



Twelve Days of Terror: A Definitive Investigation of the 1916 New Jersey Shark Attacks

Richard G. Fernicola

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In July 1916, with the specter of American involvement in World War I on the horizon and New York City in the throes of a deadly polio epidemic, the tri-state population thronged the Jersey shore in search of a respite from the stifling midsummer heat. The Atlantic's refreshing waters proved to be utterly inhospitable, however. In a shockingly brief span of just twelve days, four swimmers were violently and fatally mauled by a marauding shark (or school of sharks), and a fifth was seriously injured, escaping within inches of his life. By the third week in July, national newspapers were headlining reports of "Battles Against Man-Eating Sharks" above the battles of war across the ocean. In this thoroughly researched account, Dr. Richard Fernicola, the leading expert on the attacks, presents a riveting portrait of these twelve days of terror against the colorful backdrop of America in 1916. With the perspicacity of a private eye, he immerses himself in the specifics of the events as he carefully examines clues and reconstructs evidence to resolve what scientists have been arguing over for decades. Was a rogue shark or a school of sharks responsible? Was it a bull shark or a great white shark? Was the shark's motivation hunger or fear? Through primary sources and face-to-face interviews with witnesses, Fernicola pieces together a conclusive, if controversial, theory regarding the character and cause of these mysterious attacks. Part fascinating social history, part spellbinding detective story, *Twelve Days of Terror* is one of those rare books that proves truth can be stranger, more dramatic, and more terrifying than fiction. (6 x 9, 368 pages, b&w photos, illustrations)

Richard G. Fernicola is recognized as the foremost authority on the New Jersey shark attacks of 1916. His research became the basis for the highly acclaimed television documentaries *Legends of Killer Sharks* and *Shark Attack: 1916*, which aired on the Discovery Channel and The History Channel. He is also actively involved in the preservation and rescue of marine mammals.

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