

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Elizabeth Barry



Elizabeth Barry is an executive coach, keynote speaker, and author. From her background in mindfulness, neuroscience, and somatic practices, she empowers professionals to transform communication into a ripple of authenticity, resilience, and connection—skills that resonate powerfully both above water and beneath the sea.

The Ripple Effect of Words

Words have the power to heal, inspire, and connect—or to fracture trust and diminish confidence. This workshop blends neuroscience, mindfulness, and emotional intelligence with hands-on creative exercises from Elizabeth Barry's Color Flow coloring book. Participants will learn to communicate with clarity, authenticity, and empathy—leaving with tools to transform their language and presence in any environment.

Jeffrey Bozanic



Jeffrey Bozanic is a scientist, explorer, and educator with over fifty years of diving experience. He has led more than seventy scientific expeditions worldwide, including the first dives at Shag Rocks. An inventor and author with multiple patents and books, he is a BTS Diver of the Year and a NOGI Award recipient.

Extreme Remote Diving: The 2026 Shag Rocks & Antarctica Expedition

Our 2026 expedition conducted the first dives ever made at Shag Rocks, a remote metamorphic outcrop on the North Scotia Ridge, near the Antarctic Convergence. 26 scientific and citizen-science divers completed the first shallow sub-tidal biological collections at this site. This presentation reviews planning, operational methods, and preliminary results from exploring a location previously unvisited by divers.

How to Invent the Future of Diving

Have you ever imagined inventing the next big thing in diving? This talk reveals the inside story of creating a brand new dive system; from wild idea to working prototype to production-ready gear. Discover the challenges, breakthroughs, and surprising twists behind bringing innovation to the equipment upon which every diver depends.

George Buckley



George Buckley studies horseshoe crabs, mollusks, coral reefs, bay ecology, wood eating Teredos and makes short environmental documentaries. He co-founded Harvard's Sustainability and Environmental Management program, led over a dozen EARTHWATCH research projects, and serves as a Board member of the New England Aquarium. Past President of the Boston Sea Rovers, he is the recipient of numerous awards including the Living Donor Award from the Kidney

Ocean Research at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI)

George Buckley, long time WHOI Associate, takes you on a deep dive into the pioneering ocean research programs at the world's leading independent, non-profit organization dedicated to ocean science, technology, education and communication. Now celebrating their 95th anniversary, this legendary Cape Cod institution continues its legacy of exploration, discovery and invention while leading the way illuminating the future of the 'Planet Ocean'.

Courtlandt Butts



Courtlandt Butts is Founder of LifeGuardian Worldwide, advancing ocean stewardship. He serves as Safety Officer for the National Association of Black SCUBA Divers, an instructor with Diving With a Purpose and DWP-CARES, and Dive Safety Officer for two American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS) organizations. He served on the NAUI Board of Directors in 2024.

Empathy at Depth: Communicating and Leading by Values in Dive Programs

Empathy at Depth explores how values-based communication strengthens leadership, safety, and performance in dive programs. Through dive scenarios, participants practice empathic briefings, feedback, and conflict navigation that align decisions with mission and values—building trust, psychological safety, and cohesive teams across operations, science, and volunteer environments, above and below the surface.

Capt. Mike Carew



"Captain" Mike Carew is a 10 year veteran of the NYPD SCUBA Team (1983 to 1993), and has more than 50 years of diving experience. Currently running Captain Mike's Diving on City Island, NY, he offers dive instruction and certification, drawing from best practices and protocols of the NYPD SCUBA Team.

City Island Oyster Beds

How important Oysters are to the Marine Environment, such as filtering the waters, Biodiversity for the echo system, help prevent Coastal Erosion, reduce wave energy and shoreline stabilization.

Bernie Choudhury & Nasreen S. Haque



Bernie Chowdhury, author, *The Last Dive* (Harper Collins, non-fiction, 2000); diving since 1984; recreational and technical diving instructor; Explorers Club Fellow; 2001 BTS Diver of The Year for Education; 2019 recipient, Gene Ritter Aquatic Education Award for Extraordinary Service to Education, presented by the New York State Marine Education Association.



Nasreen S. Haque, Ph.D. is a cellular and molecular biologist; recreational and technical diver; spelunker; and sailor.

