



Jonathan Bird's Blue World

Episode 1 • Blue Shark Adventure • Study Guide

Jonathan Bird's Blue World: *Blue Shark Adventure* is a story about how shark tagging has revealed the amazing migration of Blue sharks across the Atlantic Ocean. In this adventure, Jonathan joins Charlie Donilon, a shark fisherman and dive operator in Rhode Island for a trip 30 miles offshore to dive with Blue sharks. Donilon is a volunteer with the National Marine Fisheries Service. He uses a pole like a spear to implant a barbed tag on the dorsal side of Blue sharks as he chums them to the boat. These tags are later recovered by fishermen and reveal how far the sharks swam from the place where they were tagged. During the expedition, Donilon teaches Jonathan how to tag sharks and then Jonathan has his chance to tag a shark himself. Next, Jonathan goes into the water with his dive gear to swim with the sharks outside the cage. He learns that the sharks are not aggressive at all, but seem to be curious about his camera.

Objectives

1. Introduces viewers to the concept of pelagic animals—animals that live in the open ocean far from land, including sharks.
2. Explains how the NMFS uses implantable tags to track marine life and learn about their migratory routes.
3. Demonstrates the incredible migration routes of Blue sharks, that can travel thousands of miles per year.
4. Shows that sharks are not as dangerous as people have been led to believe.

Questions for before watching the program

1. What is a pelagic shark?
2. What is migration? What are some reasons that animals migrate? Name some animals that migrate.
3. Are sharks dangerous? Can you safely scuba dive with sharks?

Discussion for after watching the program

1. Explain what pelagic means. Why are Blue sharks considered pelagic?
2. Why does the boat have to go so far offshore to find Blue sharks?
3. Tagging has proven that Blue sharks are known to migrate from Rhode Island, USA to Portugal. Find these two places on a map and figure out how far that is. If it takes a shark three weeks to make the journey, how many miles (or km) per day must the shark travel? At what average speed (miles/hour or km/hour) is the shark traveling?
4. Overfishing of sharks is a problem facing many shark populations, including Blue sharks. If Blue sharks are protected from overfishing in one country but not others, why is this a problem even for the sharks in the protected country?
5. Why are the sharks curious about Jonathan's camera?
6. How do Blue sharks get their name?