

Back Beach, Streaky Bay



Photo by John White

ACTIVITY: Surfing

CASE: GSAF 2012.07.31.a

DATE: Tuesday July 31, 2012

LOCATION: The accident took place at Streaky Bay, South Australia.

NAME: John Campion

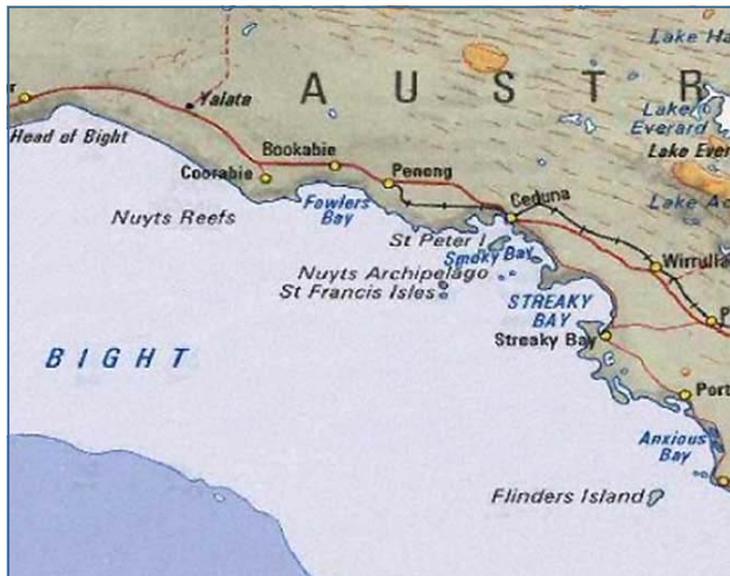
DESCRIPTION: He is a 48-year-old male from Scele Bay.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 15h00, Streaky Bay recorded partly cloudy skies and visibility of 25 miles. The air temperature was 59°F, dew point 40 F, humidity 37%, sea level pressure 30.37 inches (falling), and wind direction was NNE at 4.6 mph.

MOON PHASE: Waxing Gibbous, 95% of the Moon is Illuminated. Full Moon, August 2, 2012.

ENVIRONMENT: Streaky Bay is located on the western side of the Eyre Peninsula and is 727 km from Adelaide.



TIME: 14h40

NARRATIVE: There were about seven surfers in the water. Champion was surfing with his daughter and friends. According to a witness, a large shark launched at the man. “[The shark] took me by the arm and took me under for a while, just had to fight it off, had a chance to hit it in the eye,” he said.

INJURY: He sustained lacerations to his upper right arm, upper torso, and hand. “He had lacerations on his wetsuit from his hip to his shoulder on his right side,” said Jeff Schmucker who was shooting photos of the surfers.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: He was taken from the water and carried about 600 metres along Back Beach to an ambulance and transported to Streaky Bay hospital before being transferred to Royal Adelaide Hospital.

SPECIES: According to witnesses, the accident involved a white shark, but police said the shape and size of the bite marks on the man's arm and surfboard are more in line with those of a bronze whaler, *Carcharhinus brachyurus*.

NOTE: In a 2014 interview, Champion said ocean awareness can easily save lives. His advice is to take 15 minutes to watch the sea before diving in. “If there’s any school’s of fish or anything unusual, well then, you know not to swim in there,” he said. “You always look for rips and currents and that’s very important for the kids.”



John Champion and his surfboard



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Shark attacks man at Streaky Bay

Locals suspect a man was attacked by a Great White Shark while surfing near Streaky Bay on the State's West Coast this afternoon.

The man in his late forties was flown to the Royal Adelaide Hospital after he was bitten on the arm at about 3pm today.

SA Ambulance said he suffered significant upper arm lacerations and blood loss, but his injuries were not life-threatening.

Local surfer and fisherman Jeff Schmucker was at the beach when the shark attacked, and said there was little warning. "I spoke to one of the guys who was in the water with him and he's a reliable source, he's been a long time fisherman on the West Coast. He said it was a large Great White and he said the shark just attacked out of the blue and just launched into the guy, into his side. Miraculously the guy appears to have survived it."

