

ACTIVITY: Wade fishing

CASE: [GSAF 2011.07.07.a](#)

DATE: Thursday July 7, 2011

LOCATION: The accident took place in the Gulf of Mexico at Mustang Island, Nueces County, Texas.



NAME: Shawn Hamilton

DESCRIPTION: He is a 14-year-old male from San Antonio.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Waxing Crescent, 32% of the Moon was illuminated. First Quarter, July 8, 2011.

DEPTH OF WATER: Waist-deep

NARRATIVE: Shawn was out on the second sandbar when he saw the shark. "I was reeling in my bait just making sure the line was tight," Shawn said. "All of a sudden, I see this shark come at me. . . . I felt it pound against my leg and I started jumping up and down. When I was jumping up and down, I was pretty much kicking it in the head and I think that scared it away."

INJURY: Lacerations to right foot

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: Shawn's parents helped him to shore, wrapped the wounds, and rushed him to the emergency room of Corpus Christi Medical Center where his wounds were repaired with 54 stitches.

SPECIES: The family cannot positively identify the shark, but they believe was a bull or black tip shark. Their best guess as to why the shark bit Shawn is that the shark may have mistaken his foot for a sting ray.

Teen Shares Shark Bite Story

MUSTANG ISLAND - A San Antonio family's fishing trip to the Coastal Bend ended with their 14-year-old son in the hospital and 54 stitches after a shark attacked the young boy out on Mustang Island.

"The chance of getting bit by a shark, not very good, the chance of getting bit by a shark twice, that's most likely never going to happen," that's a little bit of knowledge from a teenager who knows all to well what he's talking about.

14-year-old Shawn Hamilton has quite a fish tale to share and the battle wounds to prove it. "Somebody told us to put Vitamin E on it to get rid of the scars and we were kind of laughing to ourselves, he doesn't want those scars to go away," explained Shawn's mother, Rhonda, "its something he can always tell his friends, or tell his kids or grandkids," she said. His fishing trip ended July 7th in the hospital. It began along Beach Access Road 2 on Mustang Island.

Where Shawn's mother, Rhonda, offered to share her success and switch fishing spots with her son. "I had already caught 3 trout and I told my son, I said 'hey bud, why don't you try over here, they seem to be over here,'" Hamilton said.

The family was out at the second sandbar, that's about where those surfers are now. They say they didn't have any bait or any fish on them, when suddenly Shawn saw the shark. "Just see this shark, like a bullet, it was just coming at me," Shawn said.

Before he could react, the shark attacked. That's when Shawn says he began fighting back. "When I was jumping up and down, I was pretty much kicking it in the head and I think that scared it away," said Shawn. In a matter of seconds his battle with the predator ended and his parents quickly realized the shark had attacked their son.

They helped him hobble to shore, wrapped the wounds and rushed him to the hospital. Shawn, a self-described hypochondriac, didn't shed a tear. Shawn's mom says she's pretty proud of his bravery and even more impressed by his understanding of nature. "I know they're out there, that's their territory and you're entering their territory," Shawn shared with us.

The family cannot positively identify the shark, but they believe was a bull or black tip shark. Their best guess as to why the shark attacked, is that they believe the shark may have mistaken Shawn's foot for a sting ray.

SOURCE: Janine Reyes - jreyes@kristv.com, July 19, 2011, <http://www.kzttv10.com/news/teen-shares-shark-bite-story/>

Bull shark bites boy, 14, in Gulf surf *Family was fishing off Mustang Island*

MUSTANG ISLAND — He said that he had a better chance of being struck by lightning than getting attacked by a shark, but unfortunately for 14-year-old Shawn Hamilton, he beat the odds. It started as a weekend fishing trip for the Hamilton family, but the San Antonio residents had to cut it short when Shawn was attacked by a shark July 7 near Mustang Island.

He was in waist-deep water on the second sandbar off shore near Beach Access Road 2

between Port Aransas and Corpus Christi when the attack occurred. "It's pretty weird how I got away with a couple of bites and I still have my foot," he said. "It's really weird that it happened to me." Kevin Hamilton, Shawn's father, said that they do their best to not attract any unwanted attention while fishing. They don't use a stringer in the surf, and they take every fish they catch back to the beach and put it in an ice chest. "We're a fishing family, and we understand that every time we step foot in the water, there is a possibility of something like that happening," Hamilton said. "(You're) part of the food chain once you get out there. We try to take all the necessary precautions."

The International Shark Attack File, a global database on shark attacks, asks that individuals who experience or witness a shark attack fill out a questionnaire about the incident. In Shawn's report, it states that he yelled "Shark!" several times as he saw what appeared to be a 5-foot bull shark approaching him on the water's surface. Shawn was jumping around trying to fend off the shark, and he was bit on his right foot and shin. "It was really like a sharp knife just going through your skin," Shawn said. "You don't feel it that much, but you knew it was there."

Shawn and his father had assumed he had caught the shark, but they came to the conclusion that he did not, nor did he catch a fish the shark was chasing. "I was reeling in my bait just making sure the line was tight," Shawn said. "All of a sudden, I see this shark come at me. ... I felt it pound against my leg and I started jumping up and down." Hamilton thought his son was shouting because he was scared by seeing a shark swim by. "I never knew an attack was going on. I thought he was in panic," he said. After the attack, Hamilton and his wife, Ronda, took Shawn to the beach, poured a gallon of distilled water on the wounds, wrapped two beach towels around his foot and leg and took him to Corpus Christi Medical Center.

He received 54 stitches, which were removed last week. Shawn said that he can't feel the right side of his foot where the shark bit him. Hamilton said it is unknown if that feeling will return. "That might regenerate; that might not. It might be a reminder for rest of (his) life for what happened that day," Hamilton said.

Shawn said his parents handled the situation well because they stayed calm, which made it easier for him to do the same. "At the hospital (my mom) started taking pictures of my cuts and started smiling," he said. "She was like, 'It's a good story to tell all the girls at school.'"

Hamilton said he is proud of the way his son handled the attack. "The biggest deal in my son's case is that he fought it, kicked at it. He didn't just stay there and say, 'Here, get me,'" Hamilton said. "I think the shark decided he didn't want to mess with him anymore; he just swam off."

This isn't the first time a shark bite has occurred in Nueces County, though attacks are rare. According to the International Shark Attack File, this is the 11th report of an unprovoked shark attack in the county since 1911.

Also on July 7, the Victoria Advocate reported that a 12-year-old boy was attacked by a shark near Port O'Connor. He was attacked at 5:15 p.m., and Hamilton said his son was attacked at 4:30 p.m.

Shawn considers himself lucky that he survived the attack with minimal injuries, and he feels bad for the 12-year-old boy who was attacked 45 minutes after him. "I feel really lucky," he said. "I have stronger faith now because God was watching over me, and he was protecting me."

SOURCE: Jesse Martinez, Corpus Christi Caller Times, July 19, 2011, <http://www.caller.com/news/2011/jul/19/bull-shark-bites-boy-14-in-surf/>