

Sharks vs People

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FROM: Ruth A. Musgrave
TO: Virtual Team Members
SUBJECT: White Shark Cafe

Hi Team Shark,

A while ago, scientists discovered the White Shark Cafe. Every year, elephant seals, harbor seals, and California sea lions return to beaches in California to have their babies (called pups). At the same time, (great) white sharks return to hunt the seals and sea lions.

When the seals and sea lions return to sea, so do most of the white sharks. Scientists wanted to know where the sharks went after they left. Tagging studies showed that many of the sharks traveled across the Pacific to an area between Mexico and Hawaii. The scientists lovingly nicknamed the location the White Shark Cafe. It is an important meeting ground for sharks. They spend months there. But why?

A new study called Voyage to White Shark Cafe conducted in May 2018 hopes to find out. This exciting research uses several kinds of technology to help us gather a better picture of white sharks. The scientists used a remotely operated vehicle (ROV), a free-swimming, torpedo-shaped robot, and two wind-powered SAILDRONES. They also attached a camera to one of the shark's dorsals fin. Scientists put satellite and acoustic tags on sharks during the fall of 2017 and winter of 2018 off the California coast.

Though white sharks have an undeserved reputation, they are important to the ocean and to so many ecosystems. Understanding and appreciating their role will help keep them safe.

They gathered a great deal of information. Now they will start analyzing it. It will be exciting to hear what the scientists discover about the White Shark Cafe!

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