Iceland Expedition 2025

This ground-breaking Explorers Club Expedition with primary goals involving biology was a follow-up to Bernie Chowdhury's 1997 Icelandic Cave Diving Expedition. This presentation will look at 30 years of Bernie's Iceland explorations, along with the remarkable biology results from the 2025 Expedition.

Off the Beaten Path

BTS Diver of the Year and Explorers Club Fellow Bernie Chowdhury shares his 30+ years of exploration and expedition diving that is still opening up new diving sites for divers, including Iceland, Norway, India, and a British Army Expedition in Scotland to find a missing World War One British destroyer. Includes how to get on an expedition and how to get required government permissions.

Larry Cohen & Olga Torrey



Larry Cohen's photographs have appeared in many publications, and he is the NY editor of X-Ray Magazine. He is a past president of The NYC Sea Gypsies. Larry has dove both locally and around the world. See his work at <https://www.liquidimagesuw.com>.

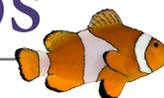


Olga Torrey is a fine artist and a Life member of the Art Students League of New York. She has taken her talent as a fine artist and applied her skills to photography both

Cuba: Island Lost in Time

In 1962, the US government prevented US citizens from traveling to Cuba. In 2015, the US and Cuba began normalizing diplomatic relations. Larry and Olga explored this island lost in time in 2013 and 2016. They will discuss their adventures diving the Gardens of the Queen and the Bay of Pigs. Besides diving, they will share images and stories from their exploration of Havana and the countryside.

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Heison Chak



Diving since 2002, **Heison Chak** has explored Great Lakes shipwrecks and Florida caves while mentoring divers in technical and cave training. He serves as President of the Ontario Underwater Council and GUE Standards Trustee, advancing dive safety, leadership, and exploration through his work with NAUI, DAN, and global diving initiatives.

Beyond the Familiar: Cultivating Exploration Close to Home Exploration isn't limited to distant oceans or polar frontiers—it begins in our own backyards. In August 2025, a team of Canadian divers made the first descent on a virgin deep-water schooner off Toronto. This expedition illustrates how disciplined planning transforms curiosity into discovery. The presentation highlights the four pillars of exploration—vision, preparation, flexibility, and documentation. Learn how thoughtful planning enables technical projects, while it fosters a mind-set of exploration.

Anna & Ned DeLoach



Anna DeLoach took an early retirement from her mainframe computer operating system career to dive. She began shooting underwater video to assist her husband Ned document fish life for their co-authored title, Reef Fish Behavior: Florida, Bahamas, Caribbean. Over the years they produced a series of marine life columns entitled “Encounters” for Ocean Realm, Skin Diver, Scuba

Diving and AlertDiver magazines. Anna launched the BlennyWatcher Blog in 2011 to record the couple's ongoing underwater discoveries and adventures. Following Paul Humann's retirement, she served a term as board chair of Reef Environmental Education Foundation and continues today as a member of REEF's Board of Trustees. Anna was inducted into the Women Divers Hall of Fame in 2011.

Ned DeLoach moved to Florida in 1968 to teach high school and dive. His popular self-published Diving Guide to Underwater Florida. In 1987, as editor of Ocean Realm Magazine, Ned invited Paul Humann to join him as co-editor. They worked well together, publishing marine life identification field guides under the auspices of their co-owned company New World Publications. In 1989 they released the award-winning Reef Fish Identification: Florida, Caribbean, Bahamas, followed by eight additional marine life guides. The pair launched the marine conservation non-profit Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF), today a leading citizen science organization

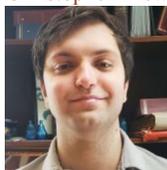
Reef Fishes We Have Known: A Love Story

Join Ned and Anna DeLoach as they travel around the equator on a 35 year mission to track down and photographically document the reefs' most wondrous fishes for the pages of marine life identification guides.

Unveiling the Secret Lives of Reef Fishes and Critter

Humans have documented the behavior of terrestrial animals since prehistoric times, as evidenced by cave paintings. However, it has only been since the advent of scuba that we have been able to freely swim with the fishes. This makes today's divers pioneers on the threshold of untold underwater discoveries.

Christopher Drew



Christopher Drew is a founder of **Scuba.Tech** and a videographer with Dive Voyager Expeditions. He dives and teaches on NJ and NY shipwrecks, leading open-source marine STEM research that empowers local students. His passion is underwater 3D imaging and video.

