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## SPEAKERS

Speaker 3, Speaker 1, Speaker 2, Speaker 4

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00:17

Coming to you from the city of the weird



Speaker 1 00:21

exploring topics from the esoteric and unexplored to dimensions unknown,



00:28

shining a light of truth on the darkest corners of our reality. Welcome to the curious realm. You



Speaker 1 00:48

Well, hello everybody and happy Tuesday night. I hope everybody is doing well. Amidst the madness in the world, there's madness out there, man, not only in our shores, but out of our shores. We are on the verge of all kinds of things because of all that. As is typical, Our second guest is always topical, folks. So we'll be we'll be finding some people to talk about this stuff going on in the world for our second guest slots coming up during the end of this month, beginning of next month, next week, do not forget stop on by the mine shaft Saloon in San Antonio, if you are out that way to visit the symposium of the strange we will be out there with Nikki Folsom next week, doing people of the Fae. We are. We are all of a week away from that event, so stop on by and check that out. She'll be talking about fairies, Matt, myth, fact, all kinds of fun things in the second part of this segment tonight, folks, after a commercial break, we'll be joined by our good friend, King Gerhart, his new book, The Essential Guide to Mothman and other flying humanoids. Is out, which is, which is kind of a re release of an old book that he

put out years ago with all kinds of new case file and data things like that. So that's going to be super fun. Also super fun this weekend is the official release of Gulf Coast great white sharks return of an icon. This event, this awesome documentary, put on and put together by our good friend Chester Moore, as well as researcher Paul Fauci ski, will be going on at the the Museum of the Gulf Coast in Port Arthur, Texas. I cannot wait to go out to this. Welcome back to the show. Chester Moore and welcome Paul for the first time. How are you guys doing tonight?

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Speaker 2 02:50

Great doing. Great man talking, uh, sharps with my friends tonight. So this will be fun,

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Speaker 1 02:56

right? It's been awesome to see you develop things, especially everything that you've had going on over at Gulf Coast, great whites, you, you jumped on the story of Lee Beth, like, like a rabid dog when it happened. Chester, I remember it was like, you, you had a website up within half a day. It was, yeah, you were on this story from the get go, and as we had you on the show whenever you launched the Gulf Coast, the Gulf great white sharks website. And like I told you, then, growing up in Houston, the Bay of you who, as we called it, over there, you know, you you knew there were sharks out there. You knew there were some, you know, maybe some tiny reef sharks, things like that. But you never really considered, like, great. I mean, of course, growing up watching jaws, you couldn't see in the water, so there was always just this reticent fear of like, my god, there's a massive shark out there, but, my God, there are massive sharks out there. So let's, let's go to Paul first. Paul, how did you first come to the world of wildlife research, conservancy work, and how did you come to meet Chester?

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Speaker 3 04:12

It was just something that I was interested in when I was 25 graduated college and hopped on the Appalachian Trail and spent six months out there doing that whole thing. And then it really got interested in, you know, wildlife and the outdoors in general. And I started, you know, researching all this stuff about hunting and fishing and, you know, kind of like living off the land kind of stuff. And that brought me to wildlife conservation. And, long story short, I ended up meeting Chester at a wildlife conference, and we have been great friends ever since, and we've made many wildlife documentaries together. We've traveled all over the United States, been to Yellowstone, we've been out to Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park. We've been to Boston, filming this great white shark stuff, down to Texas a million times, and it's just. Is never a dull moment with the Chester Moore,

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05:02

yeah, he is. He is

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Speaker 1 05:03

constantly out in the field. This guy, and his his work speaks for itself. I mean, of course

constantly out in the field. This guy, and his his work speaks for itself. I mean, of course, Chester runs higher calling wildlife. He is a reporter and photographer for Texas Fish and Game. He's the host of the award winning numerous award winning now, podcast, dark outdoors. So there it is. But so happy for you, man, that's great. That's great. And you know, it's, it's one of those when you live your life in the outdoors, it's, it's interesting to see something like this pop up. How much of a surprise was it to wildlife researchers out there, guys when, when they found out that apparently, not only were great whites like leebeth out there, but had been out there, and that there are numerous

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#### Speaker 2 05:56

Well, it's really interesting story, Chris. And if you look back, even in older books that I have from like, you know, the 60s and stuff. And I collected, I would go to old thrift shops as a kid and pick up all the while I find older books. And it would show the range of the Great White Gulf, Gulf of Mexico. But there was a lot of controversy whether there were still any out there. And then right around this time, exactly 20 years ago, my friend, Captain Ryan Warhola, gives me a call from a satellite phone. He's a charter captain. He was an 18 year old charter captain at the time, 60 miles off Sabine Pass, and he says, Chester, I'm in a rig, and I need to know the difference between a Mako and a great white teeth. Now a Mako up to seven eight feet next to a great white, it's seven or eight feet look pretty similar. They're in a similar branch of sharks. And I said a Mako has kind of jangly teeth and a great whites perfect triangles, and they got Claudius at Chester. I'm looking at a 15 to 16 foot great white. And that began an investigation, and I wrote an article for tide magazine that year called JAWS in the Gulf, and it won an award, but it was very controversial. The editor got some nasty emails saying, that's fiction. Blah, blah, blah, although I had old reports going back into the 50s of great whites, but a group called O search started putting satellite tags and great whites back probably 12 or 13 years ago now, and they started popping up around on the Gulf side of Florida. So they're up all the way up to like, you know, Panama City, Pensacola. And so it proved they were in the Gulf. But when leebeth popped up last year, she was tagged by a group called the Atlantic white shark conservancy based out of Cape Cod. And she was tagged by BIM. My is my friend Megan went Dr. Megan went and chip. Michael love from uh Outcast sport fishing. She was tagged December the I believe it was the eighth, 2023 out of Hilton Head, South Carolina, by February, 26 2024 she was 100 yards on the beach at South Padre Island. Wow, and made history. She dipped into Mexico for a while in that water, and then she came up the coastline. And by March 7, my friend Ryan Warhola, who saw that Great White and put me on this journey, sent me a screenshot of her position on the Atlanta white shark tivity app. And it said, just to think they thought we were crazy 20 years ago. This is right by the rig I saw the great white app 20 years ago. So wow, you're right. As soon as that happened, I knew it was game on what I've been working on for a long time, on great whites, and it was time to sort of really do a deep dive on this for the sake of conservation of that great species

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#### Speaker 1 08:46

well, and especially when it comes to conservation things like that there, there are huge efforts in the Gulf Coast as far as reef conservation. I have a good friend from high school who worked with Texas Parks and Wildlife for years in the reef conservation program, going out and dropping new reef structures, things like that. So the idea of repopulating the area in that kind of way, to bring larger fish, larger fish populations, in closer, that's, that's been something that

the that the rigs have been for years and years, is artificial reef. That's that's typically, if you're taking a decent fishing charter out, or something like that. That's normally where you end up going to get large fish.

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Speaker 2 09:30

The northern Gulf here is kind of the West. Northwestern Gulf is pretty devoid of natural structure. Not a whole lot of it out there. I mean, we have the flower gardens, Morgan national sanctuary, the steps and rocks and some other stuff. But, um, so a lot of those artificial structures actually help propagate fish. But what's interesting about white sharks being a migratory species is we're fine. They're finding out, these researchers that they're they're hanging out most of the summer, uh, all fall the way up. Is Canada. Yeah, and then they'll move through and then a lot of them end up in the Gulf in the winter, so they don't like their really, really extreme cold as much. And then they don't like really hot either, so they'll kind of come down. And it's been a really fascinating ride, because it's in Paul and I really had a very specific talk about this, and we put this documentary together. Is that this is a very symbolic thing, because I can tell you, man, the Gulf has a lot of red fish. People go, okay, cool. Yeah, I can tell you there's even Marlin out there and some high end fishermen. I get excited, but when I tell you there's great white sharks out there, the whole world wants to talk about it. So that's really what me and Paul were talking about. And Paul, while we're doing these interviews and stuff, I remember at the end of one of my interview segments with a man named Dr grego, he asked how much sport fisherman dollars for projects like you paid for you want to tell that little story right there, please?

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Speaker 3 10:59

Paul, well, yeah, yeah. My whole thing was, you know, a lot of this, there's just this weird conception that, you know, hunting and fishing are bad, and they do all this stuff, but when, in reality, it funds the majority of conservation work. And so, you know, I just had, had to ask, I'm like, you know, how much of this work is funded by hunters, fishermen, whatever, and it's a pretty big portion of his work is funded by, you know, an offshoot of the of the conservation dollars coming from fishermen. So it's just, you know, really interesting stuff. Every time you you turn a corner with this stuff, you learn new things. And it's just exciting, in general, doing any conservation work. But, I mean, come on, it's great white sharks. You can't beat that.



