

**ACTIVITY:** Wading

**CASE:** **GSF 2000.07.02.b**

**DATE:** Sunday July 2, 2000

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Smyrna Dunes Park (2700 block north Ocean Beach), New Smyrna Beach, Volusia County, Florida, USA.  
29°N, 81°W

**NAME:** Amber Benningfield

**DESCRIPTION:** The swimmer is a 13-year-old Caucasian female from Bowling Green, Kentucky. She was wearing a two-piece bathing suit; it was bright-green with small purple flowers.

**BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon, July 1, 2000

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was clear.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Volusia County Deputy Beach Chief Joe Wooden said that the young sharks are learning to hunt, to eat fish. "When they bite down and realize it's not something they usually eat, they let go." Several fishermen on the beach had been catching small bonnethead sharks.

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Four feet

**TIME:** 17h00

**NARRATIVE:** Amber Benningfield was swimming / standing with friends in the northern section of the park when she felt something slam into her left calf and bite down on her leg. She immediately reached down to try to get whatever it was off and was bitten on the left hand. After making the single bite on the girl, the shark swam away.

**INJURY:** The swimmer's left calf was bitten. She sustained a deep avulsion to the bone (4.5 inches by 2.5 inches). There were numerous cuts (defense wounds) to the left hand sustained while trying to fend off the shark.

**TREATMENT:** Benningfield underwent surgery that evening and was listed in stable condition on Monday morning.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The shark was said to be about three feet in length. Both Benningfield and a witness said that the shark looked like a hammerhead shark.

**SOURCE:** M. Guisti, Daytona Beach News-Journal, July 3, 2000, page 6C

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Captain Scott Petersohn, Global Shark Accident File