Mr Schmucker said there were about seven surfers in the water when the attack occurred. He said surfers and onlookers looked shaken as they helped the shark victim off the beach. "By the time I saw the other six guys that carried the victim on a surfboard, they were shaken up obviously, and quite puffed from getting through the heavy sand carrying a guy on a surfboard." He said the attack would have an impact on the West Coast surfing community. It'll shake up the people that are surfing here and definitely there will be some people pulling back that's for sure."

SOURCE: ABC West Coast, SA, July 31, 2012,
<http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2012/07/31/3557676.htm>

Great white shark mauls West Coast surfer John Campion near Streaky Bay

JOHN Campion had surfed the West Coast waters for years, but yesterday he was lucky to make it out alive after being attacked by a great white shark. Mr Campion, 48, was mauled while surfing with his daughter and friends near Streaky Bay, on the SA West Coast, about 2.40pm. He suffered injuries to his upper body and right arm but they are not life threatening.

Mr Campion, of Scele Bay, 30km south of Streaky Bay, had to be dragged from the water and carried about 600m along Back Beach to reach an ambulance, before being flown to the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Local Jeff Schmucker was shooting photos of Mr Campion and about 15 others when the attack occurred. "I was shooting three surfers in the water ... and every time a set came in I'd snap a couple of photos, but then those guys just disappeared," he said. "They all went in at once, so that was a little strange."

When Mr Schmucker got further along the beach someone shouted that there had been a shark attack so he called emergency services. "He had lacerations on his wetsuit from his hip to his shoulder on his right side," he said. "The guys ... said they thought his injuries were possibly life threatening so I ran back up to call the police back.

"The guys were quite worried for him (but) by the time he was going into the ambulance he was breathing strongly and looking rejuvenated and he was conscious."

The shark-attack victim is carried from the beach on his surfboard. Picture: Jeff Schmucker
Source: AdelaideNow

Mr Schmucker, who has surfed the Back Beach area for the past 20 years, said sharks were a growing threat.

"Every surfer on the West Coast, in their right mind, would think about sharks every time they went surfing," he said. "You see them this time of the year, coming into spring. But there's been an alarming increase in the amount of great whites because the large gillnet fisheries have been ousted from SA waters due to the protection of the Australian sea lion."

An SA Ambulance spokeswoman said Mr Campion was initially treated for severe lacerations to his upper arm and body and blood loss at Streaky Bay Hospital, before being flown to Adelaide.

Since 1974, eight people have been killed by sharks on the state's West Coast, including abalone diver Peter Clarkson in February 2011.

SOURCE: Thomas Conlin, Adelaide Now, July 31, 2012,
<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/shark-bites-surfers-arm-at-streaky-bay/story-fndo471r-1226439609049>

Shark attacks surfer

A 47-YEAR-OLD man was airlifted to the Royal Adelaide Hospital after he was attacked by a shark at Streaky Bay on Tuesday afternoon.

John Campion, from Sceale Bay, was bitten on the right arm and shoulder by a shark at about 2.20pm on Tuesday while surfing with family and friends at Back Beach. Police suspect the shark involved in the attack was a bronze whaler.

Streaky Bay man Jeff Schmucker was at Back Beach photographing a group of surfers when the attack took place. He said he was photographing a group of three surfers, one who he believed was Mr Campion, when the surfers suddenly disappeared onto the beach. Mr Schmucker said he looked through his photographs after the attack, which showed two surfers "frantically" paddling towards the beach, with the third surfer nowhere to be seen. "A guy saw me coming and he screamed there was a shark attack," he said. "Half a dozen (people) carried him (Mr Campion) up through the beach." It is believed a group of about 15 to 17 surfers were in the water during the time of the attack, surfing different breaks up and down the beach.

