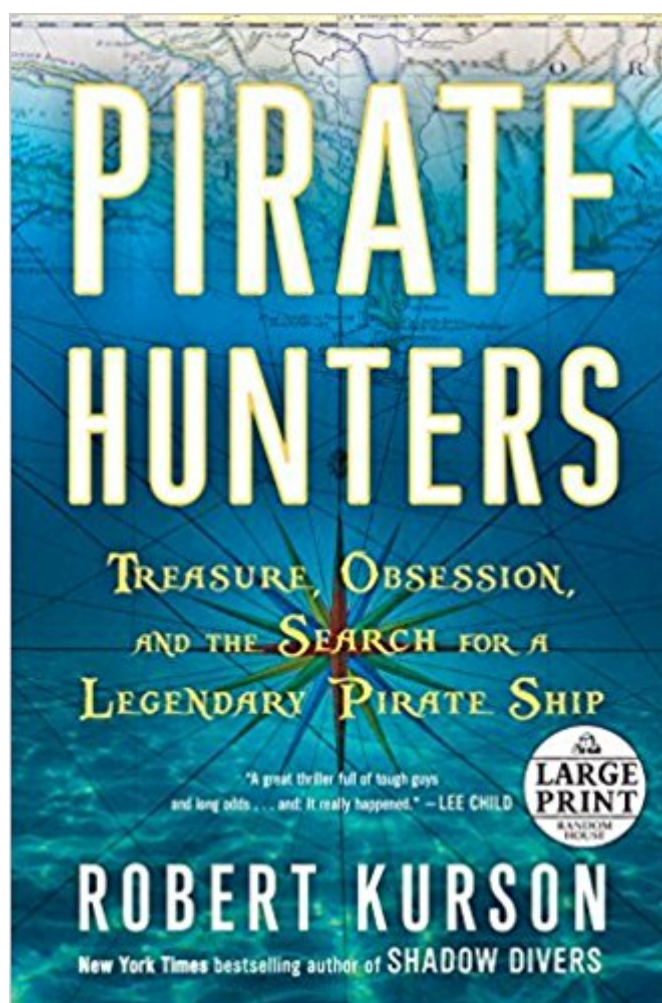


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# Pirate Hunters: Treasure, Obsession, And The Search For A Legendary Pirate Ship (Random House Large Print)



## Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER **AND** NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY CHICAGO TRIBUNE **AND** A thrilling adventure of **AND** danger **AND** deep-sea diving, historic mystery and suspense, by the author of *Shadow Divers* Finding and identifying a pirate ship is the hardest thing to do under the sea. But two men—John Chatterton and John Mattera—are willing to risk everything to find the Golden Fleece, the ship of the infamous pirate Joseph Bannister. At large during the Golden Age of Piracy in the seventeenth century, Bannister should have been immortalized in the lore of the sea—his exploits more notorious than Blackbeard’s, more daring than Kidd’s. But his story, and his ship, have been lost to time. If Chatterton and Mattera succeed, they will make history—it will be just the second time ever that a pirate ship has been discovered and positively identified. Soon, however, they realize that cutting-edge technology and a willingness to lose everything aren’t enough to track down Bannister’s ship. They must travel the globe in search of historic documents and accounts of the great pirate’s exploits, face down dangerous rivals, battle the tides of nations and governments and experts. But it’s only when they learn to think and act like pirates—like Bannister—that they become able to go where no pirate hunters have gone before. Fast-paced and filled with suspense, fascinating characters, history, and adventure, *Pirate Hunters* is an unputdownable story that goes deep to discover truths and souls long believed lost.