From Wrecks to Reef Balls:

Scuba.Tech's 2026 Community Tech Update

Scuba.Tech shares a practical update for low-vis waters: Triscopic v2, new slices from Stolt3D and the Billion Oyster Project Reef Ball, photostopic (rotating-strobe) micro-topography, early Gaussian Splatting demos, strandings photogrammetry for usable data, and ReadyOBJ for clean 3D asset imports across AR/VR viewers, plus tri-state classroom and coastline highlights.

Joe Fiorentino



Joe Fiorentino is a shipwreck explorer and a PADI Master SCUBA Diver Trainer. He is a Fellow at the Philadelphia Chapter of The Explorers Club, member of the New Jersey Historical Divers Association, and is the Vice-Chairman of the New Jersey Council of Divers and Dive Clubs. Joe Has spent decades researching

Lost Flights: The Discovery of a WWII Navy F4U-1 Corsair Off The Coast of New Jersey

Lost over 80 years ago during WWII off New Jersey, this Navy aircraft was accidentally discovered by local divers. Joe's presentation will highlight the first dives to this historic site and the progress made in the recent investigation to identify the pilot and his war-bird.

Anthony Ford



Anthony Ford is an emergency medicine physician by training, a course director trainer with NAUI, and president of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK SCUBA DIVERS. He is also chairman of the NAUI Services Group Board of Directors

Ear Barotrauma

Scuba divers face challenges with changes in depth, resulting in changes in pressure. This presents a unique challenge that diver need to be aware of. There are a number of physiological changes that occur within the auditory canal as a result of changes in pressure. We will review not only the normal physiological responses, but the pathophysiology that occurs when changes are not made quickly enough.

Elsie Gabriel



Elsie Gabriel is an award-winning ocean literacy advocate, HSA International Director-HSA certified scuba diver, and founder of the Ocean School India. She champions inclusive and sustainable marine scuba diving Tourism, empowering indigenous girls in coastal and vulnerable communities through education, accessibility, and conservation. Elsie is also an associate member of Women Divers Hall of Fame and member of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

Accessible Ocean Tourism and the Handicapped Scuba Association: Redefining Inclusion Beneath the Surface

Accessible Ocean Tourism empowers persons with disabilities to experience the ocean through adaptive diving, training, and inclusive education. This presentation highlights the global standards of the Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) and the urgent need for the diving fraternity to champion accessibility as a pillar of sustainable and equitable marine tourism as a pillar of the UN mission.

Capt. Tom Gebhardt



Captain Tom Gebhardt has over 30 years of experience, including nine on Aggressor liveboards. A certified Scuba Instructor, he speaks English, German, Spanish, Swedish, and Portuguese. Originally from Sweden, he manages Aggressor's global re-seller program and travels worldwide for dive and adventure shows.

Learn about the Thailand Aggressor With Two Andaman Sea Itineraries and the NEW Chiang Mai, Thailand Signature Lodge!

Thailand is often called the “land of smiles.” Adventure travelers have a lot to smile about as they join the Thailand Aggressor with scuba expeditions exploring the magnificent reefs of the country's national parks. In addition, the NEW Chiang Mai, Thailand Aggressor Signature Lodge, located in the Chiang Mai district, opened its doors in November 2025. An extended stay in this remote, eco-friendly lodge is the perfect complement to the Thailand Aggressor scuba adventure.” Capt. Tom Gebhardt will give you the details of this amazing destination.

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Nuno Gomes



Nuno Gomes is an in-date diving instructor with the Confédération Mondiale des Activités Subaquatiques (CMAS), this includes the following: 3 Star Instructor, 3 Star Cave Diving instructor, 2 Star Wreck Diving instructor, Advanced Trimix Instructor and Trimix Gas Blender Instructor Other Qualifications: Professional Civil Engineer and Commercial Diver. Nuno has done well over 5,000 dives, in all parts of the world and in

all types of environments.

Chances of success in Deep Record dives

Deep Record dives are not always successful, even for very experienced divers. An up to date look at the review of 27 successful dives and the bottom gas used and a review of the 14 unsuccessful dives and the bottom gas used.

“Butch” Hendrick



“**Butch**” **Hendrick** has 55+ years teaching thousands of sport and public safety divers worldwide, “Butch” created ground-breaking programs including “Rescue Diver” and “Field Neurological.” This father-of-diving-rescue invented the rescue throw rope bag, the do-si-do and in-water mouth-mouth procedures, the right-hand release weight standard, and the 90% contingency diver.

