

National Geographic Dives Into the Untold History of the Transatlantic Slave Trade With New Podcast, Into the Depths, Launching Jan. 27



Washington, DC – Jan. 13, 2022 – Ahead of Black History Month, National Geographic is launching a powerful new podcast, **INTO THE DEPTHS**, on Jan. 27, 2022, that uncovers the deep history of the transatlantic slave trade as it follows a group of Black divers who are dedicated to finding and helping to document slave shipwrecks. **The podcast series trailer is now available on [Apple Podcasts](#) and wherever podcasts are found, as well as at <http://natgeo.com/intothedepths>.** The podcast will also be accompanied by a cover story in the March issue of National Geographic magazine, available online on Feb. 7, and a National Geographic documentary special, **CLOTILDA: LAST AMERICAN SLAVE SHIP**, premiering Monday, Feb. 7, 10/9c on National Geographic and available to stream next day on Hulu.

The six-part podcast series, funded in part by the National Geographic Society, highlights the journey of National Geographic Explorer [Tara Roberts](#) ([@curvypath_tara](#) on Instagram), who quit her job and

left her life behind to follow in the footsteps of [Diving With a Purpose](#), a group of Black divers who traverse the globe in search of long-lost slave shipwrecks and the truth of the history that accompanies them. The podcast follows Roberts from Florida to Costa Rica, and from the continent of Africa back to Roberts' family home in Edenton, North Carolina, where the journey quickly turns personal for her.

"What I was experiencing was this sense of longing. I think this is a unique thing for African Americans. Where is home for us?" she asks in the fourth episode of the series. The question leads her on this life-changing journey.

"INTO THE DEPTHS is a profound and personal exploration of identity and history as told through the lens of Black scientists and storytellers eager to deepen our understanding of American history," says [Davar Ardalan](#), executive producer of Audio for National Geographic.

The podcast, which will drop from Jan. 27 to March 3, features over 40 voices, including underwater divers and archaeologists – descendants of those brought over on the ships, historians, and a variety of experts whom Roberts works with to uncover these stories. Ken Stewart, diver and co-founder of [Diving With a Purpose](#), is featured in the second episode as Roberts dives into the story of the Spanish pirate ship, the *Guerrero*, which wrecked off the coast of Florida in 1827. Meanwhile, the town of Africatown, Alabama, made up of the direct descendants of Africans brought to America on the slave ship *Clotilda*, make an appearance in episode six. The journey brings Roberts to a deeply painful and personal crossroads concerning her identity as a Black American as she searches for a sense of belonging. You can listen on [Apple Podcasts](#) and wherever podcasts are found.

"As I got to know the divers, the ships they had found, the stories of those who had been captured, I realized this was a way to come to grips with those 400 years, with this traumatic history [of much of the Black population in the United States]," Roberts explains in the opening of the first episode. "Through these ships, we could bring lost stories up from the depths and back into collective memory."

The podcast series was produced and directed by [Francesca Panetta](#) with National Geographic's [Carla Wills](#) as executive editor and producers Mike Olcott and Bianca Martin.

"As a Black journalist, it's been uplifting to edit and produce this podcast together with Black women storytellers who have brought tremendous insights and creativity to this groundbreaking series, including Tara as well as National Geographic Explorer and poet Alyea Pierce, sound designer Alexis Adimora, and producer Bianca Martin," Wills says.

National Geographic is also encouraging listeners to listen with their crews and host their own COVID-19-safe **listening parties** by offering a downloadable [listening party toolkit](#), available at natgeo.com/intothedepths. The toolkit will include an episode guide, discussion guide, social sharing graphic, and more, as well as helpful information regarding how to participate in the conversation online using **#intothedepths**.

In addition to the podcast series, Roberts will be featured on the cover of the **March issue of National Geographic magazine**, which will be published online at natgeo.com/intothedepths on Feb. 7. The feature will profile Roberts' journey as she travels with the divers to investigate the lost stories of the slave trade – both to expand the historical record and to honor the 1.8 million unsung souls who perished during the middle passage.

National Geographic will also premiere a **documentary special**, [CLOTILDA: LAST AMERICAN SLAVE SHIP](#), about the most intact slave shipwreck found to date and the only one for which we know the full story of the voyage, the passengers and their descendants. In July 1860, on a bet, the schooner Clotilda carried 110 kidnapped Africans to slavery in Alabama. The traffickers tried to hide their crime by burning and sinking the ship, but now, for the first time since Clotilda arrived in America, maritime archaeologists enter the wreck. In a dangerous dive, they explore the actual cargo hold and find physical evidence of the crime the slave traders tried so hard to hide. Descendants of the passengers share how their ancestors turned a cruel tragedy into an uplifting story of courage and resilience.

The special features experts include the following:

- Dr. Sylviane Diouf, historian and author of “Dreams of Africa in Alabama: The Slave Ship Clotilda and the Story of the Last Africans Brought to America”
- Dr. Natalie S. Robertson, historian and author of “The Slave Shop Clotilda and the Making of Africatown, USA”
- Mary Elliott, curator of American slavery, National Museum of African American History and Culture
- Dr. James Delgado, maritime archaeologist, SEARCH Inc.
- Stacye Hathorn, Alabama State archaeologist, Alabama Historical Commission
- Joseph Grinnan, maritime archaeologist/diver, SEARCH, Inc.
- Kamau Sadiki, lead instructor, Diving With a Purpose

CLOTILDA: LAST AMERICAN SLAVE SHIP is produced by National Geographic Studios, with producer/director Lisa Feit, senior associate producer Alex Brady, senior lead editor Joe Bridgers, editor Liv Gwynn and executive producer Chad Cohen. Michael Cooke is the director of photography. For National Geographic, Courteney Monroe is president, Content.

QUICK LINKS FOR PRESS: Project hub: natgeo.com/intothedepths Hashtag: #IntoTheDepths
Listening Party Tool Kit: [HERE](#) Press Images: [HERE](#) Press Broll: [HERE](#) Social Sharing Graphic: [HERE](#) Podcast Trailer (embeddable): [HERE](#) **CLOTILDA: LAST AMERICAN SLAVE SHIP Documentary First Look:** [HERE](#)

Embargoed podcast series episodes and March magazine cover story available upon request

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