

# NEWS

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## EYE TO EYE WITH GREAT WHITE SHARKS AS SCIENCE AND SPORT FISHING JOIN FORCES ON AN UNPRECEDENTED RESEARCH EFFORT

### Studying the Elusive Predators in the Wild Starts With Lifting Them Into the Boat for a Hands-on Exam

**New Series *Expedition Great White* Premieres With Back-To-Back Episodes  
Sunday, June 6, 2010 at 9:00 p.m. ET/PT on NGC —  
Airs Sunday Nights at 10 p.m. ET/PT All Summer Long**

(WASHINGTON, D.C. — May 10, 2010) The great white is the largest predatory fish on earth: reaching more than 20 feet long and weighing as much as 6,000 lbs, with serrated teeth and keen senses that can detect blood in water from three miles away. But now, this fearsome beast has met its match: the crew of the *Ocean*, a team of world-class anglers and a renowned shark scientist on the “wildest fishing trip of all time.” Only this adrenaline rush is also an unprecedented mission to unmask this mighty, but endangered shark’s mysteries.

Starting Sunday, June 6, 2010, with a special series premiere at 9 p.m. ET/PT followed by a new premiere at its regular time 10 p.m. ET/PT, National Geographic Channel launches its new summer series, **Expedition Great White**. Science and sport fishing join forces 160 miles off Baja California for a never-before-attempted research effort to study massive great white sharks in the wild. The series chronicles the savvy, salty and sweat-covered crew as they lift SUV-sized sharks out of the water with a specially modified hydraulic cradle, then descend on it like a NASCAR pit crew to mount a long-lasting tracking tag, take measurements and DNA samples while pumping water into the shark’s mouth to keep it alive, and release it unharmed ... in less than 20 minutes.

With enough bites, reels and the resulting surge of data, their goal is to unravel the mysteries of the great white’s life cycle — where they are born, how they mate, where they migrate and where they congregate — to help conserve and protect these endangered animals.

Go inside the *Ocean*, a mother ship 126 feet long and 33 feet wide (32 feet longer than an NBA basketball court!) packed with the state-of-the-art equipment, specialized skills and raw muscle needed to haul monster sharks out of the water time and time again. And get to know the crew — with nearly 100 years of experience combined — at the helm of the challenging mission.

- The brains of the operation, **Dr. Michael Domeier** (or “Doc” as the crew call him), is a renowned expert on great whites and has designed the most advanced long-term tracking devices ever made. For a decade he has been studying the sharks at Guadalupe Island off the coast of Mexico, and he knows around 100 individuals by name. “We need to manage these fishes and know where they are going so we can protect them,” he says.

CONTINUES...

- The "Type A" expedition leader is **Chris Fischer**, an expert at catching and releasing giant fish that usually get away. Former host of ESPN2's "Offshore Adventures," one of the most-watched outdoor shows in America, Chris wastes no time directing his crew in order to get these massive sharks on board and back in the water in the least amount of time.
- Say "aye aye" to Captain **Brett McBride**, who has traveled the globe with Chris and caught and released some of the world's biggest fish. This elite angler began working on fishing boats when most kids are in Little League and over the past 14 years has fished from Alaska to Central America.
- The "Hollywood hunk" on board is actor **Paul Walker** ("The Fast and The Furious"). But this handsome fellow isn't onboard for sun and waves ... he dives right in as a deckhand to help the crew with basic duties like scrubbing the deck to lifting sharks to the platform and tagging them.
- Every mother ship needs a master chef. **Dave Olson** is classically trained, with recipes published in Gourmet magazine, but his love of the ocean propelled him into diving and photographing ocean creatures. Now he's doing double duty serving as underwater photographer and preparing the evening feast.

In four long trips to sea, the crew works to land more than a dozen feisty males, fertile females and even record-breaking whoppers. Throughout the series, new scientific revelations abound as the crew extracts sperm from a live male's reproductive organ for the first time ever, along with blood samples from a fertile female to help determine when and where these great whites breed.

"The task we are trying to perform has never been done before," says Capt. McBride, "so there is no one to learn from. All we can do is theorize and try to get this thing on a boat without hurting it or ourselves."

**Premiere episodes include:**

**Expedition Great White: Feeding Frenzy**

**Sunday, June 6, 2010, at 9 p.m. ET/PT (Special Series Premiere)**

*"...what I really want ... is to understand the entire life cycle of white sharks.... Once we learn that, we could help put together a comprehensive management plan to protect white sharks year round."*

– Dr. Michael Domeier

The team anchors off the coast of Guadalupe Island, Mexico, where an abundance of seals entice hordes of great whites. After tagging a 15-foot male shark only hours before, tensions run high as the team anxiously awaits a bite from what they hope to be a mature female and argue over how to optimize their chances of getting a bite. Then unexpected guests arrive: Mexican authorities checking permits. But after everything checks out, a shark takes the bait — a 14.5-foot mature male. But it's the female they are waiting for — and when they at last get one to bite, she's going to be a bully.

