



## Shark Foundation Annual Report for 2000

Februar 2001

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### Projects

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#### Shark Exhibit

The preparations for the Shark Exhibit began towards the end of 2000. The Shark Exhibit will open in its entirety in March 2001 at the Museum of Natural History in St. Gallen.

At the end of October a small part of the Exhibit (texts and several exhibits) were given to the Adelhauser Museum of Natural History and Ethnology ("Adelhauser Museum für Natur- und Völkerkunde") in Freiburg i.B. (Germany) and will remain there until April 2001. The idea was to extend the museum's own exhibit "wasser welt weit" ("water around-the-world") with shark exhibits and information.

*Costs for hardware/transport to "water around-the-world": approx. CHF 1,000*

#### Behavioral Research

The Foundation has been supporting the research of Dr. E. Ritter since 1998 with an annual contribution of approx. CHF 20,000, in the year 2000 with CHF 37,000. In addition, the Foundation entrusts Dr. Ritter with its Sony Digital Underwater Camera and its Vemco sonic tracking equipment. The project on shark migrations (tracking) at Walker's Cay has been in progress since the end of the year 2000. Initial pretests have been completed. The main part of the research is scheduled to begin in early 2001

*Dr. E. Ritter and Dr. A. Godknecht have published a small scientific paper on these shark behavioral studies (Copeia 1/2000).*

#### Shark Identification Project

The project dealing with the identification of shark tissues developed by Professor M. Shivji (Nova University, Florida) has been supported by the Shark Foundation and its U.S. branch office since about June 2000.

Purpose of this project is to develop easy-to-use molecular-biological tools which can be applied by customs officials or fishing supervisors to quickly and easily identify shark species. This is absolutely necessary in order to control the catch of protected or endangered species. The problem which laymen have in identifying protected species is used by the fishing industry as an argument to explain why they indiscriminately process all sharks which land in their nets. The test kits are designed to strongly simplify the identification of shark trunks (with no heads or fins) and already processed shark meat for control purposes by officials in ports and at border crossings.

*The Foundation partially finances this project with an annual amount of approx. CHF 20,000.*

#### Shark Nurseries

The Shark Nurseries Project in Rookery Bay / Ten Thousand Islands will now be headed by Pat O'Donnel following the departure of Todd Hopkins. Handover of the project was somewhat delayed, but will be continued in cooperation with the Mote Marine Lab (Professor Castro).

*This project is financed entirely by the Foundation.*

*Support is foreseen up until the end of 2000: approx. CHF 8,000.*

#### Master degree on Shark Migrations

M. Ruch's masters thesis at Zurich University on genetic connections of populations of bonnethead-hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna tiburo*) is supported both scientifically and financially by the Foundation and Dr. Gaston D. Guex, one of the Foundation's scientific advisors.

*Contributions until end of 2000: CHF 5,000*

## Shark Inventory

The U.S. Shark Foundation initiated a project to take inventory of the fauna, especially of shark populations and species in the Marine National Park at Walker's Cay, Bahamas.

*According to Dr. Ritter, the first criteria for this inventory have been defined.*

## Molecular-Biological Investigation of White Sharks

Despite numerous inquiries no concrete project cooperation could be achieved with South African officials, and through the tragic death of Dr. D. Seady (Stellenbosch University), we also lost our direct contact to Stellenbosch.

*At the end of 2000 the Board of Trustees thus decided to end the project.*

*The CHF 40,000 set aside for this project in 1999 will be used for other projects.*

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## Administration

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### U.S. Shark Foundation

The Shark Foundation's U.S. branch office called the U.S. Shark Foundation was founded on July and in September 2000 was declared exempt from paying taxes by the IRS (U.S. tax authorities). The registration of trademarks for the Shark Foundation (highly recommended for the U.S.) has been applied for.

*Total administrative costs to date: approx. CHF 20,000*

### Shark Info

The Foundation works closely with the media service *Shark Info* and in 2000 founded the *Shark Info* Association. One member of the editorial staff is on the Board of Trustees; one member of the Board of Trustees is represented on the editorial staff.

*Through its contributions, the Foundation partially finances costs for the Shark Info office and special issues of Shark Info.*

### Public Relations

The Foundation and Shark Info answered hundreds of questions on shark themes. It is interesting to note that the number of media inquiries has increased considerably. Apparently their interest in publishing more scientifically correct information on sharks has grown. Larger proofreading and translation work is performed free of charge for Geo and Premiere World.

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## The Shark Foundation

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Founded on August 29, 1997, the Shark Foundation is an international organization subject to the monitoring of the Swiss Department of Home Affairs / Swiss Federal Supervisory Board for Foundations, Bern. It may accept tax-deductible donations and once a year is required to submit its annual report and annual statement of accounts to the Supervisory Board for approval.

The Foundation finances all its activities through donations, lectures or product sales, e.g. T-shirts or cuddly toy sharks. The Board of Trustees works on a voluntary basis and receives neither attendance fees nor any kind of salary. The Foundation runs a "Shark Shop" on its internet pages (T-shirts, cuddly toy sharks, tear-off notebooks, postcards, Shark sponsorships). Proceeds flow directly back into the Foundation account. Normally, each year a mailing goes to all interested parties with the request for a donation and including a deposit slip.

At the first meeting of the respective year the Shark Foundation's Board of Trustees decides on the application of any profit carried forward and of any donations stemming from the previous year. Up until that time, no reserves were put aside, instead all resources were released for ongoing projects, investments and administrative work. The accounting of the Foundation and of Shark Info is controlled annually by the auditing company Revisal (Gossau).

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