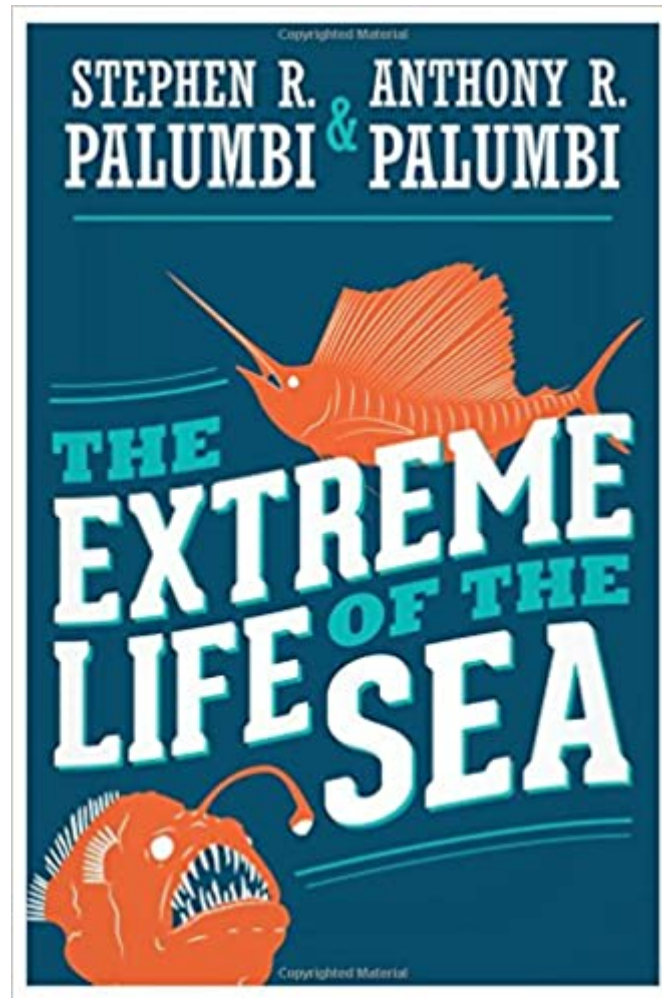




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The Extreme Life Of The Sea



Synopsis

The ocean teems with life that thrives under difficult situations in unusual environments. The Extreme Life of the Sea takes readers to the absolute limits of the ocean world—the fastest and deepest, the hottest and oldest creatures of the oceans. It dives into the icy Arctic and boiling hydrothermal vents—and exposes the eternal darkness of the deepest undersea trenches—to show how marine life thrives against the odds. This thrilling book brings to life the sea's most extreme species, and tells their stories as characters in the drama of the oceans. Coauthored by Stephen Palumbi, one of today's leading marine scientists, The Extreme Life of the Sea tells the unforgettable tales of some of the most marvelous life forms on Earth, and the challenges they overcome to survive. Modern science and a fluid narrative style give every reader a deep look at the lives of these species. The Extreme Life of the Sea shows you the world's oldest living species. It describes how flying fish strain to escape their predators, how predatory deep-sea fish use red searchlights only they can see to find and attack food, and how, at the end of her life, a mother octopus dedicates herself to raising her batch of young. This wide-ranging and highly accessible book also shows how ocean adaptations can inspire innovative commercial products—such as fan blades modeled on the flippers of humpback whales—and how future extremes created by human changes to the oceans might push some of these amazing species over the edge.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of American Association for the Advancement of Science's Books for General Audiences and Young Adults 2014

"This gem of a book by marine biologist Stephen Palumbi and his son, science writer Anthony Palumbi, finds enough weirdness in the ocean to feed creativity for generations to come. . . . The Palumbis' writing is a wonderful mix of meticulous science and creative panache. . . . A joy whether read at one sitting, or dipped in and out of to prolong the pleasure."--Callum Roberts, *Nature*

"Marine biologist Stephen R. Palumbi and writer Anthony R. Palumbi survey an impressive catch of extreme oceanic species, from the oldest to the deepest-dwelling. . . . A brilliant use of the rich store of research into Earth's largest habitat."--*Nature*

