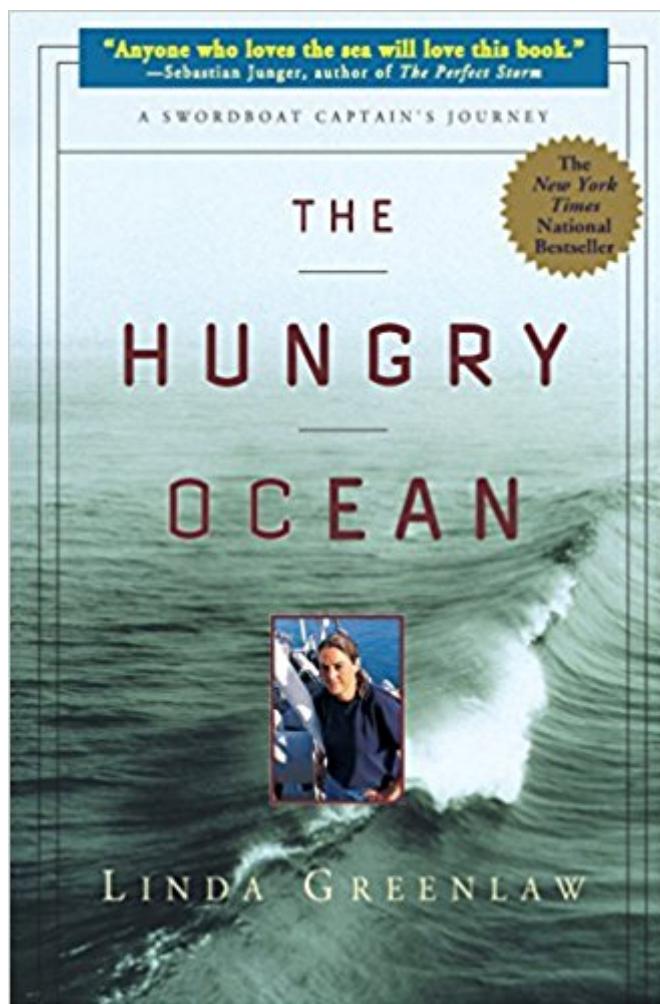


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# The Hungry Ocean: A Swordboat Captain's Journey



## **Synopsis**

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER--NOW AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK! Known to millions of readers of The Perfect Storm as the captain of the Hannah Boden, sister ship to the Andrea Gail, Linda Greenlaw is also known as one of the best sea captains on the East Coast. Here she offers an adventure-soaked tale of her own, complete with danger, humor, and characters so colorful they seem to have been ripped from the pages of Moby Dick. "A beautiful book . . . a story of triumph, of a woman not only making it but succeeding at the highest level in one of the most male-dominated and most dangerous professions." -- Douglas Whynott, The New York Times Book Review "An authentic, insightful account of the intensity of captaining a crew of strong men in an ocean which does what it wants." -- Daniel Hays, co-author of My Old Man and the Sea "A crystal-clear account of fishing the Grand Banks in a modern swordfish boat. Greenlaw is an excellent captain and an excellent writer." -- John Casey, author of Spartina

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The term fisherwoman does not exactly roll trippingly off the tongue, and Linda Greenlaw, the world's only female swordfish boat captain, isn't flattered when people insist on calling her one. "I am a woman. I am a fisherman... I am not a fisherwoman, fisherlady, or fishergirl. If anything else, I am a thirty-seven-year-old tomboy. It's a word I have never outgrown." Greenlaw also happens to be one of the most successful fishermen in the Grand Banks commercial fleet, though until the publication of Sebastian Junger's The Perfect Storm, "nobody cared." Greenlaw's boat, the Hannah Boden, was the sister ship to the doomed Andrea Gail, which disappeared in the mother of all

storms in 1991 and became the focus of Junger's book. *The Hungry Ocean*, Greenlaw's account of a monthlong swordfishing trip over 1,000 nautical miles out to sea, tells the story of what happens when things go right--proving, in the process, that every successful voyage is a study in narrowly averted disaster. There is the weather, the constant danger of mechanical failure, the perils of controlling five sleep-, women-, and booze-deprived young fishermen in close quarters, not to mention the threat of a bad fishing run: "If we don't catch fish, we don't get paid, period. In short, there is no labor union." Greenlaw's straightforward, uncluttered prose underscores the qualities that make her a good captain, regardless of gender: fairness, physical and mental endurance, obsessive attention to detail. But, ultimately, Greenlaw proves that the love of fishing--in all of its grueling, isolating, suspenseful glory--is a matter of the heart and blood, not the mind. "I knew that the ocean had stories to tell me, all I needed to do was listen." --Svenja Soldovieri --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