70 Years of Dive Experience

7 secrets to making diving safer for all levels of diver from basic to instructor.

Jennifer Jones



Jennifer Jones is a Senior Research Scientist in the biotech industry and a recreational diver. She is the Team Scientist within DWP-Cares (Diving with a Purpose-Collective Approach to Restoring Our Ecosystems), executive board member of NABS, and is a member of the NABS Science and Education Committee. Jennifer utilizes

her scientific background and love for diving to help educate others on the importance of ocean conservation.

It Is Not Too Late (DWP-CARES)

The ocean is important because every human being owes their existence to it. It feeds us, regulates our climate, and generates most of the oxygen we breathe. In 2022 at the last UN biodiversity summit, a goal was set to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030 ensuring the long-term survival of our oceans and ourselves. Although we are dangerously falling short of this projected goal, it is not too late to turn the tides. We can and we must do something and soon

Matthew David Kaplan



Matthew David Kaplan is an ocean filmmaker and dive expedition leader focused on ocean conservation through storytelling. He is a monthly contributor for Discovery, a member of the Scubapro Global Dive Team, and a SurfEars Ambassador. He will join Sea Shepherd as a crew member on the Faroe Islands campaign later in 2026.

Nusa Penida: A Beacon of Hope for Coral Restoration, The Ocean Gardener Story

Nusa Penida is more than mantas and mola mola. With Ocean Gardener, it is becoming a beacon of hope for coral restoration that can change the coral narrative. This seminar shows what coral planting involves, what impact is realistic, and how tourism and partners can support long-term recovery beyond Indonesia.

Richie Kohler, Katy Kohler, Evan Kovacs



Richie Kohler is an award-winning filmmaker, television host, author, and explorer known for bringing the hidden stories of historic shipwrecks to a global audience. A lifelong diver whose career began in the waters off Brooklyn, New York, Kohler has spent more than four decades

blending deep-sea exploration with compelling documentary storytelling.



Caitlyn “Katy” Kohler is an advanced technical diver, since 2017. A certified trimix rebreather diver with experience in waters from Newfoundland, Canada to Chuuk, Micronesia Katy has been diving in all environs. A career firefighter/paramedic for over a decade, she’s served on the local fire district public safety dive team. With an academic background in human biology and

a career in emergency medicine, she has assisted in physiological data collection in partnership with Divers Alert Network a number of both deep and remote projects. As a passionate amateur u/w photographer, she has had her work published in LDS advertisements and equipment reviews. Beyond diving, she is also an experienced ice climber, figure skater and helicopter pilot.



Evan Kovacs began his underwater filming in 2002 while working with the History Channel. Since then Evan has run high stakes multimedia projects around the world for National Geographic, Discovery Channel, PBS, NOVA, CBC, NHK and others. Since 2006 he has collaborated with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on next generation imaging systems. In 2010, Kovacs formed Marine Imaging Technologies, a subsea imaging company to develop innovative ideas for subsea imaging systems and robotics, including Pixel, the first Cinema Class ROV, and Spooler, a new style of penetration class ROV. Evan continues to film, consult and build equipment for projects all around the globe.

Massachusetts Dive Teams Artifact Recovery from Titanic’s Sister Ship!

In a landmark achievement in deep-sea exploration and maritime archaeology, priceless artifacts from HMHS Britannic—the Titanic’s ill-fated sister ship—have been successfully recovered by Massachusetts-based divers Evan Kovacs, Richie Kohler, and Katy Kohler, working in close partnership with the Greek Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities. These recoveries represent the deepest diver-operated archaeological work ever conducted in Greek waters. Presented across two one-hour sessions, this program takes audiences behind the scenes of a twenty-year effort defined by meticulous logistics, disciplined team-based planning, and continual refinement of procedures. The team details the specialized equipment, evolving techniques, and layered safety systems required to conduct complex dives to depths of 400 feet (120 meters) inside a largely intact, 110 year-old shipwreck. Drawing on firsthand video documentation, the presentations immerse viewers in the process of locating, documenting, and recovering historically significant artifacts, while candidly addressing the risks, challenges, and decision-making inherent in extreme-depth interior exploration. Team members reflect on how careful analysis of past incidents, near misses, and human factors informed their approach and ultimately made success possible. The interior exploration of Britannic has revealed long-hidden aspects of the ship’s story, offering rare insight into her final chapter. While demanding and hazardous, these dives stand among the most challenging, rewarding, and meaningful undertakings of the team’s careers.