Mr Schmucker said Mr Campion, known by locals as JC, was an experienced surfer who had been surfing his whole life. He said it was the first time he knew that a shark attack had occurred at Back Beach, which was a popular surfing spot for locals, however there had been one at a nearby beach in 1974.

Mr Campion was taken to the Streaky Bay Hospital with non-life threatening injuries after the attack before he was transferred to the Royal Adelaide Hospital later that evening.

SOURCE: Kimberlee Meier, Port Lincoln Times, August 1, 2012, <http://www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/shark-attacks-surfer/2642727.aspx>



Bronze Whaler suspected in surfer attack

Police say bite marks from a West Coast shark attack on Tuesday suggest a Bronze Whaler is responsible.

A Sceale Bay man is in a stable condition in the Royal Adelaide Hospital, after surgery last night.

Witnesses initially thought the shark was a White Pointer, but police say the shape and size of the bite marks on the man's arm and surfboard are more in line with a Bronze Whaler.

Tobin Woolford from the local surfers association says Bronze Whalers and Great Whites are found near the beach in question, attracted to schools of salmon. "There has been a few sightings of bronze whalers. I haven't heard too many of white pointers but areas out the back and towards Cape Bauer, Olive Island, they seem to frequent there a reasonable amount. Quite a few fishermen are seeing them around that area."

Local surfer and fisherman Jeff Schmucker witnessed the attack and said surfers on the West Coast would be more aware of the threat of shark attacks. "It'll shake up the people that are surfing here and definitely there will be some people pulling back that's for sure."

Mr Schmucker was at the beach when the shark attacked, and said there was little warning. "I spoke to one of the guys who was in the water with him and he's a reliable source, he's been a long time fisherman on the West Coast. He said it was a large Great White and he said the shark just attacked out of the blue and just launched into the guy, into his side."

Mr Schmucker said there were about seven surfers in the water when the attack occurred. He said surfers and onlookers looked shaken as they helped the shark victim off the beach. "By the time I saw the other six guys that carried the victim on a surfboard, they were shaken up obviously, and quite puffed from getting through the heavy sand carrying a guy on a surfboard."

Mr Schmucker said Great White Shark numbers in the Streaky Bay region were increasing as a result of an extended ban on gill net fishing around sea lion colonies. "We haven't been taking these animals out in our gill net fishery and the gill net fishery has been shut down due to the protection of the Australian Sea Lion, so I attribute that to more sharks in the water along the coast."

SOURCE: ABC West Coast SA, August 2, 2012,
<http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2012/07/31/3557676.htm>



Mauled surfer John Campion warned mates of shark's presence

JOHN Campion's first action when he surfaced from being dragged under by a giant shark was to warn his mates to get out of the water.

The 47-year-old mines rigger, his right arm and torso shredded by the jaws of what is thought to have been a 4m-long bronze whaler shark, then paddled himself to the safety of the Streaky Bay beach.

Surfers who were in the water at the time have told how they heard a splash behind them as Mr Campion, a veteran surfer from nearby Sceale Bay, was paddling out for another wave. He was dragged under, with the shark also biting into his board. When he surfaced he yelled: "Get the f-- out of here ... shark."

Mr Campion's daughter, Emma, had been preparing to head out to the Back Beach break for a surf with the group of about 15 surfers. She was on the beach when her dad made it to within metres of the shore, where the two surfers Mr Campion had warned, Aldo Legovini and Paul Kerry, raced to his aid.