"From 'immortal' jellyfish that age in reverse, to zombie bone worms that eat the skeletons of dead whales, the ocean is full of bizarre characters. Biologist Stephen Palumbi and his science writer son, Anthony, profile the most unusual specimens. Chapters cover the smallest, the oldest, the hottest and the coldest species, among others, and the landscape of strange creatures is brought to life by charming writing."--Clara Moskowitz, *Scientific American*

"The Palumbis probe life in the depths of the oceans and in tide waters in successive chapters spotlighting the long-lived Bowhead whale; sea species that adapt to extremely high temperatures and others to cold; clownfish, which change gender, becoming male or female as circumstances dictate; and much more. The authors end with a warning that the oceans contain a complex ecology in which each species 'thrives in its easily disrupted specialized niche.' . . . A sparkling appreciation of the wonderful variety of marine life that also communicates an important message."--Kirkus Reviews

"The book reads like an action-adventure novel. . . . This approach is a pleasant departure from dull textbook prose. It will delight readers who lack scientific credentials but yearn to understand the diversity of life in the oceans. The text demystifies, mystifies, and amazes."--Geraldine Richards, *ForeWord Reviews*

"Highlighting the strangest cases in animate sea life, marine ecologist S.R. Palumbi exudes a palpable and contagious sense of delight as he enlists his writer son's help to fill the 'gap in character development' in the story of the ocean's robust yet fragile ecosystems. . . . By showing how each creature is so tightly tied to its environment, the authors are able to effectively demonstrate how small human-driven changes to the oceans disrupt a complex system developed over millions of years. The Palumbis encourage a childlike curiosity by showing us the amazing diversity of life down below, and perhaps our inner children will pester our grownup selves into doing what needs to be done to keep these habitats intact."--*Publishers Weekly*

"A giddy scientific tour of weird underwater life."--Richard Conniff, *TakePart*

"The Palumbis give us the sense that although some parts of nature are more romantically wondrous than others--those sponges, giant squids doing epic battle with sperm whales--it is the variety that is

wonderful."--Owen Richardson, Sydney Morning Herald

"The whole safari is conducted with a verve and joy that only comes from a deep love of the subject, a life-long dedication to its exploration and a true communicator's sense of the *mot juste*. This experience and range means the Palumbis can write comfortably about research and researchers, and about the physical and mental exploration of the ocean's ecology. . . . [A] splendid book . . . a dynamic text."--Adrian Barnett, New Scientist

"Stephen and Anthony Palumbi--father and son; biologist and science writer--are brilliant guides to this realm about which we as a species have been remarkably incurious. . . . The Palumbis père et fils give us the new stories in succinct prose beautifully freighted with apt similes and metaphors."--Peter Forbes, Independent

"The Extreme Life of the Sea is less narrative and more an enthusiastic sharing of cool things in the sea, which are loosely tied together in thematic sections. It is not, however, just a collection of 'gee whiz' facts. The compelling vignettes help to convey broader concepts of science and nature with excitement and enthusiasm. . . . It reminds us that science and the natural world are really cool."--Josh Witten, Finch and the Pea

"Highlighting the strangest cases of marine life, the authors give us a hint of the ocean's robust yet fragile ecosystems. . . . In their delightful, vivid description about the struggle for existence in the sea, the Palumbis do manage to communicate a vital message: even the extreme conditions in the deep sea are not immune from disruptive and destructive human greed."--Wan Lixin, Shanghai Daily

"Who doesn't like reading about the fantastical creatures that stalk the inky depths of the world's oceans? In *The Extreme Life of the Sea*, it's the marine environment's superlatives that are on display."--Scientist Magazine

"The uniqueness of this book is due to the combination of a novel's flair utilizing figurative language and analogies with scientific concepts. . . . The authors seek to help us understand the value, complexity, and vastness of the ocean and the importance of consequences of their actions. I think that this would be an excellent book in a seminar for high school students and biology majors in college."--Jean Worsley, NSTA Recommends

"[The Palumbis] have written about some of the most alien creatures you will ever encounter, and for many of them it is far more pleasant to encounter them on these pages than in real life. Yet as strange as they are, many of them are vital to keeping the oceans in balance, or as indicators of oceans out of balance, and so we ought to know them better. Brightly written, with footnotes but without ponderousness, the Palumbis' book succeeds in inspiring what they say they in their preface that they set out to produce: 'a sense of guiltless wonder about how wonderful the ocean's life actually is.'"--Rob Hardy, Columbus Dispatch

