

Get ready to dive into Shark Week!

by Chantelle Lee



The annual TV programming on Discovery Channel started Sunday and runs throughout this week until July 13. Here's everything you need to know about the beloved weeklong event: Shark Week.

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Each year, the Discovery Channel holds a weeklong event over the summer dedicated to shark-themed programming. The content was initially devoted to conservation efforts and addressing misconceptions about sharks. But some experts have criticized the event, saying that it focuses on the sensationalism of shark attacks rather than on science and conservation. There are 21 programs featured in this year's Shark Week, including *Monster Hammerheads: Species X*, which airs Tuesday at 10 p.m. EST and is about a potential new species of hammerhead sharks. You can find the festive week's full schedule on the Discovery Channel's website.

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Caged in Fear aired on the Discovery Channel on July 17, 1988. The show was about testing a new motorized cage meant to resist shark attacks. Nine other shows premiered that year. The ratings during the very week in which the episodes of *Caged in Fear* aired almost doubled Discovery Channel's primetime average, according to the network. Because of this great public reception, the Discovery Channel brought back a series of shows about sharks the following year—and it soon became an annual summer event.

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1994 marked the 20th anniversary of best-selling shark novel *Jaws* that inspired the cult-classic film. That's why that year the show got a host: Peter Benchley, the author of the book. Since then, many notable celebrities and conservationists have hosted the event, including Dwayne Johnson, Jason Momoa and Nigel Marven. This year's anchor is John Cena.

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Throughout last year's Shark Week, Discovery ranked as the number one primetime cable network with men and women between the ages of 25 and 54. During the 2023 event, Discovery ranked as the number two primetime network across all of television with men between the ages of 25 and 54. "Shark Week once again proves to be summer's most anticipated programming event," Howard Lee, president of Discovery Networks and TLC, said in a press release last year. "We kept our momentum going each night and attracted a big audience."

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