

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** [GSAF 1997.12.25.a](#)

**DATE:** Thursday December 25, 1997

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Hollywood Beach, Broward County, Florida, USA.

**NAME:** Samuel Lussier

**DESCRIPTION:** The swimmer is an eight-year-old male from Quebec, Canada.



## **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** The air temperature was 83°F.

**MOON PHASE:** Third Quarter, December 21, 1997. New Moon, December 29, 1997.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water temperature was 76°F.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 20 feet

**DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE:** Four feet

**TIME:** 11h30

**NARRATIVE:** Samuel was wearing a life-jacket and swimming when something grabbed his leg. Initially, he thought it was another swimmer. "He saw something in the water and thought it was a man, but it was armor gray," said his father, Ronald Lussier, a police officer from Stoneham just north of Quebec City. Samuel's seven-year-old brother Gabriel thought he saw a dorsal fin and a couple of shadows in the water. Then Samuel saw blood in the water and cried for help.

**INJURY:** There was a gash on the posterior left leg that extended knee to his ankle. Some muscles were severed but no arteries were torn.

**FIRST AID:** After the father brought his son to the beach, he summoned lifeguards to help stop the bleeding. He was transported by Ambulance to Regional Memorial Hospital.

**TREATMENT:** Some 168 stitches were need to repair the injury. Next day, the patient was reported to be in stable condition. Dr. Allan Greismann, a pediatric specialist in intensive care, said he was expected to remain in hospital for three days.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Shark involvement has not been confirmed. It is possible that his injury was caused by a barracuda or some other marine predator, or even debris in the water.

**NOTE:** Several miles of Broward County beaches were closed for a short time as a precaution even though the attack was viewed as an isolated incident. "As far as I know we haven't had a recorded fish-biting incident in the history of Hollywood Beach actually, until now," said lifeguard Jeff Epstein.

**SOURCES:** Orlando Sentinel, December 27, 1997, page D3; Globe Newspaper Company; Miami Herald, December 26 & 27, 1997