"[A] stimulating and enjoyable read."--Diver Magazine

"Steve Palumbi has got a gift for summarizing complicated issues related to his field, making them both relatable and entertaining. . . . *The Extreme Life of the Sea* plunges readers into the world of 'the fastest and

deepest, the hottest and oldest creatures of the oceans.' . . . At the heart of the book, though, the Palumbis stress how marine creatures have managed to adapt and thrive in some of the most punishing environments imaginable. Obviously, there's plenty we can learn from them."--Crystal Chow, San Jose Mercury News

"Extremophiles are fun! Basically, they're the biggest, smallest, hardiest and definitely the oddest bunch of beasties to be found anywhere on this planet. The Palumbi father and son team--one scientist and one writer--bring us this fun little book on the extremophiles of the sea. . . . The best part of the book is that the authors do more than just recite oddball trivia, they really tell the stories of the animals in the book. . . . This is a solid book, very informative and very entertaining but with a strong message."--John Dupuis, Confessions of a Science Librarian

"This engaging book eloquently captures the long history and immense variety of life in the world's oceans, and provides a glimpse into what makes the seas so special. . . . Better than science fiction, this book is filled with amazing stories about amazing creatures. . . . Sweetly enthusiastic, enlightening and witty and, at times, inspired. . . . Regardless of your level of knowledge, this quietly joyful and informative book has something of value for everyone."--GrrlScientist

"Drawing on decades of scientific research as well as a knack for storytelling, the authors convey what happens at the ocean depths without sugarcoating it. . . . It doesn't just shed light on some of the most mysterious workings of the sea; it does so with vivid prose while managing to convey scientists' current understanding of how and why these phenomena operate. If that doesn't make people more invested in preserving the ocean, it's hard to know what will."--Juliet Eilperin, Washington Post

"A rare hybrid: a funny and easy-to-read book full of accurate science."--Susan Scott, Honolulu Star-Advertiser

"Marine biologists as well as lay readers with more than a casual interest in marine science will find this an engrossing discussion of what lies beneath the waters, how it's adapted, and threats to this adaptation process."--James A. Cox, California Bookwatch

"Extensive notes and an index round out this fascinating account, enthusiastically recommended for public and college library collections alike."--James A. Cox, Midwest Book Review

"Simply a tour de force, a splendid must read for any natural history enthusiast."--Gabriel Thoumi, Mongabay.com

"This book about sea creatures is perfect for the curious person with limited time for reading. . . . [T]he authors investigate all sorts of oddities, including whale falls, the bizarre sex life of angler fish, and the amazing aerodynamic design of humpback whale fins. They have conducted research in all sorts of odd corners of marine science and are wonderfully up-to-date, and end their text the necessary final chapter on how humans might be affecting all this diversity."--Choice

"While packed with scientific information, this book is an easy read. The average chapter is just over ten pages long, and each is divided into clearly labeled

subsections. It is fairly generously illustrated and written in a light, conversational style--as seen by the references to Volkswagen Beetles and the population of India. These characteristics make this an easy book to dip into, but once you get started, you'll probably want to immerse yourself."--Tom Baker, Japan News

"The chapters are informative and interesting and altogether well written."--Tom Fenchel, Marine Biology Research

"Every page of this wonderful book is filled with nuggets of information. It becomes quite clear that we all must strive to protect this vast pool of life that enables our own lives to continue."--Explorers Journal

"One of the most informative books I've ever read."--Al Ristori, Newark Star-Ledger

"Only the strong survive, it is said, but *The Extreme Life of the Sea* makes a good case for the strange, the efficient, and the ugly. . . . [A]n engaging blend. Stanford professor Stephen serves up the heavier science of DNA and physiology, seasoned with a sprightly narrative, some scene-setting and humor from novelist Anthony. *Extreme Life* uses Guinness Record-like chapters to discuss the smallest, the deepest, the shallowest and the coldest marine life-forms."--Melissa Davis, Seattle Times

"[B]eautifully descriptive and refreshingly free of technical terms. Here is a book that will be enjoyed by anyone with an interest in the biology of the seas, whatever their level of scientific education."--Anthony O'Toole, Sherkin Comment