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Steve & Maureen Langevin



Steve & Maureen Langevin are instructors and USCG captains, own their dive-boat "Voyager". Maureen is a proud member of WDHO. Through their company Dive Voyager Expeditions, specializing in scuba instruction and documentaries, they educate and entertain audiences about our rich maritime history and amazing undersea world.

Exploring the Amazing Galapagos Islands

The Galápagos Islands are a collection of unique marine ecosystems. Marine Iguanas, flightless Cormorants and the odd frogfish call it home. Other Islands host Silky sharks cruising alongside Hammerheads. Schools of rays above, penguins dive as turtles rest, bubbles escape underground vents. Experience a glimpse into this exotic Pacific outpost

Barry Lipsky



Barry Lipsky 1968 Started Free Diving/Scuba Diving in 1968. Later, with the Boy Scouts of America, 1970 YMCA Certified Open Water Scuba Diver. The Summer of 1974, found Barry as Dive mate in Key Largo Florida. By 2024, Barry had logged over 1500+ O.W. dives. In 2019 he was presented the NAUI Dr. Charlie Brown Memorial Award, then in 2020, Beneath the Sea's Diver of the Year for Service. He is a Lifeguard

Systems Public Safety Diver, NAUI Technical Diver, TDI Decompression Diver. In 2008 diving in High Risk Environments, Barry performed Chemical Testing on Dry Suits. In 2005 Barry was performing Dive Rescue International Boat Based Operations & Current Diving, Lifeguard Systems Overturned Vessel Dive Training, and became an Emergency Medical Technician, earning an Outdoor Emergency Care Certification. He has been or is a firefighter, Captain Water Rescue, Public Safety Dive Instructor, President Long Island Divers Association, The Dive Club of Bayshore, Boy Scouts of America Dive Advisor Sea Base Florida. He has appeared on television and radio many times.

Vessel Incident Survival Guide

Liveboard dive vessels operate throughout the world and provide divers the ability to explore some of the most beautiful and remote dive locations. For many divers there is no better way to comfortably experience the underwater world while maximizing their dive experiences. Despite decades of successful operations, several recent incidents have highlighted the need for liveboard divers to become better equipped to protect their personal safety. In this session, Barry Lipsky with the Long Island Diver's Association will present a comprehensive review of safety protocols to improve your odds of survival in the unlikely event of an onboard emergency. Learn what safety equipment and procedures should exist on board the vessel, what equipment divers can bring with them to improve their own safety, and how to rehearse emergency procedures for evacuating a liveboard experiencing an incident. The presentation is a must-attend for anyone planning to spend time at sea on board a dive vessel. What you don't know can hurt you...or worse. Don't let an incident onboard a dive vessel become a tragedy. After all, liveboards are the way to go for many divers; surviving an unlikely but potentially tragic incident is the way to go for all divers!

Steve Nagiewicz



Steve Nagiewicz formerly operated the dive boat Diversion I and II. He teaches UW Science at Stockton University. He is a Registered Professional Archaeologist. Steve is a Fellow and Former Executive Director of the Explorers Club. Steve was a participating Scientist on NOAA Ship Nancy Foster of the Office of Coast Survey. He's authored 5 books

about maritime

Privateers of the American Revolution in New Jersey

The Revolutionary War is a rich part of the beginnings of American history, and the shipwrecks of the Mullica River at Chestnut Neck in Port Republic, and Crosswicks Creek near Bordentown along the Delaware River present a unique opportunity to explore a forgotten or perhaps 'under-served' chapter of that conflict. Both locations were maritime battles involving Colonial Privateers and British Forces. Privateers were an essential naval force used against British Merchant Shipping and as such targets of the British Navy. The two sites we are documenting are designated Historic Areas. These shipwrecks are the oldest in New Jersey. We are using sonar technology to map and document the wreck sites. This study and the sonar imagery will also provide benchmark data going forward documenting the conditions and preservation of the maritime heritage of these sites for the future.

