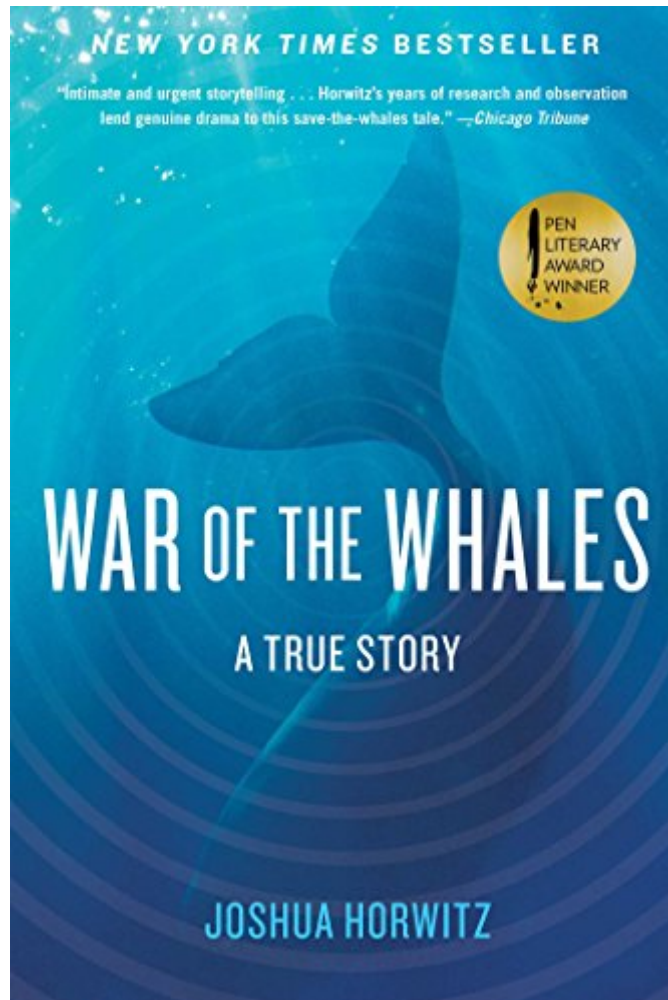


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War Of The Whales: A True Story



Synopsis

“An intimate and urgent storytelling” (Chicago Tribune), a “gripping real-life yarn” (Tampa Bay Chronicle): The remarkable account of two principled men who stand up to the world’s most powerful navy, in defense of whales. Winner of the PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award and a New York Times bestseller. *War of the Whales* is the gripping tale of a crusading attorney who stumbles on one of the US Navy’s best-kept secrets: a submarine detection system that floods entire ocean basins with high-intensity sound—and drives whales onto beaches. As Joel Reynolds launches a legal fight to expose and challenge the Navy program, marine biologist Ken Balcomb witnesses a mysterious mass stranding of whales near his research station in the Bahamas. Investigating this calamity, Balcomb is forced to choose between his conscience and an oath of secrecy he swore to the Navy in his youth. When Balcomb and Reynolds team up to expose the truth behind an epidemic of mass strandings, the stage is set for an epic battle that pits admirals against activists, rogue submarines against weaponized dolphins, and national security against the need to safeguard the ocean environment. Waged in secret military labs and the nation’s highest court, *War of the Whales* is a real-life thriller that combines the best of legal drama, natural history, and military intrigue.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a Navy man, sailor, lover of all things oceanic, and a person who once thought about a career in marine biology, I found Joshua Horwitz's "War of the Whales" to be both fascinating and food for thought. I abhor the image of Navy brass as perpetrators of animal cruelty although I'm convinced, after reading the book, that such behavior in the name of national security is entirely in character and unlikely to change. Marine biologist Ken Balcomb is a fascinating study of a dedicated scientist who is so immersed in his studies that the customary things in life that most people enjoy go unnoticed to him. He doesn't need creature comforts and, in fact, struggles to get the funding to help pay for them or for living a normal life. Although he has two homes in resort locations, neither of which could be considered luxurious, he has been known to eat fresh road-killed rabbits and stays at Motel 6 and eats Pizza Hut when he travels; travails he gladly puts up with to keep his studies funded. Horwitz makes what seems to be an impossible job of making Balcomb's early life fathomable. A weak and skinny kid, Balcomb resolutely builds himself up to a fitness specimen and spends every waking moment outdoors, wading rivers and combing beaches. As a graduate zoology student at UC Davis he gathered horse lungs from regional slaughterhouses for use in the Davis lab. Then he became interested in the whale deconstruction he encountered and became immersed in maggoty and aromatic whale offal as he dug through the garbage bins at a whaling station looking for intact whale lungs to study. After reading of Balcomb's dedication to smelly work, I am happy with my decision to go a different direction.

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