



## MARIA STENZEL BIOGRAPHY

---



As a contributor to National Geographic for more than 16 years, Maria Stenzel has covered a wide variety of assignments, documenting indigenous groups from the rain forest to the Arctic, dinosaur digs in Madagascar, and Inca mummies high in the Andes.

However, like most National Geographic photographers, there's one region of the world that keeps calling her back. For Stenzel, that place is Antarctica and its frozen underworld of big seas, icebergs, sea ice, and the largest concentration of wildlife on Earth--not to mention the world's largest icecap.

Her Antarctic work began in 1995 with a voyage by icebreaker to study the winter sea ice of the Southern Ocean with a team of scientists from the National Science Foundation. More projects have followed--the ice-free Dry Valleys, Sir Earnest Shackleton's heroic journey across South Georgia, a survey of scientific research in Antarctica, and the South Sandwich Islands. Part of her mission as an adventurer and photographer is to document the affects of climate change in this pristine world.

Her most recent story on the Antarctic, the South Sandwich Islands (*National Geographic*, December 2006) earned World Press Photo Award. In praise of this article the American Society of Magazine Editors proclaimed, "After a century, *National Geographic* managed to do the unthinkable and elevate the level of its own wondrous brand of photography. Never has the magazine's imagery been more relevant and brilliantly used to tell the epic story of our planet," citing Stenzel's "breathtaking images of penguins in the South Sandwich Islands."

Stenzel grew up in Ghana, the Netherlands, and New York. She has lived in Washington D.C. since 1980, when as a young college graduate she came to the capital city looking for work. Armed with a bachelor's degree in American Studies from the University of Virginia, she her liberal arts education had endowed in her a wide range of interests. An entry-level job at National Geographic introduced her to the world of photojournalism, and she has been on that journey ever since.

For more information please visit [www.springfieldpublicforum.org](http://www.springfieldpublicforum.org).