Julie Ouimet & Michel Labrecque



Michel Labrecque and Julie Ouimet are seasoned divers who have traveled the world. They are technical trimix divers, rebreather divers, accomplished dive training professionals, explorers, expedition leaders, dive charter operators and the owners of a dive operation and lodge located on the remote island of Anticosti, Qc. in Canada. They are both Fellows of the Explorers Club, Fellows of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society and Associate Members of the Boston Sea Rovers. Michel is a licensed boat captain and in 2016 he was named a PADI Ambassador. Julie is a member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame. Michel and Julie have twice been bestowed the honor of carrying the Explorers Club Flag, they received an Explorers Club Citation of Merit and have twice been chosen to represent the Explorers Club as guest speakers on Ponant cruise ships.



The Hype around Muck Diving

Why do divers get hooked on muck diving? Take a close look in the sand or mud and you will soon find out. There are hundreds of strange and fascinating species hiding in environments divers often overlook. We will help you figure out where to look and what to look for.

Remote Diving in Fiji

With 330 islands, why limit your diving to the well-known island of Viti Levu? The outer islands of Fiji offer so many incredible sites. Discover why you should venture beyond. Whales, sharks, stunning vertical walls and so much more await.

Michael Rothschild



Dr. Michael Rothschild is an ENT surgeon and a technical rebreather diver. He is past president of the American Bronchoesophological Association, the NY Pediatric Society and the NYC Sea Gypsies. He is also a Scubaboard.com medical moderator, and I have lectured and published extensively on underwater photography, dive medicine and rebreather diving.

Artificial Intelligence in Underwater Photography

In generative AI, text or images are produced based on original content and user prompts (e.g. ChatGPT) In this seminar, Michael discusses this technology in underwater photography, where it can enhance images in ways previously impossible. He will cover specific software, techniques and associated ethical issues.

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Diving Medicine

Many divers have ear or sinus issues, and it can be difficult to determine the source of these symptoms. There is often confusion about the anatomy and physiology of conditions like barotrauma, swimmer's ear, sinus squeeze, perilymph fistulas and inner ear DCS. This seminar will cover these troubling problems.

Michael Salvarezza & Christopher Weaver



Michael Salvarezza and Christopher Weaver have been diving the waters the world since 1978. They have presented their work numerous times at the Boston Sea Rovers Underwater Clinic, and all of the major dive conferences, and have published more than 230 articles in numerous magazines, including National Geographic Adventure. Their work has been used to support a variety of research and educational programs. Their expeditions have taken them from the Arctic to the Antarctic and many places in between.



The Wrecks of the Florida Panhandle:

Exploring the Emerald Coast

Along the Florida Panhandle, the Gulf Coast is home to a large number of shipwrecks. The vast majority of these have been intentionally sunk to create thriving marine habitats. Surplus war vessels, fishing trawlers, research vessels and oil & gas industry utility boats are just a few examples of the variety of vessels that we find here. Journey with Eco-Photo Explorers they learn about Florida's artificial reef program and visit the USS Oriskany, an aircraft carrier that was the largest ship ever intentionally sunk when it was placed on the bottom 22 miles offshore in 212 feet of water. Along the way, dives to explore and photograph a slew of shipwrecks will be discussed. Finally, learn how the entire area is preparing for the arrival of the SS United States, a luxury liner set to join the collection of wrecks along the Emerald Coast.

Norway: Frontier

Diving in the Land of the Vikings

Journey north to the fabulous fjords of Norway, exploring pristine cold water environments, mysterious shipwrecks and remote river systems to unlock the underwater secrets of the land of the Vikings. Join Eco-Photo Explorers as they search for the rarely seen Ghost Shark along dramatic walls, photograph breath-taking salmon in their quest for inland spawning grounds and explore the sunken maritime history of this northern paradise.

Tubbataha: Coral Kingdom of the Sulu Sea

The Tubbataha Reefs lie 93 miles from the nearest land in the Philippine's Sulu Sea and are at the epicenter of global marine biodiversity in the region known as the Coral Triangle. Journey to these hard to reach atolls with Eco-Photo Explorers and dive the spectacular reefs of this Marine Protected Area. Explore lush coral reefs teeming with life, and descend into the depths along sharp drop-offs to encounter schooling Barracuda and Trevally, massive Marbled Rays and the giants of the sea, the Whale Shark. Learn about the successful management program that has been established to keep these reefs healthy and protected. Tubbataha is, in many ways, a surviving example of what healthy coral reefs should look like in the world's oceans.