11:42

Yeah, yeah. Well, and

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Speaker 1 11:43

especially on the anniversary of Jaws coming out, things like that, and like you were mentioning the idea of conservation work, especially making such a difference to being funded by rather fishing licenses, things like that. That's something that I've told people about for years and years, is proper hunting, regulated hunting, regulated fishing. Things like that actually do amazing things for the populations, because at that point, yes, the money coming through from

tagged fishing, red, red fish, tags, things like that. Go toward the coastal Conservation Association. They they go to replenish redfish populations, things like that, make sure that the Conservancy for those are there. And it's kind of like we've said numerous times, having you on the show Chester, and even with our guest, King Gerhard afterward, if you love Bigfoot, if you love things like that, get involved with Converse conservation. Can start conserving the land where they live. If you love great white sharks, if you love these other animals that are in the ocean, get involved with the coastal Conservation Association across the country. Yeah, that's really important.

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#### Speaker 2 13:04

And you brought up a great point there about proper, like very proper, conservation. That's what happened with great white sharks. So researchers have learned that it takes 25 to 30 years for a white shark to reach sexual maturity. So and they have a handful of young. So it doesn't take long, when you start targeting those big fish to wipe out a population. They believe the Atlantic populations, with the Gulf populations intertwined with the Atlantic, that it was down 80% and in 1997 due to scientific research and learning all this, it started protecting great white sharks, and you started seeing come back because you it was illegal to harvest them. It's not sustainable. It's not a sustainable harvest redfish, which put out millions of young, millions of eggs, and so that became a thing. And they also removed a lot of gill nets along the coast, which were probably catching a lot of the younger white sharks moving in. So science kind of led the way in conservation. Now you have groups like the Atlanta white shark Conservancy and others that are doing wonderful work on O search, and others trying to raise awareness and do a lot of this great scientific research and get you know I've said this in every media appearance I've done on this, and that is that if you hear about the Gulf in national or international media, it's either a hurricane or an oil spill. I want people to look at the Gulf as a very vibrant, important water body that has incredible biodiversity, and there's no better symbol of that, and there's no better time. I interviewed Lewis Pugh last week. Lewis Pugh is an endurance swimmer who swam all kind of environmental swims he does. He swam back in May. He swam around Cape Cod, the whole thing, and wow, and to raise awareness of great white sharks and. He said, this moment with this moment of the most iconic films of all time, the 50th anniversary. This is a once in a generation opportunity to talk about this topic. So I knew when it was time to work with someone who had the intestinal fortitude and can keep up with me. Paul was the guy to go do this with, because of his heart for conservation, his talents as well. And I knew this was a moment. And here's the thing, this is the first ever documentary about great whites in the Gulf. Now, I'm sure on Shark Week this year they'll debut something on Animal Planet, but that'll be great. We beat him to the punch by a few weeks here.

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#### Speaker 1 15:41

That's right, that's right, by just a little bit. Now let's, let's start getting into that. Uh, Paul, what was it that that begat because you do, you do quite a bit of not that. Chester doesn't do a lot of field work, things like that, tons of field photography, that kind of stuff. But you specifically do quite a bit of documentary work, things like that, for for your outdoor,

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#### 16:05

for your outdoor work at aptitude outdoors,

S**Speaker 3 16:09**

yeah, I, I really think that, you know, I don't have the scientific background to study these animals. You know, professionally, I don't have a biology degree. I don't have, you know, the hard science background that it requires to do all that, but somehow, over time, I've just been getting better at filmmaking and filming, and I have a real passion for filming wildlife. It's definitely difficult, which draws me to it. You know, these things move and they're hard to focus on, and for people like me and Chester who have probably extreme ADHD at some level, it's very fun to to film these animals because you're constantly moving. And, you know, just being outside is one of my favorite things. So, you know, just trying to build a life around that is awesome. And to when someone calls you, I don't care what you're doing, if you're at a job or you're at a whatever, and says, Do you want to go film great white sharks? You don't say no to that. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what you're doing. You fire me. I will go see ya.

P**17:15**

Yeah, yeah. No. That once again,

S**Speaker 1 17:18**

as I was saying before the show. It's kind of like whenever my buddy was like, you know, I got somebody that could set you on fire. I was like, Yeah, I'm not gonna say no to that.

P**17:27**

That is a unique opportunity.

P**17:30**

I have a few people that want to set me on fire, but

P**17:34**

not in the nice, let's put it on film kind of way, though,

S**Speaker 2 17:38**

I found myself over the years in this, like, producers role in a lot of stuff, because I'm good at bringing people together, things together. And it was started in music. I just noticed that our bands were independent. Men didn't really have a producer, and I was the de facto producer, you know, just because I was there and could put it all together and it that's when it came

along with this. And there was a moment where I was invited up to the Atlanta white shark Conservancy's media day in Cape Cod, and made a connection, and they told me, man, we're so grateful you came up here. We'd love to get you out when the sharks are really here. I was there a little bit early for shark activity, and I called them back, like a week later. Were you serious about that? Can we put dates on the calendar? Yeah? And oh, Paul, I'm like, you want to go film Great Whites? We went up there and spent four days with them and filmed at their shark center, and which is an incredible place, and got to go out in the field while they were doing a drone study of great whites. And it was, it was a pretty incredible time. And, you know, Paul is so good at capturing the FEEL, and that's always important to me, like the feel of what's going on there. And, you know, I'm looking out there, and there's, like this, probably 200 seals on this beach, you know, and the captain of the boat goes, there's going to be sharks. And said, why? He goes, there's only a couple of seals in the water. They know something. And then, like the other, the other seals were like, they were clueless. And the dudes in the beach, you could kind of see him going, Hey, shark. And they're like, Huh, you know, like, you know, those guys. And it was, like a fun thing, but it was such a it was really incredible, I mean, and it was a moment for me, because Chris, you know, all the work we do with youth and children, and we have three of the young people that we work with in our documentary with key roles. That was something I had to have. I hate when you hear about like, let's get the next generation involved, and no one ever shows the next generation. Yeah. So we did that. But I had realized, as I'm looking is a there's a great picture on Paul's Facebook right now of me and him hanging over the. Boat, and I have a GoPro. He has a camera. There's a great white you can't see it in the photo, but it's like 10 feet away from us, maybe. And I'm realizing I had now seen great white sharks from my cage, diver in the Pacific in 2002 now I'm in great whites in the Atlantic. And this was from a little boy who saw jaws and watched Jacques, who's still ocean specials, and dreamed of one day being able to see this. And part of what we want to do this documentary is independent filmmakers as independent journalists, is to let people know that if they have that dream in life. If these two knuckleheads can make it happen, they can't, and that was important. Part of this open to make a wider tent for anyone who wants to get involved in conservation. And you know, you can't escape the jaws. Part of this, and I was not leaving the freaking Cape without going to Martha's Vineyard, where we had Jaws filming. And there was a very powerful moment. I know Paul remembers he captured this, um, we're leaving this gigantic, I mean, huge ferry going over to Martha's Vineyard, like a 45 minute ride and, uh, look back, kind of tucked in the under these beautiful oaks, out of out of woods. Hole there. Sign says, Oceanographic Institute well on jaws. When Richard drives his character, Matt Hooper walks up to the scene, he says, Hey, I'm Matt Hooper from the Oceanographic Institute on the main end. Yeah, I was looking at the real one they reference on the mainland from Martha's Vineyard, which is Amity in the movie. And it was a cool moment. Got to film a little clip that's in the dock over at the jaws bridge, a famous bridge scene. And it was interesting, because I believe in the long run, not the short run, for sure, but in the long run, JAWS has done more to raise the profile of sharks and great white sharks than anything even younger kids, I mean, they like the MEG that came out a few years ago and stuff like that, but Jaws still has this place. And there was a lot of people who wanted jaws on their walls, including me when I was a little kid, you know, after seeing the movie. But people like Dr Greg Stonewall, we interviewed, said that character, Matt Hooper, actually inspired him. And, yeah, it was inspiring a lot of other people. So I think that's another important part of looking at it from this perspective, you know. And Paul, yeah, was a Jaws guy growing up, so he got to see it in reverse. What was that like, first?

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Speaker 3 22:43

Uh, well, yeah, when we went to Martha's Vineyard, I had still, embarrassingly, not seen jaws so Chester's freaking out. Just



22:52

seems like a lot of old people getting drunk. That's what I saw.