Praise for *Pirate Hunters*

- “You won’t want to put [it] down.” *Los Angeles Times*
- “An exceptional adventure . . . Highly recommended to readers who delight in adventure, suspense, and the thrill of discovering history at their fingertips.” *Library Journal* (starred review)
- “A terrific read . . . The book gallops along at a blistering pace, shifting us deftly between the seventeenth century and the present day.” *Diver*
- “Nonfiction with the trademarks of a novel: the plots and subplots, the tension and suspense . . . [Kurson has] found gold.” *The Dallas Morning News*
- “Rollicking . . . a fascinating [story] about the world of pirates, piracy, and priceless treasures.” *The Boston Globe*
- “[Kurson’s] narration is just as engrossing as the subject.” *The Christian Science Monitor*
- “A wild ride [and an] extraordinary adventure . . . Kurson’s own enthusiasm, combined with his copious research and an eye for detail, makes for one of the most mind-blowing pirate stories of recent memory, one that even the staunchest landlubber will have a hard time putting down.” *Publishers Weekly* (starred review)
- “The two contemporary pirate-ship seekers of Mr. Kurson’s narrative are as daring, intrepid, tough and talented as

Blood and Sparrow and Bannister. . . . As depicted by the author, they are real-life Hemingway heroes. The Wall Street Journal “[Kurson] takes his knowledge of the underwater world and applies it to the Golden Age of Piracy, . . . thrillingly detailing the highs and lows of chasing not just gold and silver but also history. Booklist “A great thriller full of tough guys and long odds . . . and: It’s all true. Lee Child From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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• The Wall Street Journal “Captivating and alluring . . . a riveting tale . . . perfect for summer beach reading.

• Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star “[Kurson] takes his knowledge of the underwater world and applies it to the Golden Age of Piracy . . . thrillingly detailing the highs and lows of chasing not just gold and silver but also history.

• Booklist “John Chatterton and John Mattera . . . come across as modern heroes, the kind of men the modern world often finds it hard to make a place for. An enjoyable read, especially if you’ve got a thing for pirates.

• Kirkus Reviews “A great thriller full of tough guys and long odds . . . and: It’s all true.

• Lee Child “Action and adventure on land and sea you can’t ask for more. But Robert Kurson raises the ante in *Pirate Hunters* with an array of mystery and a fleet of colorful characters spanning four centuries. This is a great summer read!

• Michael Connelly “*Pirate Hunters* is a fantastic book, an utterly engrossing and satisfying read. It tells the story of the hunt for the rare wreck of a pirate ship, which had been captained by one of the most remarkable pirates in history. This is a real-life *Treasure Island*, complete with swashbuckling, half-crazy treasure hunters and vivid Caribbean settings • a story for the ages.

• Douglas Preston “A terrific read. I was pulled in from page one. Kurson brings us face to face with some of the most swashbuckling pirates ever to sail the Caribbean, even as he takes us underwater on a high-tech quest to discover the relics they left behind.

• Daniel James Brown “There’s nothing in the world like buried treasure and people hungry and obsessed enough to risk their lives for it. *Pirate Hunters* isn’t just a good story • it’s a true one. Searching for the souls of its explorers, it takes you to the far tip of the plank and plunges you deep to the bottom of the ocean.

• Brad Meltzer “*Pirate Hunters* is a gripping account of two courageous divers’ quest to uncover the shipwrecked vessel of Joseph Bannister, one of history’s most infamous pirates. Robert Kurson will keep you on the edge of your seat in this high-stakes journey around the globe that ultimately teaches these explorers about much more than an old ship.

• Sen. John McCain From the Hardcover edition.

Robert Kurson is the author of the runaway bestseller *Shadow Divers*, and *Crashing Through*. From the Hardcover edition.

This book is engaging, but it's no "Shadow Divers". For one thing, there's not much plot and the author had to sort of create a narrative and stick in bits of Pirate history to glue it all together. Then the two primary personalities come off pretty badly. One is portrayed as crazy-violent, the other as an obsessed ego-maniac. I guess it's all meant to paint a picture, but it's a little too much personal information for me. The book also ends abruptly, with 97% devoted to a fruitless search and 3% a quick summary of what they found. So although I enjoyed reading it, and made it through to the end. It will not be a keeper and is headed to a used book store shortly. BTW, if you have not read "Shadow Divers", for Pete's Sake go get a copy now! Now that was an extraordinary tale.

