



Forrest Nelson, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 2015



Videos: [Interview 1](#) [Swim 1](#) [Swim 2 at 8:20](#) [Crew 1](#) [Crew 2](#) [IMSHOF 2023 at 16:20](#) [IMSHOF 2024 at 1:05:37](#) [IMSHOF 2025 at 1:03:22](#) [IMSHOF 2025](#)

Forrest Nelson completed the Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming (English and Catalina Channels and Manhattan Island Marathon Swim).

He was the first male to swim a 2-way 64.6 km Catalina-California Mainland-Catalina in 23 hours and 1 minute. He circumnavigated Catalina Island, 74.7 km in 2011 in 25 hours and 35 minute a speed record which stood in 2024 (and beyond).

Other marathons include: 23 km Cook Strait; 1st in the 37 km Tampa Bay race; 29 km Tsugaru Channel crossing from Honshu to Hokkaido, three Molokai Channel crossings – achieved in both directions, Anacapa Island crossing and the Palilolo Channel - starting on Maui.

He completed long unique relays: Team FTD that completed a first ever 6-way Catalina Channel crossing in 61 hours and 7 minutes in 2013 and HTC team from San Clemente Island, around the

western edge of Catalina Island, to the Southern California mainland at Cabrillo Beach 83.7 km in 2012 in 25 hours and 48 minutes a speed record which stood in 2024 (and beyond).

In 2022 he completed 10-years as President of the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation and observed and supported dozens of Catalina Channel crossings. The Federation made two big strides during these years: on-line registrations and safety improvements including full day multi-media observer training. From 2011 to 2014 he was a member of the Board of Directors of the International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame.

In 2025 he received from the International Swimming Hall of Fame: The Irving Davids/Captain Roger W. Wheeler Memorial Award for his contribution to the administration of open water swimming.

[Expanded Biography \(Openwaterpedia\)](#)

[Long Swims Database \(Marathon Swimmers Federation\)](#)