22:56

After the scientist dude,



Speaker 3 22:59

yeah, but after the fact, it was really cool to, like, see all that stuff. Like, oh, that's where they filmed that. And, I mean, just from a filmmaking perspective, dear Lord, that movie is amazing. I was blown away by the whole thing. And even, you know, being as old as it is, and it still holds up to that level of like, cinematography and filmmaking, that blew me away. I mean, it's considered probably cheesy by today's standards at some level, but, I mean, it's a good movie. You know, I came home and watched it because Chester's like, you gotta watch it if we're making this documentary. I'm like, fine. He wins. It was a good it was a good movie.



Speaker 1 23:32

It was, it was one of those, like, like I said at the beginning, and I've got a picture up here from the Chronicle in Houston that shows, as I said earlier, the Bay of you who And granted, you know, this is just like suspended silt in the water, folks, but this is what I grew up with, whenever it was like, Hey, let's go to the beach. Yeah. You know, it's not like crystal blue water, things that like you get down here, Corpus Christi, that kind of stuff. Absolutely, the wash is totally different. You are between. You aren't there with like three major rivers, but that whole area of the Gulf Coast that is being tracked by by the by the tracking app and everything is quite literally that that whole area is bay of you who so the idea of not being able to see that directly under the water when it's there with you is frightening. And as a kid, you know it was one of those. I was telling my barber the other day like man Jaws had me scared enough to not want to, not want to swim in Lake Livingston, like that's fresh water Jack.



Speaker 2 24:44

Well, you know, my dad talked about he used to wade fish up to here to throw his surf rods out for bull heads. When Jaws came out, it was knees for him.



Speaker 1 24:54

Yeah, I one instance, one where I and I won't Wade. Fish anymore in Galveston, or anything like that, because of it, because I had a small shark tug on a red fish that was attached to my floating Mall... yeah, yeah, you know, and it was, it was there, close enough that I could hit it.



floating well, yeah, yeah, you know, and it was, it was there, close enough that I could hit it with my club and knock it away. But it was, it was just a tiny little black tip, you know, only, only a couple few feet long, but enough for me to be like, Yeah, I'm good. I don't I don't need to be in the water with them. I'll be on the shore.

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## Speaker 2 25:29

But that, but that's part of the safety part of this too, actually, is, you know, like Atlanta white shark Conservancy, their whole thing is, you know, that safety part of Cape Cod, because there's a lot of great whites on the beach. Now, they have a whole system that they do, which we got to witness in person, the shark tivity app. We literally saw a great white and then Victoria, the girl there, the lady there, who was doing part of the drone study, sends a message to the people who own this beach, and then a purple flag goes up with a great white logo on it. So we saw that in action. And I give because this is a not out to get people, but they do hit people sometimes, you know, yeah. And, you know, in general, you know, people freaked out because a great white showed up. I'm like, your chances of ever running into a great while the beach, but you got a big chance running into a black tip or a spinner or a bull Yeah. And if you're out the beach a lot, I guarantee you've had a bull shark swim pretty close to you at some point. And last year, there was a bull shark attack at South Padre and the media went nuts. People were blaming the great white that was that had showed up. And of course, I did a blog at Gulf Great Whites and said, Well, she woulda had to make a one day trip from Nova Scotia, because that's where she last pinged a couple of days ago. But the funny thing is, the media can't handle reporting on wildlife and sharks. They take it to a new level. A publication in the Rio Grande Valley posted that Parks and Wildlife had essentially lassoed the bull shark that attacks the people and had taken it and let it out to deep water to get it away from people. Now I'm thinking, This is Texas, and a lot of things are possible, but that sounds like a tall tale. So I called Park some wildlife, and I'm going, they did not publish that. I said, Yes, they did. And so they went out there and made them correct it. But you know, in general, Shark safety, if anyone listening out there, if you're Wade fishing, I highly recommend don't use the kind of old school thing like Chris and I use, where you have the one little float, you just kind of put the stringer to the mouth. Yeah, he has the it's the baskets are a lot better, and you need to have as much distance between you. And another thing is, if you're in the water and you a bunch of bait fish come up, you find yourself in a school of men Hayden or mullet, time to go bye, bye. Get out of the water, yeah, because there's dark feeding in there. Other thing is, you mentioned murky water. Murky the mercury. Now, when you go into the Galveston Bay, like sea rims, upper coast, part of Louisiana coast where I live, all this area, murky is a relative term. So you know, if you got visibility like this, like, you know, if you can see down three feet, that's clear local water, yeah, so. But if it gets real murky, stay out of the water, because sharks won't be able to see you, and they just might hit because they see something move or movement or smell fish around you or whatever. And don't swim at night, because the bigger sharks and stuff, a lot of times moving to the beaches closer to no dusk and dawn and stuff like that. Just basic safety, intelligent stuff. I recommend a thing called Shark bands that puts out a signal from the Earth's magnetic Oh, wow, that that has shown some resistance to sharks. I've had it on an episode of dark outdoors before. So let's look for a little bit of safety stuff for the Gulf Coast, because most people never run into a great white you know, the fear of sharks is interesting because I get it in the water. I understand that. But I had someone I was talking to was almost shaking talking about sharks, and said, You do realize they're not going to ring your doorbell fill up at the house, right? So the good thing about a short shirt just, yeah, don't, don't, don't, you know, don't go in the water if it freaks you out that bad. But you don't have to be terrified of living in Beaumont, Texas, yeah, 30 miles from the Gulf. Yeah,

S**Speaker 1 29:33**

yes, yes. And then, you know, especially when it comes to that kind of education, you know, once again, I think that that was brought about a lot in Jaws. It was, it was interesting because they did the character from Woods Hole did do a lot of education on behalf of sharks, you know, letting people understand, like no, like Great Whites aren't man eaters. That's, that's not really what they do. It's not really the prey that they're after. We don't like if, if they bite us, it's more maybe an exploratory bite, something like that, and once they realize there's not enough fat content, hey, yeah, you know. And pretty even the idea of, like you said, bull sharks, those are, those are ones that they are reported

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a good 3035,

S**Speaker 1 30:23**

miles up the Mississippi. There's one currently wreaking havoc in the Potomac, yeah, in the Potomac River

S**Speaker 2 30:30**

both there has actually been a bull bull shark that was verified in the Mississippi in Illinois, yeah, yeah. I mean, it's pretty crazy. You mentioned all that educational effort. This book was an important part of my childhood, and it sold a bajillion copies. And there's a couple that were involved with the cinematography underwater of Jaws, Ron and Valerie Taylor, and they actually took all of the all the first video and photos of great whites underwater that they took, including that shot right there. Wow. But talk about the power of images. When I think great white shark, immediately the coolest photo ever taken pops up in my mind. That's what I think of. I think of a great white that shot by Ron Taylor, yeah, yeah. And, you know, I look at that and go, that's the coolest thing in the entire world. Some people may have a different reaction, Yeah, but how you present the image is important. I think we did that well in the documentary, we didn't, we didn't make them seem like they're a bunch of hippie vegans with gluten free sandwiches trying to go for an Oceanside camp out. They are great white for God's sake. Well, but

S**Speaker 1 31:42**

I was gonna say, let's, let's get into that real quick, Paul, especially as somebody who you know, once again, was not necessarily a shark enthusiast growing up or or through your conservancy work, uh, a what would is, what was it like for you to step into that role as a filmmaker and and really document that side of it, the effort for Conservancy. And what were you trying to at least as somebody who may have had their own personal revelations as this journey went on, what were you trying to get across with the film?