"This is a scientifically rich book that is also a good read and would be appropriate for a wide range of audiences."--AAAS

"[W]ell worth purchasing. . . . [*The Extreme Life of the Sea*] is a fascinating read for anyone interested in the seas and their creatures from the earliest ages to the present."--Al Ristori, Newark Star-Ledger

"Incredibly accessible and frankly a joy to read. . . . It is refreshing to see writing that is trying, successfully, to convey challenging biological concepts with fun and humour. . . . It is a great and enjoyable book that will inspire readers and leave them with an incredible sense of appreciation of the natural world."--Dr. Alan Jamieson, Underwater Technology

"The oceans are our most precious treasure, full of creatures and stories more fantastic than any science fiction. *The Extreme Life of the Sea* is a fascinating exploration of this vast mysterious universe. Wonderfully written, it will grab you from page one and carry you all the way through. A must-read for everyone."--Philippe Cousteau

"This book brims with fascinating tales of life in the sea, told with freshness, wit, and verve. Simply wonderful."--Callum Roberts, author of *The Ocean of Life: The Fate of Man and the Sea*

"*The Extreme Life of the Sea* will reignite your fascination with how much life lives beneath the waves. This is extreme-ly good reading."--Randy Olson, author of *Don't Be Such a Scientist: Talking Substance in an Age of Style*

"What better way to learn about life in the ocean--and how we are changing it--than through stories of blind zombie worms, immortal jellyfish, and unicorns of the sea? *The Extreme Life of the Sea* is an insightful book that inspires

awe and wonder about our ocean, and brilliantly shows us the immense possibilities of life on Earth."--Enric Sala, explorer-in-residence, National Geographic

"The Extreme Life of the Sea is filled with wonder and appreciation for what lives in that most mysterious realm on Earth. We travel to the furthest points of the conceptual compass--the biggest, smallest, oldest, fastest, and hottest. By crisscrossing these polarities, we sense how far life has come and see the extremes to which life has gone. Pure pleasure."--Carl Safina, author of *The View from Lazy Point: A Natural Year in an Unnatural World*

"The Extreme Life of the Sea reveals some of the amazing aspects of ocean life and why we should care. This accessible book will inspire a broad audience--and with any luck help to inspire change. The authors have done a superb job of communicating much of what is special about the ocean."--Paul V. R. Snelgrove, author of *Discoveries of the Census of Marine Life: Making Ocean Life Count*

This is a fascinating book. I couldn't put it down. Palumbi's writing is nothing short of beautiful--lyrical, easy to understand, and profoundly moving. Every page contains new and intriguing information about the nautilus, the giant squid, the humpback whale, octopus, worms that live at boiling sea temperatures, creatures that make their own light and more. If you are a diver or snorkeler, as I am, you will learn so much more about the undersea world you love. And if you're not, perhaps you'll be tempted. This is a book to keep and to read again and pass on to children or friends. Writing teachers, take note: This is what informational writing can--and should--be. Forget boring reports. Palumbi shows readers how to make information exciting.

Very fascinating. Would have liked more photos or links to photos. Enjoyed the history lesson but it bogged down into show and tell by just describing various ocean life. Not cohesive in the end

Read the chapter on the smallest things in the sea, you will never see the ocean the same way again. A dense but rewarding insight into the critical role of ocean health now and in the clouded and mysterious future is presented with all sizes and shapes of ocean delights. Something for everyone's taste.

Written with a style that makes it hard to put down, this book is filled with information about extremely fascinating sea life, much of which I was totally unaware. One of the best books I've read this year.

This well written and witty exploration of our oceans informs, entertains and energizes providing new insights about the evolution of complex ecologies ending with strongly persuasive arguments for immediate action to address climate change, especially CO2. Read it and get to work! Please...

I loved "geeking out" in this book. Almost read it in one sitting. Really novel, really well written.

Thanks to the Palumbi's for sharing a lifetime of work!

This father and son team clearly love the sea and its unusual denizens and share their affection and knowledge with this easy-to-comprehend book that is packed with fascinating information. You'll want to become a marine biologist.

I saw a clip for this book in a science magazine and it looked interesting. The book is very informative and interesting and easy to read.

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