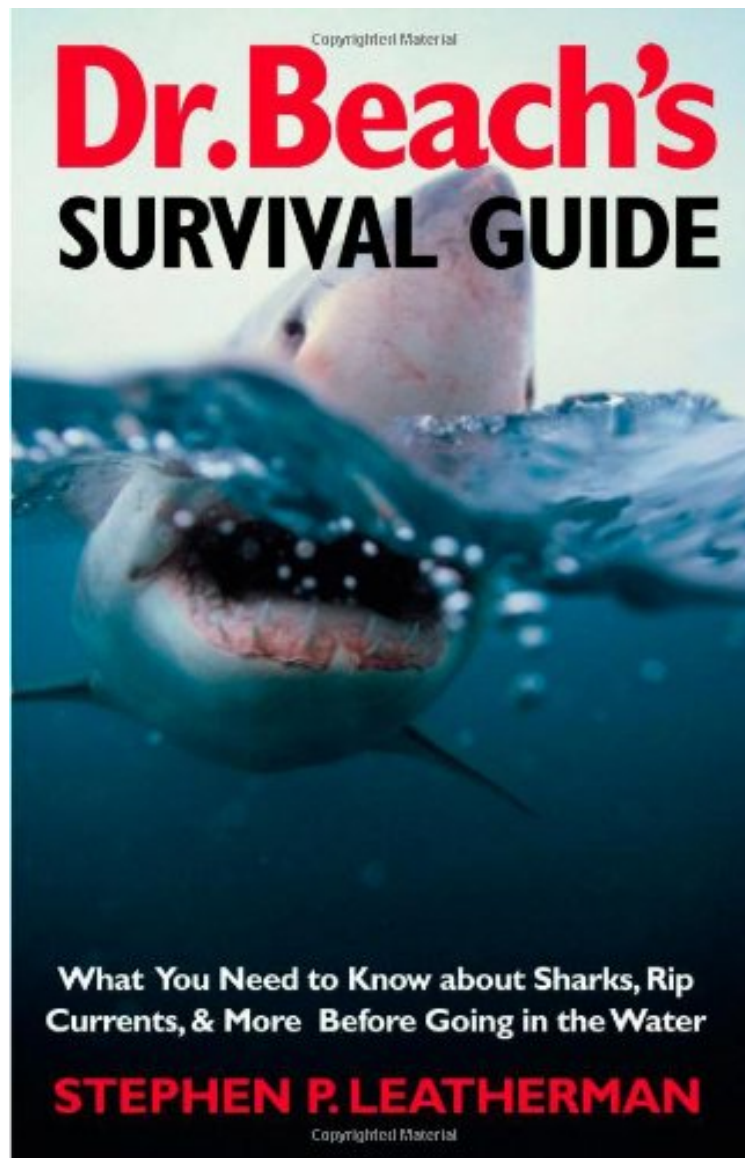


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Dr. Beach's Survival Guide: What You Need to Know about Sharks, Rip Currents, and More Before Going in the Water

Stephen P. Leatherman

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Stephen P. Leatherman : Dr. Beach's Survival Guide: What You Need to Know about Sharks, Rip Currents, and More Before Going in the Water before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dr. Beach's Survival Guide: What You Need to Know about Sharks, Rip Currents, and More Before Going in the Water:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wipeout, Too basic to be of much use. By Magickal Merlin This little book was too brief to really be of much use. It's one of those books, you might get at a tourist shoppe. The reference drawings look cheap, and real pictures would have been better. The beaches mentioned were few and far between. He could have given far more examples of various beaches and dangers surrounding them. He sheds little light on the few beaches suggested. It would have been better if various sharks were pictured and described. Also jellyfish, which ones are poisonous and which harmless edible. Which beaches received top ratings for pollution-free, health and upkeep. The author may have been pressured to write a simple book about beach safety, rather than a weighty erudite one, from his publisher. I can't see how this book immensely helps arenophilic beach-lovers and thalassophilic surfers alike.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. really good info By K. Amos living on a beach and being a surfer for well over 20 years, I already knew a lot of what was in here. I really enjoyed the section on sharks. There's great information on the different types of waves, riptides and what causes them, plus what to do if caught in a rip. Towards the back of the book is a list of various marine animals and first aid tips if an emergency should arise. (For example, would you know what to do if you accidentally stepped on a stingray?) This book should be mandatory reading material for the tourists who come down here to Florida.

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Interesting and useful book By Magellan This book is full of interesting info and useful tidbits about the dangers and hazards of going to the beach. Some of this I already knew, but much of it was new. For example, when I was growing up in L.A. as a beach bum, I learned that you can spot riptides by standing on the cliff or getting a little elevation, such as by climbing up a lifeguard stand, and looking for a triangle of white water pointing out to sea. They could be anywhere from 50 feet wide to hundreds of yards wide, but they were detectable if you knew what to look for. I also learned that most sharks don't like the murky water where the waves are breaking and stirring up the sand, and to head for that if there was trouble. Better yet, just get out of the water. I learned how to recognize each shark species by their fins and which ones to get out of the water if they appeared, such as bluefins, which are also known man-eaters in addition to the infamous great whites. Interestingly enough, technically great whites are only "man-biters" rather than man-eaters. They usually bite humans by mistake looking for seals, their favorite food, and so spit it out. Of course, that's not much consolation to the person at that point. Some of these attacks are because a swimmer in a wet suit looks a lot like a seal with their dark, blubbery skin. It's also probably not a good idea to decorate the bottom and sides of your sea kayak with pictures of seals, as I saw once. :-)