Well, I think most importantly is that, yes, sharks are dangerous, but, I mean, every animal is dangerous. If you're an idiot, I guess, like, pretty dangerous, yeah. I mean, humans are the most dangerous. That's something Chester and I talk about quite often, so, you know, it's just about being smart. I mean, there's so few shark attacks that it's really just media blowing it up. And I think it's really important to remember that you are responsible for not getting attacked by a shark. I mean, if there's, you know, you talk about Boston, there's no joke up there you go on the beach, and there are signs, I would say, What would you say? They're probably 1015, foot wide by eight foot tall on the beach. Giant, bright red signs that say there are great white sharks in this water, you are risking your life when you go in there. If you ignore that, that's your problem. Dude, like they're they're doing everything in their power to make sure that you're aware of what you're getting into. So I think a lot of this stuff is blown out of proportion, and just like Chester had talked about earlier, takes them almost 30 years to mature, to be able to have babies, and they can only have so many at a time, because they're I think when we interviewed Dr Megan Winton, she said they're eight foot long when they're born or something. They're just massive. Yeah, five feet. Five feet. So, I mean, they Wow. You know, you learn a lot about these animals in real time, but then, you know, the moment everything came together for me is like we, you know, with Chester, when a lot of the stuff we do, it's like a three, four day gauntlet, you know, he calls me up and says, Hey, I booked a flight for you. Meet me in Boston. I'll pick you up at the airport. We meet up, we drive, we BS, we catch up, we get to where we're going. We get to the hotel, we wake up. We got to do a couple interviews. We set up Blah, blah, just rush, rush, rush, rush, rush. And then all of a sudden, we're on a boat in the middle of the ocean outside of Cape Cod, and I'm just in filmmaking mode. So I'm filming everybody on the boat. I'm film trying to film the airplanes flying overhead. I'm trying to film everybody doing their thing on the boat. And they said, oh, there's a shark we're pulling up. So I screw on my attachments to be able to see in the water. I'm hanging off, I'm filming this shark. And then I look like I'm in the camera. And you would understand this, working with cameras, I'm in the screen, looking at it, filming it, making sure it's in frame. And I my eyes focus past the camera, and then I'm like, That's a great white shark. Like, holy crap. That is a real massive great white shark. And I'm, I am on a railing, basically walking the plank out here. I'm six one, so, like this railings below my hip. And I'm, like, if this boat rocks, I'm dead. Like, you know, I look like a pretty good seal. So it's just, it was very, you know, it. It was very cool to see that in person. Yeah, and then to learn from these people about the shark research that's going on, like the current shark research, a lot of the stuff we're hearing and, you know, a lot of the stuff that they make on television, they make it fast, but some of the stuff's years old, like they're doing reruns from Shark Week. That's, you could think we 10 years old. That's old information. We're learning about new things, and it's really interesting. They don't know where sharks breed. Like to me, that's just crazy. Like, how do you not know that they have trackers on tons of these things, and they just don't know what they're doing. And it's like in an age where we all think we know everything, in an age where we all think we got it all figured out because we have the internet, we still don't know about these, these amazing animals. And, you know, yes, they can be terrifying, but also they are a species at risk. They're, they're very dependent on very specific things. And yep, it's, it's, you know, it's, it's a real thing that we have to be concerned about. And luckily, you know, he can't fish for him anymore, and that stuff's really important. And as a person who's an avid fisherman, you know, you advocate, you advocate for that, because if it's harming the population, then why would we go for it? You know what I mean? And all that stuff is very, very cool to learn about. I wish more people would learn about it. And it's kind of funny. This is probably the only podcast we could really make this make sense. As Chester and I were talking the other day, we're like, you know, great

whites are kind of like the only, like, cryptid adjacent animal that's out there. Like, because, like, they're they're clear. Like, we see them all the time. They're on TV all the time, but it's like that fear that campers get at night when they're around the campfire telling Bigfoot stories. People get that when they go in the ocean, but like, for sure, it's funny that they're, it's like, you know, you know what I'm saying, your audience is the only one who would understand that you talked about that with a bunch of biologists. They're gonna be like, don't talk, yeah.

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#### Speaker 1 36:51

Well, and you know, it's, it's interesting that you bring that up, because it does, it does take, sometimes that that suspension of disbelief to get a point across and and, you know, it's one of those. Once again, the idea that a two hour long suspension of disbelief known as JAWS, led to the beginning of shark Conservancy, basically, is really fascinating to think about it when you when you look, especially in the world of Conservancy, there is what is known as an indicator species, and when you're talking fresh water, things like that, like frogs are a huge indicator species as to whether or not there are toxins in the environment, that kind of stuff that may further affect fish and other things, because they feed on the tadpoles and on the frogs and that kind of stuff. And sharks are very much an indicator species in in the world of oceanography, you know, and marine biology Go ahead, Paul,

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#### Speaker 3 37:57

it was interesting that you brought that up because I did not know. I mean, this is just, could be ignorance on my part. But, you know, I grew up in the Midwest where we have, you know, your big we have deer, you know, that's what we have around here, raccoons, squirrels. They didn't have any, any seals up in Massachusetts, up up in the northeast at all, and they basically had wiped them out because they said, the the fishermen were saying they were, like, depleting the fish populations. And then, you know, talking with the scientists there, they believe that's part of the reason the sharks weren't there for so long, is because, or in at least in lower numbers, because seals are their main food source up in that area of the world. And they're still kind of figuring out what they eat in the Gulf. You know, I think they said it might some of the correct me, Chester, some like sea turtles and some of the like red fish and stuff like that. They're eating some of these bigger fish. But in the northeast, it's seals. And the recovery of the seal is the recovery of the Great White. In that region, it's all, you know, yeah, preach the ecosystem all you want. But I mean habitat destruction and collapse of ecosystem is the number one threat to all wildlife right now. It's not absolutely, it's not this. It's, it's, yep,

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#### Speaker 2 39:09

and with that, with the seal comeback, was its own thing. I mean, that could be an incredible documentary, but when Jaws came out, of course, the initial reaction was very negative. I mean, there's a lot of sharks killed after that, yes. And interestingly, the man that Captain Quint was inspired by was a fisherman named Frank Mundus. And they it wasn't like, exactly like Quint, but he was a, you know, kind of a character. And he, I forget, what he mainly Fisher. It might have been Bill fish for tuning in the fishery had tanked, and he caught a big gray, white and hung it on a dock. And the newspaper showed up. Pre dating jaws. He was going out and doing this, and he get, you know, just massive fish they caught. And then by the mid 80s, when

Mundus had seen what had happened, and also Peter Benchley, the author of Jaws. Jaws, they became staunch shark conservationists. So I think, you know sharks, it's interesting because Jaws is not what painted a bad picture. We prove it in the documentary, by the way, that Jaws wasn't what put a crosshair on great whites at first. There's Mundus right there, yep. And I have a newspaper clipping that Paul does a great job of showing in the documentary from 1950 when a Great White was called a man eater in a Texas newspaper. And there was the movie done with Ron and Valerie Taylor and others in 1971 four years before Jaws called a white water, or no blue water, white, sorry. Blue Water white, death, and it's on prime. It's incredible to go watch and so but Jaws took it to like a global level and a lot of fear. But out of that, these young shark conservationists rose up, and now we can go at the 50th anniversary, and look at the people that are put their eyeballs on Great Whites because of that. I think it's a net gain in the in the long run, for sure. And I think it's, it's a fun thing to celebrate, because, look, think about this from the environmental perspective. I mean, you got, like, Free Willy or something, but like, let's look out. You know, come on, let's look at reality here. Name a movie that's are, a picture like that, anything like that, that has a little bit of Jaws is pretty reality based. I mean, there's, you know, that makes you think about nature, like John, yeah. I mean, maybe A River Runs Through It, or the book, but nothing like Jaws puts the attention on a species and an ecosystem. So we are honored as brothers in conservation and doing films together to release it on the weekend Jaws was released 50 years ago and help steward that next generation of conservationists. I was talking to one about seven o'clock this afternoon, Marina Wilson, who is one of the stars of the documentary. She's a first year marine biology student we're working with the last couple years, and cool, she's going to host our event. She's going to be our event host. And we've got my friend Erica Shea here from Orange, Burrell, and then Ridge petty, two other young people in the documentary, and we're seeing a new generation rise up, and they're wanting to do something positive, and we're going to be announcing some positive conservation things out of this, and doing our best to say, hey, you know, the true apex predator of the Gulf isn't the bull shark, and it isn't Hammerhead, It's Carcharodon, carcarius, the great white shark. And we want to put that stamp of conservation awareness with filmmaking. You know,

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**Speaker 1 42:48**

absolutely. And Paul, you know, what? What are you looking to again? What are you looking to bring to the next generation with this? How are you looking to present this to them, and how are you hoping that it will help bring a new generation to understanding this animal?

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**Speaker 3 43:10**

Well, I think first and foremost, it's really important that, you know, we understand that these opportunities are available to people. I mean, you don't have to be, you know, on National Geographic, you don't have to be a world famous filmmaker that makes \$10 billion of film or whatever to do this stuff, like Chester and I did this on our own because we care about it. Yeah, you know, we, we didn't have any funding from anybody. We didn't have anything, you know, provided to us. We just went out and did it. If you're passionate about something, you really can just go for it. And you know, maybe it's not going to be, you know, the the most amazing looking shot on the 12k camera with a 30 person film crew, but you're telling a story that means something to you, and I think that's more important than anything. You know, we don't have a lot of fancy equipment, and a lot of you know technical knowledge about a lot of things,

but we work really hard and we're passionate, and I think that's what's important for kids to know, especially in this in this age of social media, where everybody seems to be famous all of a sudden, all the time, out of nowhere, and Chester and I live in the real world, we work hard and we try and get a message out there that's positive and a lot of negative stuff. And I mean, that goes for wildlife too. There's so many misconceptions about wildlife. People are just confused. They don't understand it because we're not in touch with wildlife anymore. I mean, it's rare for people to be interested in wildlife and nature and the outdoors in general anymore, and I think it's just bringing people any way possible to bring them closer to the real world, which is, you know, nature, and I think that's really important. And just letting them know whatever they're passionate about, they want to be a marine biologist, filmmaker, journalist, podcast host, whatever they want to do, they can do it for whatever they're passionate about. Hopefully it's. Wildlife from my perspective. But if not, they can do it. Man, we're just, dude, you're just doing it.

