



Shark Foundation Annual Report for 2002

January 2003

Projects

Shark Exhibit

The Shark Exhibit was a big success in St. Gallen. It was also very successful in Zurich where it opened on June 11, 2002, in the Museum of Natural History and attracted more than 55,000 visitors. For the Zurich exhibit various new shark models were obtained, especially of the 4.25 long thresher shark.

In March 2002 nine specially adapted panels were delivered to the Sealife Center in Constance (Germany) where they will remain until further notice as an information medium on the biology and endangerment of sharks.

Investments 2002: approx. CHF 20,000

Investments to date: approx. CHF 155,000

Sponsoring: approx. 10'000 CHF

Shark Identification Project

The project dealing with the identification of sharks based on minute tissue samples developed by Professor M. Shivji (Nova University, Florida) has received the Foundation's support since June 2000. Purpose of this project is to develop easy-to-use molecular-biological tools which can be used by customs officials or fishing supervisors to quickly and easily identify shark species. This is absolutely necessary for controlling the catch of protected or threatened species. Professor Shivji has published three scientific papers and held two lectures at conferences on his work.

No requests for financial support in 2002 were made.

Investments to date: approx. CHF 40,000

Shark Nurseries

The Shark Nurseries Project in Rookery Bay / Ten Thousand Islands remains under the direction of Pat O'Donnel in cooperation with the Mote Marine Lab (Professor J. Castro). Since project begin approximately 245 young sharks have been caught and measured, 14 of which had already been caught before. In 2002 various volunteers put in more than 1,600 hours of voluntary work.

No requests for financial support in 2002 were made.

Investments to date: approx. CHF 14,000

Masters Degree on Shark Migrations

The degree dissertation on the migrations of bonnethead-hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna tiburo*) in the Gulf of Mexico was successfully completed at the beginning of 2002. For the publication of results in a scientific journal, additional samples from the Mexico region must still be analyzed.

Investments to date: approx. CHF 5,000

Behavioral Research

Up until the third quarter of 2001 the Foundation supported Dr. E. Ritter's project with a total of CHF 94,000. In addition, valuable research material and technical devices were made available. Up until this time, despite various requests, no concrete results on the two projects of shark conditioning and shark migrations were available. No further scientific work was

published on this theme, except for a publication which has no direct connection with the projects.

Due to the lack of results, the Board of Trustees cancelled its further support of the two projects. Dr. Ritter was asked to return the underwater camera and the Vemco tracking material to the Foundation for use in other projects.

Investments to date: approx. CHF 94,000

Shark Inventory

Taking inventory of the fauna found in the Marine National Park at Walker's Cay by Dr. E. Ritter, especially of shark species and shark populations.

The project was cancelled by the Board of Trustees due to lack of results.

Basking Sharks

A new research project from WildAid supported by the Foundation (Project Manager: Bethan Billings, Scientific Director: Colin Speedie) investigates shark nurseries and the migratory behavior of basking sharks off the coasts of Wales and Scotland. The Foundation supports this project by covering running costs and provides a laptop for data analysis.

Investments 2002: approx. CHF 3,000 plus a Laptop

Whale Sharks

The bereaved family of a diver who lost his life in a tragic diving accident asked the Foundation to invest the money collected at the funeral for a whale shark protection project. Since the Foundation has no such project, the amount was doubled and transferred to the Shark Research Institute, Princeton, N.J. (USA), for their whale shark activities.

Vorerst einmalige Investitionen 2002: ca. CHF 3'700

Deep-sea Sharks

In the scope of our cooperation with Mark Grace of NOAA/NMFS (see below) the Foundation supported a research project dealing with the identification of various deep-sea sharks in the Gulf of Mexico. Mrs. Claudia Bänisch delivered tissue samples for the Foundation's shark tissue collection, a research report as well as photographic material from her stay between October and November 2002.

One-time investment 2002: approx. CHF 2,500

Contacts

NOAA/NMFS

In July/August Dr. Gaston D. Guex and Dr. Alexander J. Godknecht from the Board of Trustees were able to attend a two-week shark research trip in the Gulf of Mexico. There they established valuable contacts between the Foundation and the NOAA/NMFS (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Marine Fisheries Service), Mark A. Grace and Dr. John Carlson. Together the decision was made to carry out common shark protection projects.

Public Relations Activities of the Shark Foundation and Shark Info

Media

In 2002 the office of the Shark Foundation and *Shark Info* again answered hundreds of E-mails and questions on sharks, wrote diverse shark articles and gave various interviews on current shark themes. Over 550 print and other media as well as *Shark Info* members received the latest news on sharks through *Shark Info*.

The Foundation supports Shark Info with an annual contribution of approx. CHF 25,000.

Administration

Dr. E. Ritter

In January 2002 the Foundation/*Shark Info* and Dr. E. Ritter mutually agreed to end their cooperative efforts.

Scientific Advisory Committee

For reasons of time, Professor John F. Morrissey resigned from his position on the Board of Trustees. The Foundation was able to win Professor Mahmood Shivji, Nova University, Florida, as new scientific advisor.

U.S. Shark Foundation

The U.S. Shark Foundation is the American branch office of the Shark Foundation and, according to the IRS (U.S. tax authorities), is exempt from taxes. After G. Adkison was excluded as Secretary, Alexander Godknecht took over this function temporarily.

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

Shark Info

We successfully published four issues of *Shark Info*.

Financial Policy of the Shark Foundation

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 is addressed 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 money stemming from donations from the previous year. Up until that time, no reserves were set aside, instead all resources were released for ongoing projects, investments and administrative work. The accounting of the Foundation and *Shark Info* is newly audited once a year by Ernst & Young auditing company (St. Gallen Branch Office).
