

Editor's Note

Classification



What is it with our propensity to classify everything? The desire to separate, organize, and name singles and groups of anything seems to be hardwired. I'm pretty sure the hunter-gatherers had collections of the things they hunted and gathered stored up in the Paleolithic version of the freezer-bag-and-Sharpie or the alphabetized spice rack. In the 1700s Carl Linnaeus, the father of taxonomy (the science of naming stuff), wasn't satisfied with only one label, so every known living thing got two or three names.

Obviously, Linnaeus was onto something. Based on the highly unscientific data collector known as Facebook, the email we get, and the conversations we've had on deck, it's not so easy to classify swimmers with only one name; many consider themselves fitness swimmers who compete or competitive swimmers who swim open water, etc. So why do we go back and forth over the labels, *fitness swimmer* and *competitive swimmer*?

It's undoubtedly another human trait to resist labels when they are placed upon us, and often with good reason. Since the dawn of time, humans have had a hard time with the concept of moderation when it comes to labeling—not all have used their powers for good. It's fine when labeling meant: "This plant will cure your headache; this one will make you bleed out your eyeballs." But when labels are applied to people, it can bring out the worst in *Homo sapiens*.

Whatever type of swimmer you consider yourself, we're all good. We just want to make sure we're providing content and services that you find valuable. We've labeled this issue as the first "Fitness Issue" of *SWIMMER*. It is not strictly fitness articles—Pan-Ams was a competitive event and Rich Burns, featured in "From the Center Lanes" would probably not be considered a fitness swimmer by anyone. But it's a way for us to hunt and gather content that appeals to those who swim for myriad reasons.

Laura Hamel, *SWIMMER* editor

SWIMMER

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» » Your percentage *fitness swimmer* and *competitive swimmer*, expressed (respectively) as a split:

84/16

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ON THE COVER

Concert pianist and swimmer Jeyoon Kim, featured on page 14. Photo by Nino G. Cocchiarella.

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Photo: Stephanie Ganey Photography

THE SOCIAL SWIMMER

Why do you swim?

David Amezcua It's as close to flying under his own power that a human can come. **Rebecca King Beebe** It is my favorite place to be ... In the water. I love how stretched my whole body feels. And my jeans continue to fit me.

Thomas Hintz To keep my demons from catching up to me.

Jennifer Darpinian Dowden Because after a long morning swim, we usually end up with a smile ... that lasts all day long.

Janet Noble For everything!!! Off 2 meds! Lost 14 lbs. No spanx. Love it!!!

Mark Jaeger Because I'm hoping to run up enough karma points to come back as an orca.

Rachel O'Neal Because it reminds me that I'm still a strong person in many ways

David Fyfe The black line. The blue tiles. The rush of water. The silence of the world. The blood rush.