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#### Speaker 1 45:05

You know that? That brings up a huge point that we try to champion on this show all the time, and that is the concept of citizen science. I am a backyard Astro photographer. I am out there looking at the night sky all the time, like a good 10% of astronomic objects and discoveries are made by people like me who just have the time to observe, you know. And it's fascinating to see how many relic species have come back, things like the ivory billed woodpeckers, stuff like that. And that's only through people who have the time to observe. Now, granted, there are people like y'all that are out there in the field doing this stuff. Chester, once again, works with, you know, Texas Fish and Game things like that. He's out covering bighorn sheep relocation all over the country, things like that. So when he reaches out to somebody, it might be a little bit different level. You know, however, if you're somebody out there with a big footing on the weekend and you have trail cams out in a dense wooded area, feel free to get with your local wildlife Conservancy. They would love to be able to count bears with that, count birds, all kinds of things, and you're now contributing to their science. You're building a bridge, and come the day that you need something examined, they're going to look at you in a different light, because you've been contributing to them. Didn't

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#### Speaker 3 46:33

wasn't there a Bigfoot group doing a camera study out in California, and they found a species of Martin they thought were extinct or something. Recently, within the last couple of years, I remember hearing about that. I mean, yeah, for real, people know that the people out in the woods are the ones with the cameras looking for stuff. They could find species that they didn't know exist. No,

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#### Speaker 1 46:52

they're totally possible. No different than the fishing guides out there that are out there in that water all the time. You know, to

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#### Speaker 2 47:02

be tagged by a fishing guide with the Atlanta white star Conservancy. And it's, it's a great thing to that on ramp you're talking about, for people to be involved. And, you know, I just knew we had to do this. So I dug in and figured out how I'm going to fund it out of my own budget here. Then I'm kind of backwards way we did independent production. And we had afterwards, we had the Texas Outdoor Writers Association, through our friend Herman Brune and Rebecca Jones and the church family step up and be contributing producers and help us fund some of the promotion of it and buying bulk footage. And we had some other people sign on to help. But there's ways to do it like crowdfunding and stuff as well. Well, we did it in reverse because the opportunity was there, and we knew that this was a moment in time that will never repeat itself, and we owed it, I think, to ourselves start off with just to take advantage of this for the sake of conservation. Because, look, we can talk about white tailed deer all day long. We can talk about snakes. We can talk about nuts, but man, when you start talking about sharks, you get people listening. And we want a wide audience, cast a wide net and hopefully make a big, big impact. And Paul so eloquently said about like, people can have a chance to do it. Don't worry about all what you see other people, the illusion of celebrity and all that stuff. If you got the heart and you got the talent, put some work in and make great things happen. Yeah,

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#### Speaker 1 48:38

yeah. And, you know, it's amazing because, as a technician, things like that, like, man, there's a black magic app for your camera now that literally lets you control F stop and, like, use your camera like an actual photographer and filmmaker. You know, it's, it's fascinating. That thing is free. So the fact that, like, you got a 4k camera in your pocket that you can then use that app and shoot footage and get even shooting RAW format for editing, like, it's pretty disgusting. Like, that's just because you've already got the technology in your pocket. And that's kind of something that I used to tell people whenever I spoke at podcasting conferences that kind of thing is, like, you don't, you don't have to have I've got a ton of technology, but it's also what I do for a living. You know, like, I make music, I do all this stuff. I've been in broadcast for years. I do corporate AV for a living. So I have tons of technology, but when I went live on the way into my son's birth in like from the waiting room to the surgery room, I just had an earpiece on. That was it. I wasn't even live on video. I was live on audio, and that was it. It was just, it was just a hardwired earpiece to my phone. You'd. Not have to get complex to make the content, you know. So, yeah, the idea of get out there, get your hands dirty, do it make the dream a reality and release it into the wild, much like any well cared for critter that you are trying to that you're trying to help sustain in the world. And I

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#### Speaker 3 50:21

go ahead, no, I agree. I would say that's one of the hurdles I see with a lot of people, is they'll they'll make something, or they'll want to work on something for years and years, and it's never perfect. And I'm like, at some point, guy, you just gotta let it go. You just gotta send it like, you know, I was telling Chester, I sent him the final documentary last night, and I was like, there, I could sit and nitpick this thing to death for five years, but it's as good as it's gonna get for the timeframe we have, and it's ready to go, and it's watchable, and it's the best thing we can make in the window. And I think it's important, you got to give yourself a deadline and just go do it, put it out there. You can make other stuff down. I can make so much crap every day. I can make stuff forever, and something I regularly do that I that I enjoy, is like with this chip, with trip, with Chester, I'm coming down there. I'm not bringing any of my nice cameras or



anything. I have a little Sony pocket camera. And it's just sometimes it's good to go back to your roots with your cheap equipment and just see if you can still make good stuff with it. Because you can, you don't need

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Speaker 1 51:20

expensive equipment. No, it's all BS. Yeah. Yeah. It really is one of the there's all kinds of fancy hammers out there. And then there's one with just a wooden handle, like you don't, you don't need a tuning fork inside of it, and all kinds of things, but, but it's out there, you know? And, and, yeah, the idea of what, one of the things my wife's always mentioned about me and my music is that I actively enjoy listening to my music. And I tell her I enjoy listening to it because I don't toil over it. I had friends for years that when they went to make an album like they've And granted, I don't do a lot of vocal singing, things like that, but still, I don't toil over it. When it's done, it's done, and it may be done rapidly. It may be done in about six months, something like that. But I release, on average, at least an album or two a year, something like that, because I don't, I don't toil, I don't make

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Speaker 2 52:14

that's a great that's a great point, and I've mentioned this. So the metal band overkill. It always ends up going back to metal somehow, life from overkill. Bobby blitz said, Look, man, we're not artists trying to convince the world and beg the world to understand our artistic dialect. We're craftsmen. We have a certain skill set. We do our best and put our product out, and that's kind of all this is about

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Speaker 1 52:41

well and Exactly, exactly, and the idea of Conservancy for conservancy sake, you aren't, you aren't trying to, once again. You didn't go out, you didn't raise a crap ton of money to get this done. You didn't go out and find a crap ton of sponsors and angels and that kind of stuff, and go through, go through insane channels of promotion, to get it into a Regal Cinema or something like that for a day viewing that kind of stuff. You went to the museum of the Gulf Coast and said, Let us help you. Help us. You know that that great

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Speaker 2 53:19

partner, yeah, it's very prestigious museum. It's a 19,000

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square foot museum. It's a big museum, and

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Speaker 2 53:27



great place, and they're great at hosting events. And the fact this was Gulf centric, it wasn't just made by somebody on the Gulf Coast. It was about the gulf coast was, I think, very important to them, and they built a cool event around it. And we're doing a lot of media, and we're so excited to meet everyone that's going to come out. We've got a it's going to be a lot of fun, man, we're going to have it's for the whole family. It's free, two showings of the documentary, and get to hang out, see us and learn about sharks. And I'm going to do a little presentation before the doc debut called the jaws effect. And I mean, you think, you think Chester Moore is going to be on the day Jaws was released 50 years ago, not talking about it. In mind, I'm going to have that little talk before we go, and then we're going to take this shark and let it go out into the water and hopefully doesn't attack anyone. Well, I am,

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Speaker 1 54:20

well, maybe a few people, yeah, yeah, hopefully at least nibble some toes and get some good attention. There we go. Because, because, truly it is, it is important, once again, for science to have, just in the last little bit, come to the realization that the Gulf Coast is actually a massively important, basically nursery for great whites that like this is where they come to spend part of their adolescence. You know, things like that is fascinating research. And once again, just coming to the world of marine biology so it it changes things. It changes how we look at things here in the Gulf. So it changes how we treat the waters that we're fishing regularly, things like that. So thank you guys for the effort for a seeing the necessity for this and actively making it happen. Because once again, people can take pen to paper and start putting a documentary together, but to active, I remember, once again, it was not long ago, wasn't even a year ago, Chester, that you launched

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Gulf great white sharks.

