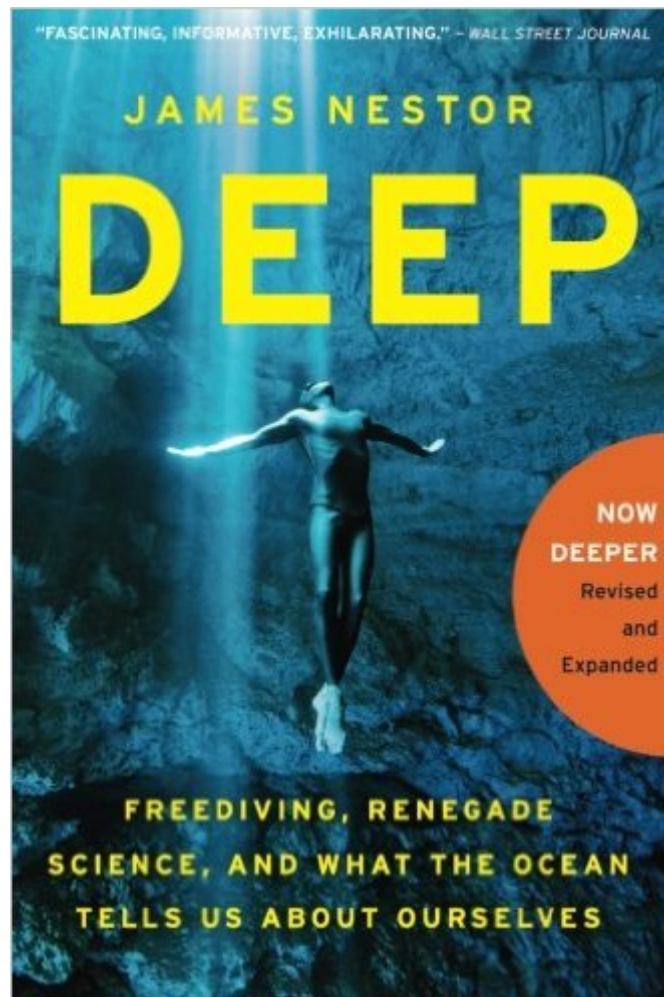


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Deep: Freediving, Renegade Science, And What The Ocean Tells Us About Ourselves



Synopsis

New York Times Book Review's Editors' Choice • An Best Science Book of 2014 • Scientific American's Recommended Read • "Fascinating, informative, exhilarating." • "Wall Street Journal" Deep is a voyage from the ocean's surface to its darkest trenches, the most mysterious places on Earth. Fascinated by the sport of freediving "in which competitors descend great depths on a single breath" James Nestor embeds with a gang of ocean-going extreme athletes and renegade researchers. He finds whales that communicate with other whales hundreds of miles away, sharks that swim in unerringly straight lines through pitch-black waters, and other strange phenomena. Most illuminating of all, he learns that these abilities are reflected in our own remarkable, and often hidden, potential "including echolocation, directional sense, and the profound bodily changes humans undergo when underwater. Along the way, Nestor unlocks his own freediving skills as he communes with the pioneers who are expanding our definition of what is possible in the natural world, and in ourselves. "A journey well worth taking." • "David Epstein," New York Times Book Review "Nestor pulls us below the surface into a world far beyond imagining and opens our eyes to these unseen places." • "Dallas Morning News" "This is popular science writing at its best." • "Christian Science Monitor"

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Deep diving as a competitive sport is a nasty business laced with blackouts, bleedouts, and final-outs. Freediving for pleasure is a meditative way to reconnect with nature, the environment,

and our hidden mammalian ancestry. James Nestor narrates sublime benthic passages that extol the hallucinogenic virtues of yoga exercises that prepare your body for breath holds of three minutes plus. Various cultures have dived to procure food for thousands of years, and tales of fifteen-minute submergences abound. Mr. Nestor interviews competitive, recreational, and research divers, takes classes, and begins the struggle to freedive deeper than say ten feet, not as easy as it sounds. Humans activate something called the mammalian dive reflex when we enter the water and our bodies physiologically prepare for submersed deprivation by pooling blood closer to organs. At depth, our lungs can be squeezed down to the size of baseballs without damage. As we go deeper we pare away at the modern layers of evolution exposing our aquatic ancestry, and Nestor sidebars on echolocation and magnetoreception in humans, and the useful side of freediving, as opposed to the numbers racket of the competitive divers who close their eyes and deliberately shut out the marine environment, lest their visual processing power waste precious oxygen. Some oceanographic researchers are getting much closer to cetaceans and sharks without any equipment and hypothesize strange and beautiful spatiotemporal languages that can also see inside their prey, or echo-stun it. Dolphins might be holding two simultaneous 'conversations,' it's all so new and we just don't know. Nestor does it all, venturing forth in a homemade submarine to -2500 feet.

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