Capt. Barbara "Bobbie" Scholley, USN (ret.)



"Bobbie" Scholley retired after 24 years as a U.S. Navy Diving Officer, graduating from dive school in 1983. She was the fourth woman to command a Navy ship, USS BOLSTER (ARS 38). She contributed to the TWA Flight 800 recovery, USS COLE response, and USS MONITOR expeditions. Post-Navy, she worked with veteran non-profits, held leadership roles in the Women Divers Hall of Fame, and frequently appeared as a maritime expert on major news outlets.

USS Monitor's 50 Year Ironclad Legacy-Where's the Turret?

The civil war ironclad USS Monitor sank near Cape Hatteras in 1862 and was not found until 1973. It became the first National Marine Sanctuary 50 years ago and remains a challenging shipwreck dive site. Learn how NOAA and the US Navy recovered its unique gun turret from 230 feet deep, as well as what diving at the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary is like today.

James Sears



James Sears has spent more than 45 years pursuing his passion for diving. He has served as New York State Divers Association web master, digest editor and since 2003 its President, sharing his enthusiasm for wreck diving, UW photography, marine archeology and history with others through diving and Freighter Wrecks of The St Lawrence presentations.

Shipwrecks of Lake Champlain

Lake Champlain has been used as a maritime route since people first arrived in the area and at 140 miles long forms a major part of the corridor connecting Quebec to New York City. Over the last 400 years it has been the site of major battles and seen explosive growth in trade. This has led to more than 300 known shipwrecks. We'll take a look at the maritime history of Lake Champlain and explore some of its shipwrecks.

Jennifer Sellitti



Jennifer Sellitti is the Managing Member of Atlantic Wreck Salvage. She manages dive expeditions, conducts historical research on both the ships Tenacious dives and ships that are the subject of new projects for the team, oversees the team's side scan sonar projects, and leads the team's efforts to educate the public about the importance of shipwreck discovery and salvage. She has participated in the discovery of new ship-

wrecks and organizes regular expeditions to dive sites off the Eastern seaboard. She is a licensed boat captain, a certified diver, an associate member of the Boston Sea Rovers and a trustee of the New Jersey Maritime Museum.

Finding Closure:

The Discovery of the WWI-Era Steam Trawler: Seiner

In September 2025, the dive vessel Tenacious announced the discovery of the wreck of the Seiner, a World War I-era steam trawler that vanished on Georges Bank in January 1929. The Seiner departed New London, Connecticut, on January 9 and was last heard from nine days later before foundering in a storm with all 21 crew aboard. Tenacious first located the wreck using side-scan sonar in the summer of 2022 and confirmed the identification through a series of dives in July 2025. Just two days later, Tenacious Captain Joe Mazraani died while diving another wreck on Georges Bank. Following the Seiner announcement, the team met descendants of one of the lost fishermen and those conversations offered a measure of closure to both families and crew.

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Paul Sieswerda & Scot Albertson



Paul's Sieswerda life has been a voyage of wonder, folly, and discovery—adrift at times, yet always steered by curiosity. From the depths of the sea to the depths within, I keep sailing toward new horizons, guided by faith in possibility and the belief that the dream itself is the destination.



Scot Albertson is Gotham Whale's dynamic Social Media Promoter. He is known for weaving compelling narratives connecting people to the Gotham Whale. Scot has significantly expanded Gotham Whale's digital presence on Podcasting and YouTube platforms. His creative campaigns build bridges between diverse audiences and protecting marine life.

The Gift of Time and a Dive Watch inspired "The Seal In The Bathtub Story"

As a child, an extraordinary experience with a harbor seal living in my family's bathtub sparked a lifelong fascination with the underwater world. What began as wonder evolved into purpose through, volunteering time and transforming curiosity into stewardship. This talk traces the journey—from awe to action—and explore how early encounters with wildlife can shape a legacy of conservation, service, and responsibility. It is a story of how one seal, and the simple act of kindness and change the course of a life.