Having been at the beach many times and body-surfed some pretty big waves occasionally, I've had a few harrowing experiences myself. I once had the experience of being in an undertow that actually pulled me underneath the water, but only for about 5 seconds. It was still a little scary. One time I stupidly tried to ride an 18-foot wave and almost got killed because the wave was what the Aussies call "a dumper" and it smashed me on the bottom. You should avoid fast-breaking dumpers because of that. I think the biggest wave that's safe to ride for most people is probably about 10 feet, unless you've got a belly board, which can outrun the break. Wearing one swim fin (yes, only one is needed, because it's inconvenient to have two fins on) is a trick experienced body-surfers use, that's also helpful for catching waves. Back in the 60's, I saw TV footage of this crazy guy belly-boarding 30-foot waves at Waimea. Talk about guts. The beach that's the king of the riptides is Sunset Beach in Hawaii. Many people have died there because of rips, and it's capable of pulling you under, too. Once it pulled 3 surfers under at the same time, who unfortunately drowned. One thing to remember is if you "wipe out," be sure to tuck and roll up into a ball. One thing that happens to tourists and neophytes at Sunset is that when they go "over the falls," they don't tuck and then get slammed face first into the bottom, breaking their necks. This happened recently to a young couple that was on their honeymoon, and it's happened a number of times to inexperienced swimmers and body-surfers before. So be careful about that. Speaking of getting pulled under, I once had the idea for a little invention, a small oxygen cylinder that would weigh maybe 5 or 10 pounds max but that would contain enough air to allow you to breathe for a few minutes, if you were going swimming or body-surfing, especially at a potentially dangerous beach like Sunset. Not sure if it would be practical, but I never did follow up on it to find out. But there were a number of times when I wiped out on a big wave and didn't get to take a full breath before I got slammed under, and then I got held down for 20-30 seconds or so, or had to stay down that long because of other breaking waves, and I was almost out of air a couple of times before I was able to surface, and that would have been nice to have. Another odd fact is that the reason why your feet itch after a day at the beach, at least on western U.S. beaches. It's not because of the hot sand and the salt water. It's because of the pieces of jellyfish, especially man-'o-war, that wash up on the beach, and can still irritate your feet even after days on the sand. Well, if I haven't scared you off completely from going to the beach again, this is a great little book to learn about all the hazards and dangers. Good luck and happy beach-going!

Designed for beachgoers, this guide is filled with surprising information about how to avoid dangers both large and small while at the beach. Stephen Leatherman (otherwise known as Dr Beach) introduces the gamut of beach hazards, from sharks to rip currents to jellyfish, revealing which dangers should be of greatest concern and how best to minimize their risks. His scientifically sound advice, interspersed with facts and anecdotes, should make this work a useful reference for the travellers and vacationers who visit the ocean shore every year. There are practical answers to

these intriguing questions and more: which US beach records the most shark attacks each year?; which species of shark is the most dangerous to people?; why are rip currents the most deadly beach threat?; how can rips be avoided?; what should you do if caught in a rip?; can lightning strikes at the beach be predicted?; is a stingray dangerous?; when is ocean water pollution likely to be worst?; what types of waves are threatening and how can they be detected?; what is the danger of a red tide?; and how can swimmers avoid contact with jellyfish?

A true seaside read designed to save your life. -- Carolanne Griffith Roberts, Florida Living
From the Inside Flap Here, from the nation's most renowned beach expert, is the first complete guide to beach safety. Stephen P. Leatherman (a.k.a. Dr. Beach) introduces the gamut of beach hazards --- from sharks to rip currents to jellyfish -- revealing which dangers should be of greatest concern and how best to minimize their risks. His scientifically sound advice, interspersed with fascinating facts and anecdotes, makes this book a perfect reference for the millions of travelers and vacationers who visit the ocean shore every year. Answers to these intriguing questions and more: -Which U.S. beach records the most shark attacks each year? -Which species of shark is the most dangerous to people? -Why are rip currents the most deadly beach threat? -How can rips be avoided? -What should you do if caught in a rip? -Can lightning strikes at the beach be predicted? -Is a stingray dangerous? -When is ocean water pollution likely to be worst? -What types of waves are threatening and how can they be detected? -What is the danger of a red tide? -How can swimmers avoid contact with jellyfish? "From sharks to rip currents, read this book for fun stories, but share it to save lives." (Jean-Michel Cousteau, president, Ocean Futures Society) "For those of us who love the shore, "Dr. Beach's Survival Guide" is a thoughtful, thorough book to pack with the suntan lotion this summer. The real payoff is his compelling argument that rip currents, not sharks, are the real coastal menace." (Keith Bellows, editor-in-chief, National Geographic Traveler) "Professor Leatherman's broad knowledge of beach and coastal issues gives him vast credibility. This book is a must-read for every beachgoer!" (Christopher Evans, Surfrider Foundation-U.S.A.)
About the Author
Stephen P. Leatherman, popularly known as Dr. Beach, announces his "Top Beaches List" on national television every Memorial Day weekend (www.DrBeach.org). He is chair, professor, and director, International Hurricane Center and Laboratory for Coastal Research, Florida International University, and the author or editor of fifteen books on coastal science.