



YOU TEND TO THINK OF THE MOST DREADFUL SITUATIONS. BUT IT TENDS TO BE THE LITTLE THINGS THAT GET YOU. IT'S WALKING TO THE DIVE SITE WHERE YOU FALL DOWN.

| KENNY BROAD, CAVE DIVER |

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CAVE DIVER, ENVIRONMENTAL ANTHROPOLOGIST



In Kenny Broad's line of work, exploring submerged caves and blue holes, one mistake can equal death. He and his team must take every precaution to avoid such dangers as stirring up sediments that can wipe out visibility, succumbing to nausea as they pass through a toxic layer of hydrogen sulfide, or getting lost in maze-like passageways with a limited supply of diving gasses.

The need to study blue holes is urgent, as they are among the least studied and most threatened habitats on Earth. Over 90 percent of the Earth's unfrozen fresh water is in underground aquifers. These systems are a source of drinking water for locals, boast a unique biodiversity of microbial and multicellular life that shed light on the evolution of life, and, due to their unique water chemistry, perfectly preserve skeletal remains of long extinct species and indigenous people. Cave formations such as stalagmites can be used to reconstruct climate as the Earth passed in and out of the ice ages, allowing us to better judge the rates and possible impacts of modern changes in climate.

Broad's work combines the study of risk perception, exploration, and environmental anthropology. His interdisciplinary training includes an M.A. in marine affairs and policy from the University of Miami and a Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University. He is currently a professor in the University of Miami's Division of Marine Affairs and Policy and is director of the Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy. He is also a co-director of the Center for Research on Environmental Decisions at Columbia University. He was elected a National Geographic Emerging Explorer in 2006, a Fellow National of the Explorers Club in 2009, and was selected as the 2011 National Geographic Explorer of the Year.

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