I don't read a lot of nonfiction and when I do I want it to read as smoothly as fiction. This pretty much fit the bill, with an exciting account of seasoned treasure hunters / divers finding a wreck of a fairly obscure merchant-captain-turned-pirate, Joseph Bannister. The author went off on a multitude of tangents including in depth studies of the lives of the men searching for the ship (which were interesting but not terribly relevant), and I'd say the actual story focusing on the tactical search for the wreck only constituted about half the book. Also, without spoiling the ending, the main characters fly all over the place at great expense doing a ton of primary research, and then the biggest piece of the puzzle ends up being in a newly published book that you can buy on - that element had a feel of deus ex machina about it. But overall it was an enjoyable and quick read, and I did learn something about Bannister, the treasure hunting "business," and the dangerous techniques used in underwater recovery efforts. Would recommend.

Excellent book. I know a pretty fair cross-section of the shipwreck hunting community and every word rings true. There is a good bit of backstory on John Chatterton and John Mattera as well as their partner, the extremely successful salvor Tracy Bowden, but it puts the story into context and gives a good peek into what it takes to find a shipwreck that has been lost/unidentified for centuries. It does not appear so from the armchair, but there is a lot of cerebral involvement in treasure hunting from the historical research to the abilities needed to do everything from fixing the outboard on the dinghy to operating a \$100,000 remote sensing array of magnetometer, sub-bottom profiler and sidescan sonar. Couple this intellect with the drive to keep going out every day to do the job, even on the days when fun is hard to find, and you have some pretty smart Type A folks.

Sometimes Type A's clash, but they get a lot done. I wouldn't change a word. Well done to all involved. I am making plans to give dive Samana Bay . Dominican Republic here we come!

I love a fast-paced adventure novel, filled with treasure hunters, deep sea divers and an anti-heroic pirate captain. And to find such a story, which also happens to be true....now that's a real treasure! This is the first time I have read Robert Kurson's writing, but I really am impressed by the way he takes a true story and writes non fiction as though it's an exciting adventure tale that just flies by. However, he could not have done this without some fascinating subject matter provided by deep sea divers and treasure hunters John Chatterton and John Mattera. The basis of this story is how Chatterton and Mattera have been commissioned to find the Golden Fleece, a ship captained by the pirate John Bannister. However, not only does Kurson's tale take us from the Dominican Republic to Europe to the States and back again, he also takes us into both the distant and more recent past as we delve into the lives not only of the infamous Bannister but also of Chatterton and Mattera. Pirates, mafia crime rings, German U-boats, battles against cancer and even diving experiences in the shadow of the World Trade Center on 9/11/2001...it's all here in a fast-paced , well-researched piece of non-fiction, that reads like a combination adventure - historical fiction - detective novel.

I loved shadow divers, but this book did not live up to the same standard. It should have been about 100 pages, but the author dragged in redundant or irrelevant history to stretch it. Also, I get it that they were fired up to find a pirate ship, but there was a great deal of build up/discussion about how treasure hunting is no longer going to be permitted, so treasure hunters must rush to recover what they can. Given that there was very little monetary value to the Golden Fleece, it seems like Chatterton and Mattera would have done better to hunt for the Galleon, as they originally planned, and save the pirate ship (which was mostly historic/museum value) for later. I suppose that doesn't have much to do with the author, but the lack of treasure caused the story to fall a little flat for me.

I purchased this as a pre-order, and the book arrived in time for a flight from the east coast to the west coast - and I devoured this book before I landed! The storyline (given it is a true story) flows as best it can through the years of on-site diving/searching, research all over the globe, the personal quirks of people who have the traits to take on these kinds of endeavors (and the people who have to live with them), the back-story on governments and greed in general... and ends with all of the joy and pain you would expect from a real story (not a prototypical Hollywood ending). The author does

a nice job of telling the whole context and story... and ends with a recap of where things were heading after "The End" (No "spoiler alert" - you'll have to read it to find out). If you're a professional or amateur diver, treasure hunter, or just love the idea of pirate treasure, you'll love this book.

Chatterton and Mattera are what every boy dreams of growing up to be, Treasure hunters and they tell their story with grit and glory and don't hold back with the realness of the ups and downs, the heartache that comes along with the hunt as well as the details of the research.

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