow the Canadian Wildlife Federation on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.



CWF NEWS, PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

What's Happening

Strap on Those Hiking Boots

CWF's annual Walk for Wildlife campaign wraps up on May 22, so it's time to hit the trails and show your support. This year, CWF is adding a pledge component to Walk for Wildlife and will use the money raised to support species at risk. Our top fundraiser will also win a trip to Calgary for an exclusive tour of the Calgary Zoo. Check out WalkforWildlife.ca for details and to register your walk.

Read the Signs

Each year when CWF holds its annual general meeting, it says thanks to its host city with a conservation-themed project, called the Footprint Project. This year's AGM takes place in early June in Winnipeg, and CWF will be supporting the Sturgeon Creek fish ladder signage project, including a \$5,000 contribution toward the creation of an outdoor

classroom. Other supporters of the project include the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, the City of Winnipeg and the Manitoba provincial government.

Pollinators Poster

CWF is drawing attention to the plight of pollinators with a colourful new poster showing pollinators from across Canada and the plants, both native and cultivated, with which they interact. The

poster is chock full of information about the species and the role they play in our environment. Register at the CWF website and order yours today. They're free!

Fish Funding

Good news from Ottawa. The federal government has doubled its investment in the Recreational Fish Conservation Partnerships Program, adding \$15 million over the

next two years. The program, founded in 2013 with CWF support, provides aid to projects that conserve recreational fish habitat. Among those projects is CWF's Love Your Lake program, which helps shoreline property owners and lake associations assess and improve habitat for fish and wildlife.