She's smart, hard-working and good at what she does, though sometimes she wishes she had a life. Greenlaw is captain of the *Hannah Boden*, sister ship to the *Andrea Gail*, the sword-fishing boat whose disappearance was described with agonizing verisimilitude in Sebastian Junger's bestseller, *The Perfect Storm*. Greenlaw tells a comparatively quotidian tale, "the true story of a real, and typical, sword-fishing trip, from leaving the dock to returning." Not trying to compete with Junger's operatic tale of death on the high seas, Greenlaw deals with stormy personalities rather than with bad weather. She rounds out the story with her gimlet-eyed description of a captain's biggest headache after nature itself: the crew. Racism, drug use, baffling illnesses: these are all elements of a 30-day journey for six people crammed aboard a 100-ft. boat designed less for human comfort than to carry the 50,000 pounds or more of fish it will eventually take on. But Greenlaw picks her sailors carefully and, through her own example, inspires a fierce loyalty among the menAsuch as the one who extracted his own abscessed tooth rather than return to shore ("In my experience," she notes, "very few men are willing to pull their own teeth"). Greenlaw's narrative should foster an abiding respect in anyone who has tossed a swordfish steak on the grill, and it is certain to induce jaw-dropping admiration among personnel managers everywhere. Photos not seen by PW.

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I didn't know of Greenlaw (didn't remember her from the *Perfect Storm* book or movie) but ran into a neighbor of hers on vacation who sang the praises of this book, and it's a good read. It's not exactly

suspenseful like The Perfect Storm. It's more of a memoir. But it's interesting. She writes very honestly. Easy read. I'd like to read more of her stuff, and more stuff from people like her.

I really enjoyed learning about the life and subculture of sword fishermen. From the specific language and terms used in fishing to the unique experiences probably only found at sea Linda draws you in with recollections of how she got into the business of running a ship, the colorful people she has interacted with, and a composite of one such adventure out at sea. I especially appreciate all the references to New England, the geography and way of life that I knew was historically and remains currently important, but never really understood. Coming from an author who isn't an author professionally, this was well done and an enjoyable read.

Everything you ever wanted to know about the life of a Swordboat Captain as told by one who has been there. It's a tough life whether your perspective is from the Bridge or from the Deck. As the boat steams out into the Atlantic for five days there is no guarantee that the trip will be profitable for the Owner, Captain or Crew. So much depends on the ability of the Captain to find the fish. Although the Author states the Crew was one of the best she had ever had a month at sea can wear on even the most compatible group and she has to deal with any issues and keep fishing. There is also no guarantee that the boat will make it safely back to the dock as was the unfortunate case with her sister ship the Andrea Gail.

Another great book by a great author and lobster boat skipper. Thank you Linda Greenlaw and .  
John Offield, Hemet, CA

I found it fascinating. The challenges of being a captain, the isolation and the weight of the decisions - and just the personalities, and the fact that she gives very little weight to her being a woman in a role that is seen as a man's. And also that she takes no advantage of having been the Andrea Gail's sister boat and also out in the "Perfect Storm". I have read a number of her other book, fiction and non-fiction and very much enjoyed them!

Very good. Wonderful reading.

This was the first book I read by Linda Greenlaw. She basically describes a typical swordfish fishing trip, from filling the boat with groceries, gathering the crew, fishing itself, and the final payment. Very

interesting and educational, but I also related since she is a woman in charge of an all-male crew in a male dominated industry. Ms. Greenlaw is a great writer and has plenty of interesting tales.

Who didn't see the film, (or read the novel) The Perfect Storm? Not many of you, given its status as one of the top-grossing motion pictures of all time. The story made for riveting reading--and with the addition of some very high-tech special effects--a dramatic movie. It was a fictionalized account of actual events surrounding the loss of the Andrea Gail, a swordfishing vessel lost at sea with all of its crew during a horrific storm in 1991. One of the characters in that story, Linda Greenlaw, captain of the Andrea Gail's sister ship, the Hannah Boden, has written a fascinating tale of life aboard a swordboat--minus the tragedy. What happens when everything 'goes right' is the theme of Greenlaw's The Hungry Ocean: a Swordboat Captain's Journey. To most of us, the concept of spending a month or more at sea in smelly, cramped quarters, working torturous 20-hour days and MAYBE getting a paycheck to show for it, (depending on how good the catch is), hardly seems worth the effort. Linda Greenlaw is one of the most successful swordboat captains, and it's very obvious she loves her work. That she is perhaps the world's ONLY female swordboat captain is incidental to the story. After reading this book, it would be hard to enjoy a meal of grilled swordfish without reflecting upon just what it took to get it on the plate. Over 12,000 pounds of bait and \$4,000 worth of groceries is loaded on board and stuffed into every conceivable nook and cranny prior to heading to sea. On the trip out, thousands of hook-and-leader sets are crafted, which are then attached to the 40-odd miles of line played out every single night--a 'set.' With a baited hook every 100 yards or so, they consider themselves fortunate if they haul in 20 or 30 fish per set; typically running about 15 sets per trip. Despite the fact that she is not an author by profession, Greenlaw very competently conveys a picture of life aboard a swordboat. Hungry Ocean is an entertaining and fascinating read! (I bought an additional copy as a gift for my father-in-law, whose late father was also a fisherman out of Gloucester, Mass. HE loved it too!)- Jonathan Sabin

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