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So Gulf great whites.com and

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Speaker 1 55:34

it was probably a few months after that that you were like me, and me and my buddy Paul are starting a documentary about this. So it's been within a year that this was conceived, shot put out. So congratulations, guys. I am hugely happy for y'all before we let you go, Paul, let everybody know where they can go to, like, follow, subscribe, or they can go to find everything that that is. I is Paul fazinski,

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Speaker 3 56:04

yeah, you can just go to apt aptitude outdoors.com, that's where everything that I make goes. I am on social media. I'm not a big active social media guy, but I am on there. So it's aptitude outdoors on everything. And you know I'll be posting about the shark stuff and my trip down

outdoors on everything. And you know, I'll be posting about the shark stuff and my trip down there at the museum, helping Chester. So if you want to find me, you can reach out there.

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**Speaker 1 56:30**

Fantastic. And Chester, before we let you go, uh, where can everybody go to keep up with everything that is Gulf great whites? And where can they go to keep up with everything that you do with higher calling wildlife. Where can they go to get their tickets for this event? Are there tickets for this event? Does it just come to the museum? By your tradition,

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**Speaker 2 56:52**

come to the museum. But the first 100 families that come get a commemorative movie pass, and they also get a commemorative there's only 100 of these printed up. I was there Gulf Great Whites decal, nice and lots of cool stuff, like, that's free, Gulf great whites.com all of my great white stuff. By the way, Gulf great whites.com was named by the Excellence in craft awards, by the Texas Outdoor Writers Association, number one outdoor website of Texas this year. Wow. It was just also recognized and by the Press Club of Southeast Texas as one of the top three blogs. Of course, the funny thing is, higher calling wildlife beat it. So fourth you're gonna grow higher calling.net by the Press Club of Southeast Texas, number one blog by them. Higher kong.net it's kind of my catch all for everything that I do. And at the Chester. More on Instagram. And if people go to golf great whites.com I hit the subscribe link and they send me their their mailing address. I'll send them a gulf Great Whites decal. We have sent Chris in the last three months, over 600 of these to people subscribing to the blog. Wow. So thanks for happening. Fantastic.

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**Speaker 1 58:04**

I'm so so glad to hear that. Chester, it's always great to have you on the show. I love your work. I love what you do, Paul, thank you so much for your time tonight. It's always great thank you to meet new conservationists that are out there trying to save our outdoors. Because once again, whether, whether you're a hunter, a fisherman, whether you're a cryptid researcher, these are places that we need to preserve if we like the wildlife, if we like the cryptids that we're trying to track, we first have to start with protecting their homes and protecting their environment. So congratulations, gentlemen, and kudos. Kudos to everything that you've done with this documentary. I can't wait to see it. I

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**Speaker 2 58:48**

appreciate it, my friend. Thank you for always being a staunch supporter of the work I'm doing, and also for having so many people across different parts of this outdoors world, whether it's cryptids or whatever, on your program. Thank you for being you and having a song. Man,

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**Speaker 1 59:01**

absolutely. Thank you very much. You bet you guys, take care. Have a great evening. I'll be

sending links everything else very soon. Sounds good. All right. Take care guys, while you are online, checking out everything from Gulf great whites.com as well as higher calling wildlife. Everybody make sure to stop on by curious realm. Curious realm.com is where you can like, follow, subscribe. That is where you can find all of the episodes. That is where you can also find your link to Curious Research. If you have had an experience of the paranormal, stop on by fill out our experience or form there. Let us know what happened to you, how it happened, things like that. When we come back from this break, everybody, we will be joined by our good friend, King Gerhard. We will be talking about his new book, The essential Mothman. Uh, The Essential Guide to Mothman and other flying cryptids. Right after this, the key to good science is good research. At the heart of good research is a good data set with the field observation and encounter log from Curious Research, you can easily keep track of your investigative information all in one place, making it easier to review cases and readily see comparisons and contrasts between them, whether out in the woods, watching in a backroom gathering EVPs or using high tech gear to track UFO, UAP activity this easy to carry pocket sized scientific data log is the perfect companion for any field researcher. You can find your copy of the Curious Research field observation and encounter log@amazon.com or visit the official curious realm store at curious realm.com forward slash store to reserve your copy for yourself, your family or a mind that you want to open that website again is curious realm.com forward slash store, you Well, hello everybody, and welcome back from that quick break. Thank you so much to our good friend Chester Moore. I cannot wait for his upcoming great white shark documentary at the Port Arthur museum. It's going to be great. I'm going to be there. You should be there too. Our guest in this segment is the amazing King Gerhard. He has just put out a new and revised version of a book that he previously had out the essential Mothman and other flying humanoids. This is a great, great Compendium. If you are into the world of Mothman, into the world of flying humanoid like, believe it or not, folks, there are more flying humanoid sightings than you can you can shake a stick at there. I mean, there's quite a few that you may not be aware of, and it is fascinating information in here. Welcome back. Kim, how are you doing?

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Speaker 4 1:02:42

Christopher, it's always an honor and a pleasure to be with you, my friend. How are you doing today? Doing

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Speaker 1 1:02:47

great. I have been thumbing my way through the new book. I got my copies directly from you. You had a you had a limited edition signed batch, so I had to get a couple of those. Thank you. And absolutely it's if you're coming from the world of rock and roll, if you like the band by the CD folks, because they didn't get paid at the door, always, if you like research like this, go buy the books that researchers write. That's literally what enables them to do more research. So I love the fact that you have revised this book, added new things to it. What? What was it that brought you to write the book? To begin with Ken,

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1:03:29

well, Christopher, my Genesis into

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**Speaker 4 1:03:33**

investigating creatures like the Mothman and other flying humanoids goes back to when, as, you know, I'm kind of a traditional old school cryptozoologist in terms of, you know, try to keep it straight, zoology and so, yeah, you know, that's kind of how it was intended to be. But about 25 years ago, when I was living in San Antonio, when I first moved to San Antonio, and just before that, I began researching accounts of weaned cryptids throughout South Texas. Many of my Texan friends will be familiar with the Big Bird, yes, a play on the Sesame Street character, but the creature that was described down there in the Rio Grande Valley and parts of San Antonio, starting in 1975 '76 was, you know, this winged creature. Some said it was bat like, or more like a flying pterosaur, like a winged reptile type thing, very Dragon, like some people said it was just an enormous bird. But anyways, the all of those things kind of fall within the purview of traditional cryptozoology. But shortly after I came out with that book, I appeared on an episode of A the old show monster quest. And then the following year, they called me up. The producers called me and said, Hey, would you like to go down to Mexico and investigate kind of a Mothman case that's developing? Down there. This was in 2009 and of course, I was like, wow, that, you know, I was weaned on the Mothman as a kid. Of course, my mom used to regale me with stories of the West Virginia Mothman. And I read John Keel's books when I was a kid and all that kind of stuff. So it's always been a fascinating mystery to me. So we went down to Mexico in 2009 filmed the episode mostly around Monterey, and interviewed some eyewitnesses who claimed that they'd seen, you know, winged human like creatures. And then ultimately, I ended up, you know, doing another show up in Point Pleasant finally got a chance to go up there and investigate the original Mothman in 2010 or 11. And of course, once you're on TV talking about these things, ultimately people will reach out to you that have had experiences, which is what happened. I was contacted by a number of people who you know wanted to basically unburden themselves. They'd seen these weird, winged human like creatures, certainly nothing that we consider traditional within the field of cryptozoology, but very strange. And so ultimately, through the years, I've, you know, I've interviewed many eyewitnesses. I've investigated these winged humanoid creatures, you know, kind of in addition to my traditional cryptozoology stuff. And I, I guess, as we get into it a little bit well, it will be clear that I view this as definitively a metaphysical or supernatural construct or phenomenon, something that folks that are in the UFO field with you, or you know, in different aspects of the paranormal field, will relate to, because it's certainly again, that the Mothman, you know, from the outset, let's say it, the Mothman does not physically, does not match anything that should have evolved on this planet. Yeah, its behaviors were very unnatural. And there were, there was a lot of weird stuff attached to it, from psychic phenomenon to UFOs to men in black to curses and all this, all this kind of stuff. So it's a pretty weird and fascinating case, and very, very dark and creepy. Yeah,

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**Speaker 1 1:07:05**

yeah. And, and one that, like you said, literally struck terror into a town for a while, especially just before the Silver Bridge collapse, which is, of course, most famously what the Mothman is connected to. But let's, let's get into a little bit of that lore in the cases that led up to that event, Ken, before we get into modern day sightings, things like that.

