



**ACTIVITY:** Standing

**CASE:** GSAF 1934.10.09

**DATE:** Tuesday October 9, 1934

**LOCATION:** The attack took place near Reuben Cooper's timber cutting camp at Redcliff on the Cobourg Peninsula, Northern Territory, Australia.

11°20'S

**NAME:** Unknown

**DESCRIPTION:** She was a Australian aboriginal female about 38 years of age, and the mother of Victor Cooper.

#### **BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon, October 9, 1934

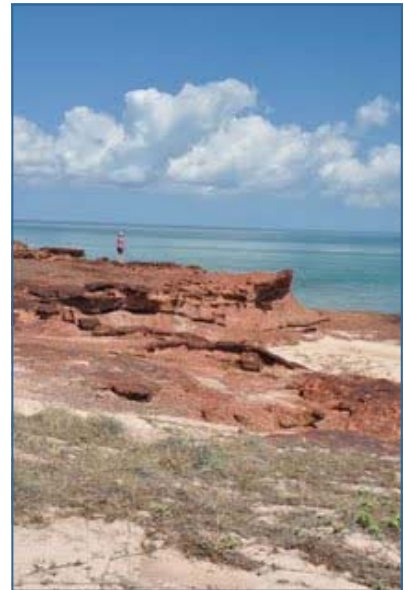
**ENVIRONMENT:** The Cobourg peninsula, located 350 kilometres east of Darwin in the Northern Territory, is a remote corner of Arnhem Land and is now part of Garig Gunak Barlu National Park.

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Knee-deep

**NARRATIVE:** She was bathing with others, including children, when she was bitten "several times" by a shark.

**INJURY:** Fatal. She died soon after rescue.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Not identified, but the shark was reported to be 14 feet in length.



## NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

1934. October.

ABORIGINAL WOMAN. Redcliff, Coburg Peninsula. Lat. 11° 20'S. Fatal.

Bathing with other natives and children. Several attacks. Rescued. Wounds to body and flesh stripped from legs. Died soon after rescue.

*Victor .M. Coppleson (1958), page 240*

### SHARK'S SAVAGE ATTACK.

#### Tears Lubra to Pieces.

DARWIN, Friday.—Reuben Cooper, of Mill Camp, near Coburg peninsula, sends word of a savage attack by a shark on a native woman. On 9th October the lubra, with a number of other women and children, had been swimming at a spot where they had bathed for many years. While the woman was standing knee deep in the water, laughing and talking, she was suddenly seized by a shark, which grabbed her leg, tearing the flesh from the bone. The woman screamed and collapsed in the water, and the shark again attacked, tearing her entrails out, and biting off one arm.

The shark's approach had been so swift that the other natives were unable to realise at first what had happened. Recovering, they drove off the monster, and brought the lubra's body to the shore. She was about 38 years of age, and was mother to Victor Cooper, adopted son of "Old" Cooper, formerly a buffalo shooter of Melville Island. It is a most unusual occurrence for a shark to attack anyone in Territory waters, as they are not considered as ferocious here as on Queensland or New South Wales coasts.

*The Age, October 27, 1934  
page 12*

## **Native Woman Killed By Shark**

**DARWIN, October 26.**

According to a report brought to Darwin by a timber lugger from Coburg Peninsula, about 150 miles away, an aboriginal woman was shockingly mutilated by a shark which made several attacks upon her.

The lubra was swimming with other natives and children at Red Cliff, near a timber camp. The shark made an attack and stripped the flesh from her leg. Then the monster made other attacks upon her, inflicting horrible wounds upon her body. She was taken from the water by the natives, but died soon afterwards.

The shark was about 14 feet long.

*The Advertiser  
Saturday October 27, 1934, page 22*

## **A TERRITORY TRAGEDY.**

Word was brought to Darwin by the lugger Maskee, of a fatal attack by a shark on a native woman at Mr. Reuben Cooper's timber cutting camp at Redcliffe, Coburg Peninsula, in which a native woman was torn to pieces. On October 26th, the woman with a number of other natives of both sex, and a crowd of piccaninnies, been swimming at a spot much favored by the natives, and where they had bathed for a number of years.

While standing knee deep in the water, and with other natives laughing and talking, she was suddenly seized by the leg by a shark. The woman screamed in agony as the flesh was stripped from her leg. So swiftly and stealthily had been the monster's approach and assault that the other natives were unable to comprehend what had occurred. The injured woman collapsed into the water, where the vicious brute again attacked her, ripping her entrails out and taking one of her arms off.

The other natives, now fully realising what was happening quickly drove off the shark, which they estimated was 14 feet long, and recovered the body. The lubra was about 38 years of age.

*Townsville Daily Bulletin  
Thursday November 8, 1934, page 7*



© Global Shark Accident File, 1993. All rights reserved. This report may not be abridged or reproduced in any form without written permission of the Global Shark Accident File.