Yana Stashkevich

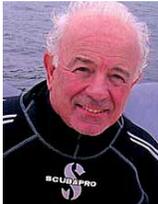


Yana Stashkevich is an experienced exploration technical CCR, cave, mine and wreck diver. Yana Stashkevich is passionate about inspiring people to push their boundaries and pursue their passion. She was a member of the Vaggfjellan XI expedition exploring the cave system located beyond the Arctic Circle, and a CCR diver on the Underwater Filming & Research (UFR) project team documenting the wrecks in Greece. Currently Yana is involved in scientific project in Iceland and filming in the Bikini Atoll, and continues to explore mines and wrecks in the North Sea.

Diving into the industrial underground 2.0: England, Scotland and Wales Mine diving

Yana explains her love for exploring Great Britain's flooded mines, the industrial time capsules that once were at the core of the UK economy, providing livelihoods for thousands of people and communities. From slate mines of North Wales, Chert and Iron Ore mines in England to Limestone underwater mazes in Scotland, you will be taken on a thrilling and curious underground journey. *(This is a new version of the 2025 BTS presentation - with new mines recently explored)

John Stella



John Stella is a distinguished writer, explorer, and diving industry professional whose journey began in Cape Ann, Massachusetts. John's extensive diving experience took him to Greece, where he joined a Greek marine archaeological dive team. The Discovery Channel's Expedition Unknown featured the team's work in an episode: "The Greek Triangle of Shipwrecks." Currently, John Stella is technical advisor and senior member of the dive team at the

Korseai Institute of Historical & Archeological Marine Research. John is an active member of The Explorers Club and The Boston Sea Rovers.

The Greek Triangle of Ancient Shipwreck A Two Part Presentation

John will recount his team's astonishing discovery and documentation of 58 ancient shipwrecks discovered near an isolated island in the Northeast corner of the Aegean Sea off the coast of Asia Minor. These shipwreck discoveries have rewritten our understanding of ancient marine trade routes.

Tamar Thomsen



Tamara Thomsen is a Maritime Archaeologist with Wisconsin Historical Society's Maritime Preservation and Archaeology program. Her research has resulted in the nomination of more than sixty submerged sites to the National Register of Historic Places. She has received awards from the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History, the Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society, and in 2014, she was inducted into the Women Divers Hall of Fame.

I Live Underwater: The Thrilling Adventures of a Record-Breaking Diver, Treasure Hunter, and Deep-Sea Explorer, Max Gene Nohl

"I Live Underwater," the posthumous memoir of diving legend, deep-sea explorer, and Milwaukeean Max Gene Nohl, recounts the harrowing experiences with tangled air-hoses, hungry sharks, and painful cases of the bends. Nohl's vivid narrative shows how his unquenchable thirst for adventure propelled him to transcend fear and become one of the field's great innovators—shattering the diving record in 1937 as the first person to dive deeper than 400 feet. "I Live Underwater" describes Nohl's early passion for the undersea world and his many ground-breaking contributions to the diving industry, including inventing the first self-contained diving suit, co-founding Milwaukee-based diving equipment company, DESCO, and developing early underwater film and photography techniques for Hollywood.

Peter Venoutsos



Peter Venoutsos has been a certified diver since 1976 and a commercial diver since 1983. His experience includes working with private underwater engineering firms, the Federal Government and the US Navy. His interests include underwater photography, shipwrecks & cave diving, with the goal of promoting diving in around the world.

Seal Madness

Travel with us around North America as we encounter some of the most lovable energetic and adorable mammals in the ocean. Seals have no concept of what personal space means. So, join us as we travel to both coastlines with a side trip to the arctic to encounter these amazing mammals.

Andrea Zafares



Andrea Zafares has enjoyed 42 years teaching thousands of sport & public safety divers worldwide. Andrea is VP of TeamLGS, a noted author, public speaker, medicolegal death investigator, WDHOFF charter member, standard-setter, and award winner for contributions to diver safety and education (e.g. DAN Rolex and Beneath the Sea Awards).

What can go wrong and do we have a proven, hands-on practiced plan to get you and me out to safety?

Before you go in, ask yourself two questions drilled into me by Butch Hendrick: 1. Using the diver and environmental variables of this dive - what can go wrong? 2. Do we have a proven, hands-on practiced plan to get you and me out? If these two questions were taught and applied at every level of dive training to the extent that divers reflexively applied them prior to every dive - we would have far better training, fewer near-misses and fatalities, more satisfying dives, and a reduced diver dropout rate. In this presentation, attendees will be asked to participate in scenario discussions to show you how to apply these two powerful questions to make us all better divers and dive leaders.