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**Speaker 4 1:07:32**

Well, the quintessential Mothman encounter occurred on the just before midnight on November

well, the quintessential Mothman encounter occurred on the just before midnight on November 14, 1966 there were two young married couples, Roger and Linda Scarborough, Steve and Mary Mallet were cruising around in their old 57 Chevy around an area known as the TNT plant, or TNT area, which is just next to Point Pleasant, West Virginia. Point Pleasant is a little city, town right on the Ohio River on the border with Ohio, kind of a very rural area still kind of the same after all these years, but the TNT area nearby was so named because during World War Two it had been used as an ammunitions manufacturing and storage facility. It's littered with about 100 of these concrete bunkers that are reinforced and covered with grass and dirt so they're not visible from the air. And they would store explosives in there. And then, after World War Two, the place was used for storing toxic chemicals and other things. But as is the case in rural areas, many of the young people would use it as kind of a Lover's Lane or a hangout place where they would go and party and stuff. And so the Mallets and the Scarboros were driving around looking for something to do just before midnight, and as they approached this old building called the North power plant, the women saw it first, you know, what is that? And you know, according to all four witnesses, what they saw was about was a man like figure, about six and a half to seven feet tall, they estimated. Of course, its most startling features were these big, red, hypnotic eyes that kind of transfixed them. Kind of seems self illuminating. It did have wings attached to its back, and it had sturdy man like legs. The head was kind of low slung so they couldn't tell if it had a head. The eyes are kind of placed down here, if you will. And this thing waddled off towards the abandoned power plant building in a very clumsy fashion, of course, they were terrified. After a few minutes of being transfixed, they decided to tear off out of there, and then they claim they saw this thing again on the top of a hill. It took off and chased them all the way back to town, for several miles, at speeds approaching 100 miles an hour, flying just above and beyond the car and then bumping into the side of the car. Mary Mallet, who's in the back seat. The ladies were in the back seat. The gents were in the front. Roger Scarborough was driving. Mary Mallet claimed she could hear this thing making a mechanical squeaking noise. And then just before town, when they were getting into the kind of the lights of the outside of town, the thing disappeared. We. Well, of course, they were in shock. Didn't know what to do. They thought about going to the police, but they didn't think anyone would believe them, frankly. So they drove to tiny's drive in, which is on the outskirts of Point Pleasant, which was just about to close right before midnight. They knew some people that worked there, and they talked to some people there, and they convinced them, Hey, call the police. So a guy named deputy Millard Halstead showed up and led them back, hesitantly, back to the to look for this thing. And I'm leaving out another possible sighting when they went back, maybe on the fringe of town, but they didn't see it. When they got out there, there was a mysterious cloud of dust. The police officers radio seemed to go out of control and was garbled, you know, garbled messages, like a phonograph or something playing backwards, and it was just, you know, lots of weirdness. Well, ultimately, Mary Mallet and Linda Scarborough were in shock. Both ladies had to be taken to the hospital and evaluated for for panic and PTSD. And then the four couples were obviously had a restless night where they kind of camp together. But, you know, the following morning, the sheriff George Johnson announced this encounter. It should be noted that the law enforcement officials that interview these couples knew them. You know, it's a small town, yeah, everybody knows everybody. They knew them to be, you know, sober, clean, you know, it's pretty straight laced kids, and that they were very, very terrified by something. So that was the original story, and was picked up by the local news wires of court or national news wires. And the name Mothman was not immediate. It was referred to as the bird, the bird monster, the Mason County bird. People just assumed foregone conclusion that they saw some kind of monstrous bird of some type, but that was the essential, quintessential sighting. The following night, a woman named Marcella Bennett had a very close encounter with this thing rising up behind her car near the TNT area. And, you know, after that, of course, mass hysteria ensued, and people were going out to this TNT area in droves with, you know,

guns and pitchforks and baseball bats find this creature. And the local officials had to, you know, do some crowd management. And so that was it. And then there was, you know, there were a number of sightings, you know. And we could talk about those for about the course of a year, until the tragedy of the Silver Bridge collapse, which occurred, you know, exactly, pretty much exactly, 13 months after that, on December 15, 1967

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Speaker 1 1:12:26

and that is what many people attribute the The Mothman to, is kind of, kind of a harbinger being that that shows up. Because it's not like there was any pre existing lore before that, any sightings before that in the area, any anything like that, correct?

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Speaker 4 1:12:47

Yes, the fact that the Mothman sightings really kind of stopped occurring right around the time the bridge collapsed, or right before that, many people do associate the Mothman with the tragedy of the Silver Bridge collapse. And a lot of that was, was that idea was kind of initiated by John Keel, author of The Mothman Prophecies, who we just mentioned, and also a colleague of his, named Gary Barker, who was a UFO author, who wrote a book called The Silver Bridge in 1970 and he was probably the first one to publicly link those things, and then John Keel did as well, you know. And we, you know, if we talk about some of these similar creatures in antiquity, which I'm happy to do, yes, there are traditions of winged human like creatures being considered harbingers or omens of cataclysmic events and things like that.

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Speaker 1 1:13:42

Let's do get into that for a second, because I think that's important to kind of cuss bomb before I bring up my next question. So,

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Speaker 4 1:13:51

yeah, well, an example, an older old example, would be Pazuzu, which was in a Syrian, the wing demon in Assyrian, you know, mythology, Pazuzu. Yeah. You got Pazuzu on. Yeah. That was, what was that? 3000 years ago, or something, you know, 20 503,000 years ago, the ancient Assyrians had a Pazuzu, which was typically depicted as in your figurine, as a human like form with a dog head, four wings, and typically his right hand is up in this position. Like a lot of Mythological Beings, Pazuzu had a duality in nature. It was considered to be a harbinger or omen of, you know, famine, pestilence, bad weather and things like that. Occasionally, Pazuzu could also be a hero if he was driving another evil force into the underworld or whatever. But that's a very old example. And then you know, in more modern times you have, for example, in Irish and Scottish folklore, you have the Banshee and Scree. Uh. Respectively. And those are also winged creatures that are said to appear right before a tragedy. There's an old story from the the Battle of Culloden. More you know, hundreds of Jacobite soldiers were slaughtered right before right after. This winged creature supposedly flew over this Scree, flew over the

battlefield. And then, as you know, in like in Mexican Texas folklore, we have things like Lechuza, which is a shape shifting witch, and owls in general. In many cultures, the appearance of an owl outside the window is considered to be, you know, a premonition of death or illness,

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Speaker 1 1:15:38

yep. Same with hearing an owl. Who?

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Speaker 4 1:15:42

Yeah, so there are these recurring themes of winged harbingers that appear in the sky. Now, there are some, also some that have to be kind of discounted in the movie The Mothman Prophecies, which came out in 2002 a lot of folks have seen that with Richard Gere and, yeah, Laura Lenny, you know, they make mention of the moth, a Mothman like figure appearing before the Chernobyl nuclear accident, the black bird of Chernobyl. Now, that was completely made up for the movie, but has kind of become ingrained into the Mothman mythology, to the point where a lot of people now believe that that happened. Other fictional accounts, or a Mothman, like creatures being seen before 911 before the towers collapsed, or before a great hurricane in Galveston, and those types of stories. So a lot of those, we have to kind of take with a grain of salt. But there is, there is an underlying theme, or current or motif of things, like Mothman appearing before a tragedy.

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Speaker 1 1:16:42

Interesting. And of course, you know the the very long history of protectorate, beings that that are winged, like gargoyles, things like

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Speaker 4 1:16:52

that. The Kalu in ancient Sumerian mythology and gargoyles. You're right again. It's that duality of nature. So you know, Garuda in Hindu and Buddhist mythology, sometimes they are enemies, demons to be feared. Other times they can be protectors or helpers,

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Speaker 1 1:17:09

yeah, yeah. And, and, you know, even the, the interesting case right up there where you're at now, The Jersey Devil, you know, whenever, whenever you start looking at that and the concepts behind that, it's, I mean, of course, the the lore behind that is totally different, with somebody being cursed by a witch all kinds of things, and the the offspring becoming what The Jersey Devil is. But when you're talking about wing humanoids that are stalking people by night.

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1:17:42



Yeah, that's right up there in that same neck of the woods.