CONTINUES...

**Expedition Great White: Fresh Kill**

**Sunday, June 6, 2010, at 10 p.m. ET/PT (Regular Time)**

*"...you go from trying to conquer this beast and break its will to caring for it like a baby."* – Chris Fischer

The team has been out at sea for five days — their bait is dwindling and they have only three tags left. Their first bite is one fiery little shark ... but one that satisfies the Doc. Dr. Domeier discovers, for the first time ever, seminal fluid in the groove of the male reproductive organ, which brings him a step closer to proving his theory that great whites come to Guadalupe Island to mate. When the crew sets off to find the next prize, they spot a dead elephant seal in the water — a sure enticement for a great white. This time, when they drop a line a short distance from the kill, they are rewarded *with the largest great white male on deck to date.*

**Expedition Great White: Giant on Deck**

**Sunday, June 13, 2010, at 10 p.m. ET/PT**

*"It's a thrill. You got to be quick to react. A 3,000-pound fish is gonna pull you in the water and his buddies are waiting down below to take chunks out of you."* – Paul Walker, deckhand

With only hours left before the ship must head back, the crew has just one tag left and is still hoping to place it on the perfect female shark. To better their chances, the team fishes from both the mother ship and their much smaller chase boat, the *Triton*, where Paul Walker and two other crew members are stationed on the other side of the island. As luck would have it, it's the smaller ship that gets the bite, and this female shark is a fighter. Brett and Chris must jump into a support boat and head to the *Triton*, which is two miles away, to take over the clash. Once they get there, it's a two-and-a-half-hour rigorous battle to land their precious cargo.

**Expedition Great White: Chasing Giants**

**Sunday, June 20, 2010, at 10:00 p.m. ET/PT**

*"It is the wildest fishing trip of all time ... definitely the most challenging thing we've ever set out to do from an angling standpoint."* – Chris Fischer, expedition leader

After catching, tagging and releasing 11 great whites, the crew speeds off to an ocean area pegged as the Shared Offshore Foraging Area (SOFA), a mysterious patch of ocean where great whites congregate and seem to disappear for six months. Setting out for a four-week trip, Doc, Chris, Brett and the crew plan to travel around SOFA to find out why the great whites journey here and go more than a half-mile deep, where the temperature is freezing. What could possibly lure this cold-blooded fish to such frigid depths? The team loads the mother ship with 500 gallons of fresh cow blood and thousands of live sardines to use as shark bait and waits for the prize.

**Expedition Great White: Into the Unknown**  
**Sunday, June 27, 2010, at 10:00 p.m. ET/PT**

*"Hopefully it is shark-infested waters. I seriously doubt they're around here, but if they are that's great. Great for us, not for me, but great for us."* – David Olson, underwater photographer.

The crew continues their expedition deep into the SOFA, the shared offshore foraging area, and the stakes in determining how great whites survive here are high. So far, they've lost more than a third of their bait and they haven't come close to catching a great white ... yet. In their quest to land a big one, they discover two species of squid, which "the Doc" theorizes must be a good part of the sharks' diets. But excitement is cut short with impending danger: one of the engines on the mother ship is overheating and if it goes down, it will take them weeks to get back to shore. Additionally, to the north a storm is brewing and to the south, the first tropical depression of the season begins heading their way. Will the rough seas force them to abandon their mission?

**Expedition Great White** is produced by Fischer Productions for the National Geographic Channel (NGC). For Fischer Productions, executive producers are Chris Fischer and Maureen Lemire. For NGC, executive producer is Mike Welsh, senior vice president of production is Michael Cascio and executive vice president of content is Steve Burns.

For more information, visit [www.natgeotv.com/greatwhite](http://www.natgeotv.com/greatwhite)

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**National Geographic Channel**

Based at the National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, D.C., the National Geographic Channel (NGC) is a joint venture between National Geographic Ventures (NGV) and Fox Cable Networks (FCN). Since launching in January 2001, NGC initially earned some of the fastest distribution growth in the history of cable and more recently the fastest ratings growth in television. The network celebrated its fifth anniversary January 2006 with the launch of NGC HD, which provides the spectacular imagery that National Geographic is known for in stunning high definition. NGC has carriage with all of the nation's major cable and satellite television providers, making it currently available in nearly 70 million homes. For more information, please visit [www.natgeotv.com](http://www.natgeotv.com).

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