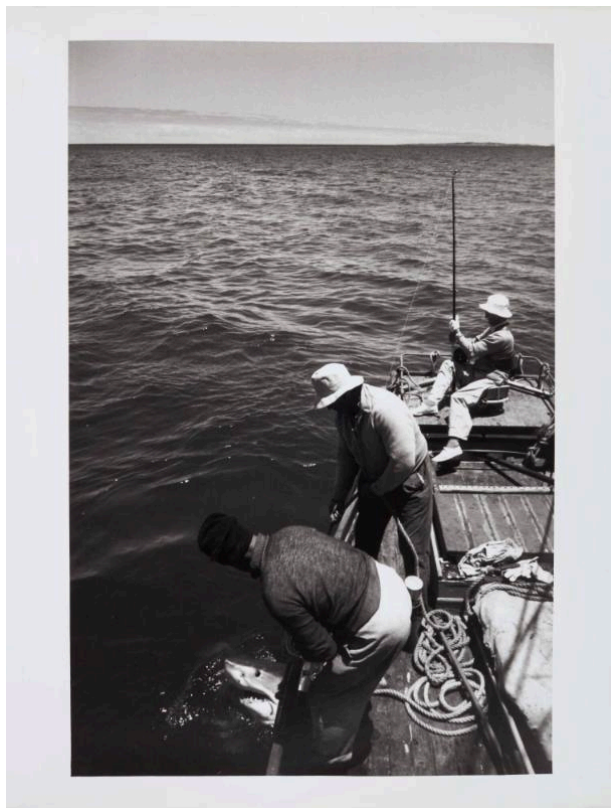


Basic Detail Report



00019105

Title

Fishing for Great White sharks

Date

1957 - 1958

Primary Maker

David Potts

Medium

Silver gelatin photographic print on fibre base paper

Dimensions

Image: 305 x 455 mm Overall: 505 x 405 mm, 0.06 kg

Sheet: 405 x 505 mm

Name

Photograph

History

The series of images by David Potts depicts a group of three fishermen hunting seals and angling for white pointer sharks on board a hired 28-foot charter boat called VICTORY off the coast of Ceduna, South Australia. The fishermen were Alfred Dean, a farmer from Mildura and holder of the record (in 1957) for 'capturing the largest fish landed by rod and reel in South Australian waters'- a massive 1150 kilo white pointer shark. Tom Cooper, a long time fishing companion of Dean's and owner of the South Australian brewery 'Coopers'. Ken Puckeridge, a professional fisherman and owner of the VICTORY, one of the largest fishing boats available for charter in the area at the time and also one of the oldest. VICTORY was not specifically fitted for big game fishing and all the essentials such as the fishing chair (a converted tractor seat), gaffs and other equipment were provided by Dean and Cooper. The charter cost £5 per day per person. Potts' images begin with the fishermen hunting seals for bait on the coastal rock ledges near Ceduna. The seals were shot with a .22 rifle and hauled back to the boat where the blubber is removed and sewn around the chain connecting the thick hooks and woven wire trace. The seal livers were removed to bait the hooks and the seal carcasses hung from the aft platform of the boat to settle in the water. A berley (shark bait) trail was created by mixing the seal carcasses with a mixture of putrid bullock's blood and whale oil dripping from a can over the stern. The boat then steered in a wide circle making a sweeping berley trail eventually anchoring in the middle. On the first day at 9am Dean caught a large female white pointer, weighing approximately 816 kilos. The shark was taken ashore, the hooks removed, its stomach slashed open and left to rot on the beach. One hour after it was killed and dismembered the shark's jaws were still able to slam together with great speed and force when Potts touched them. The best day's catch

was four large sharks. The last of these sharks was attacked by the fishermen with a hammer and shot with a rifle. The larger sharks were towed alongside the boat to the weighing station, the smaller sharks were not weighed and were dumped in the shallows of the shore. Potts focuses on a spectacular struggle between a large shark and Dean showing the tremendous effort required to hold the fishing rod and the extraordinary momentum employed by the shark in the water. The shark eventually escaped having straightened out the massive hook.