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**Speaker 4 1:17:45**

Yeah, I did include The Jersey Devil in the book. Admittedly, it's not the most humanoid looking creature based on the archetype, archetypal descriptions. You kind of nailed the story, the legend back in 1735, supposedly a mother leads, who was this poor, destitute woman that lived in the Pine Barrens of southern New Jersey. She already had 12 children, and she became pregnant with a 13th, and she was a widow, or something like that. So basically, when she gave birth to this 13th child, she cursed it, and it spawned wings and turned into this horrible monster. So there you have, there you've got a nice illustration there of the Nelson Evans sighting of The Jersey Devil, which occurred on January 9, 1909 according to Mr. And Mrs. Nelson Evans, they watched this creature gallivanting on the roof of their shed for several minutes. They said it was about three and a half feet tall, kangaroo shaped body with long legs, bat like wings, a long head or muzzle, and, you know, glowing eyes, some moth man or some sorry, some Jersey Devil light. Witnesses also described, you know, horns. And, of course, it had this long tail, like a forked tail, kind of like a devil's tail. So that's the kind of a chimera or a gargoyle, which you just mentioned. But there are a lot of similarities I feel between The Jersey Devil mythos and things like Mothman, because you did have, you know, first of all, you have an impossible creature, that's the first thing, with wings flitting about. And then many of the encounters are hyper aggressive at According to one account, The Jersey Devil melted some railroad tracks when it blew fire on them. It attacked a trolley car full of people. It killed a dog. It, you know, it was a, you know, a very nasty sort of creature. And then you have all these weird elements associated with it, the stories of a curse and things of that nature. And you actually have a specific place kind of associated with it too. You know, the Mothman, of course, is associated with the TNT area in Point Pleasant The Jersey Devil is always seen in an inner around. The Pine Barrens area of southern New Jersey, in that forested area there so

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**Speaker 1 1:20:04**

and granted I have, I have, and this was part of my question was, of course, could, could the Mothman be animal? And I have, I have always posited that, you know, 1861 was when an American biologist categorized the hammer headed bat. And it awfully, awful lot looks like a Jersey Devil, you know. So if he would have brought a sample back, a couple few samples back, something like that, for study, or anything like that, and they got loose, yeah. I mean, that's possible, maybe, maybe not even probable, but possible, to be able to explain The Jersey Devil, at least in the in the eyes of biology, what about what about Mothman?

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**Speaker 4 1:20:50**

Now that's a great a lot of people have brought up that weird, striking similarity between a hammerhead bat and The Jersey Devil. Sketches there. The only thing I would argue against that, of course, is that the Hammerhead bat is very much a tropical, equatorial species that lives in very warm environments. I doubt it would thrive during the winter in New Jersey, exactly. But you know, as with a lot of these cryptids and weird creatures, a lot of times we're dealing with a composite identity, meaning that there are different things that kind of get lumped together. So perhaps a misidentification of a known species is possible. One thing I like



to point out about the Mothman. I just mentioned that it was referred to as the bird early on by the newspapers, and in fact, a local biology professor named Robert Smith, no not the singer from the cure, although that would have been cool, claimed that he thought the sightings were of a species known as a Sandhill Crane, which is a *grues canadensis*. Is the Latin which is a five foot tall, gray bird with a red blotch on its head, but very un Mothman, like when you look at its long, skinny legs and long neck and stuff. But there are, there is a history of Big Bird or Thunderbird sightings in West Virginia as well. Christopher, yeah, I have an account from the 1890s from Webster County, West Virginia. According to stories, there was a giant eagle like bird, very nasty and smelly that was attacking livestock in that particular area and was ultimately dispatched by a farmer or rancher. And then in the 1920s I have an account. I interviewed the grandson of a gentleman who claimed that he encountered a Thunderbird in Mingo County, West Virginia. In the 1920s he was riding a work detail in the back of a pickup truck on a logging road in this giant, massive bird swooped down on him. So we have those accounts. So there is a tradition of Big Bird accounts in West Virginia already, and in Ohio, which is nearby. And then you also have one particular Mothman witness I'd like to reference is a guy named Thomas Ury on November 25 1966 10 days after the Scarborough mallet sighting, he had a daytime sighting of something as he was driving into Point Pleasant in the morning. And he was a young shoe salesman at the time, headed to work, and he claimed that this giant bird swooped over the trees and kind of like circled over his car, you know, few 100 feet in the air. And he said that it was like way larger than any bird that ever was known to exist. You know, 1520, foot wingspan. And he always stuck with that description, even up until the very end. In latter years, he was a speaker sometimes at the Mothman festival in West Virginia. And he would always tell people I did not what I saw was not humanoid. It was a massive bird, unknown bird species of some kind. And he was actually a little bit ticked off at John Keel, because John Keel had misrepresented his description in Mothman Prophecies book and described it as a humanoid thing with big, red glowing eyes. And he said, I never said any of that. And he felt like, oh, wow, yeah. So he always wanted to kind of set the record straight that what he saw was definitively a monster bird. It was not a human. So we do have a little bit of, you know, kind of gravity, yeah, a little bit we can talk about that too. As much as I admire John Keel, and a lot of people love his book and his research, he was kind of found out to be a bit of a storyteller and embellisher in later years. So we have to keep that in mind when we read his books and his research

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Speaker 1 1:24:34

well, well. And you know, especially whenever you look at the fact of I mean, he was, he was a newspaper reporter. That's what he did for a living. So there, there is a way in which you write to sell newspapers, you know, where sure you're using fact and things like that. But there's also some conjecture in there as well, and sometimes a healthy dose of conjecture to lead the Reader along somewhere. You know, that's true, and that it, it is a specific style of writing. And yes, when, when applied to, and I wouldn't even necessarily say that he was, quote, researching anything more than article material or anything like that, you know, I don't think he was on, I don't, I don't think he was a quote field researcher in that kind of way, you know, definite investigative researcher, getting, getting stories, compiling them, things like that. But once again, to add embellishment in order to sell.

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Speaker 4 1:25:40

Yeah, that's true. Now I do know some I never had the honor of meeting John Keel, and I'm

certainly not here to disparage his no media reputation or anything, but I have spoken to people that that did know him, and you know, he blamed a lot of that embellishment stuff on his editors. So he said that, you know, it's, it's a lot of times that was the thing the case, where they would go through and be editing the book and, well, let's touch the size, not that dissimilar from a lot of the TV shows that we see now, where the producers maybe step in and say, well, let's make this a little more interesting or exciting for the audience, because it is ultimately entertainment. Yeah, absolutely, kind of, you kind of hit on a key point there. So the other thing we have to point out about Kiel is, you know, he was obviously a very colorful person, personality, and he had a little bit of a confirmation bias, because he was coming from more of a UFO background initially, and then he, you know, he also had some interest in demonology and different topics like that. He had kind of a 40 in view, if your listeners, I'm sure are familiar with Charles Ford, who, kind of, in the early 20th century, early 20th century, authored many books about, you know, anomalous phenomenon. And you know, the the 40 in view is that, you know, all of these things might be interconnected somehow. Yeah, whether you're talking about UFOs or spirit phenomenon or cryptids or whatever. So there's still a lot of people that kind of view it that way. And



1:27:09

you know, I'm open minded, but,



Speaker 1 1:27:12

and I love your open mind, especially as somebody who really comes at things, and especially your research from a very biological point of view and scientific point of view. So it's one of those to hear you say, supernatural is, is interesting. Ken, it's fascinating to me to hear you resolve to the fact of like, this seems to be some kind of supernatural phenomena that that is tied to the Mothman.



Speaker 4 1:27:49

So I certainly have a lot of colleagues that are, you know, do that kind of research, absolutely. So I think there's something to it. You know, what I often tell people when I'm discussing this kind of weird stuff is that, you know, I I've seen a door slam by itself in a so called haunted house in Jefferson, Texas. I've seen a black Triangle UFO fly over Charles mill lake in Ohio back in 2000 fours. So, I mean, those things, you know, in my mind, there's a valid phenomenon going on that, you know, warrants investigation. But I'm not necessarily about, you know, trying to find connections between these different things. I think all of these phenomenon, phenomena kind of stand alone in their own merits. You know, they kind of have a lot going for them, yeah? But, you know, they're interesting aside here, Christopher, because I'm working on a new presentation I'll be doing this year called the Sasquatch is an undiscovered species, and I do want to sort of challenge a lot of these ideas about Bigfoot UFO connections. And what I've found so far is that the very first reference that I can find is by John Keel in his 1970 book, strange creatures from time and space, he does a chapter on Bigfoot, and I think he calls it abominable, swamp slob. The chapter kind of funny, but he's the first one to suggest, hey, is there a connection between Bigfoot and UFOs and then in 1972 just two years later, UFO researcher Jerome Clark and cryptozoologist Lauren Coleman co authored an article in the

flying saucer review talking about Bigfoot and the possible Bigfoot UFO connection. And then the following year, in 1973 we had a flap of sightings in Pennsylvania, down there in like, Westmoreland County, and stuff that, you know, investigated by Stan Gordon have some really weird Bigfoot UFO type cases. So I think that whole idea kind of spawned in the early 70s. And then, if you remember a lot of those UFO magazines from the 1970s Christopher, a lot of them would put Bigfoot May. Magazine and things like that, yeah. So, I mean, it just became, I think it became because of that influence of a lot of that time period and a lot of those kind of early UFO publications and things. I think that's where that whole idea has kind of sprung from, because I there's really not a lot of evidence that those two things are connected, in my opinion,