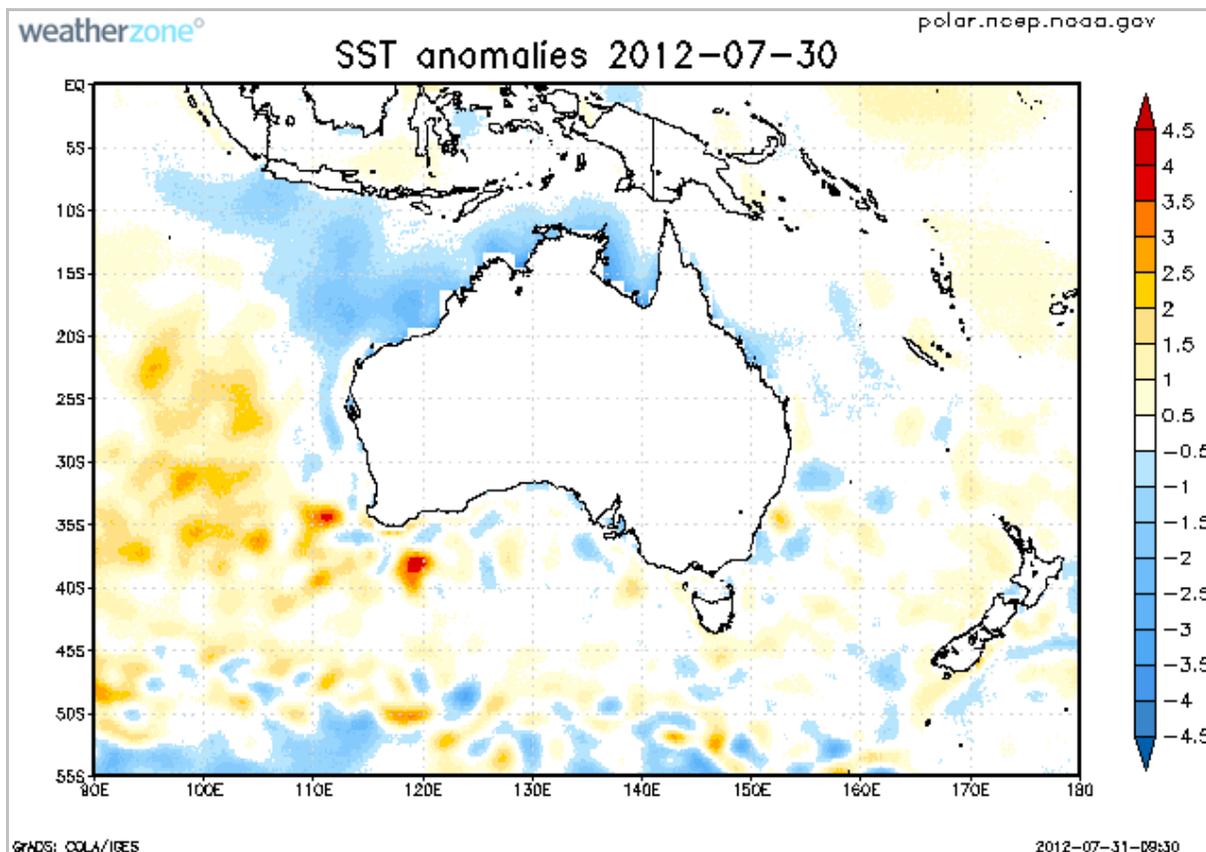
Another friend, former football teammate and fellow surfer Dale Elliott, ran to help stabilise Mr Campion and carry him up the beach to an ambulance. "He was only just conscious," Mr Elliott said. "They had wrapped his arm up and we loaded him on to a surfboard to carry him up the beach. It would have taken us up to 30 minutes to get him up the beach ... the dead weight and walking through the thick sand made it tough going. "He wasn't really talking. I was very surprised he didn't pass out. He is a bloody tough man."

Mr Elliott said the attack and rescue was a bit of a blur for all those involved. "Aldo said he saw the shark hit him ... but only saw the fin," he said. "They thought it was a great white ... whatever it was, it was pretty big."

Mr Campion underwent surgery on Tuesday night at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The hospital reported yesterday he was recovering and in a stable condition with non-life-threatening injuries.

Police have inspected Mr Campion's surfboard, which has a significant bite mark near its tip. The shape of the teeth marks in the board are consistent with the jaws of a bronze whaler shark, experts say.

SOURCE: The Telegraph, August 1, 2012,
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/national/mauled-surfer-john-campion-warned-mates-of-sharks-presence/story-fndo2izk-1226440648277>



The sea surface temperature anomaly (SSTA) is the difference between the observed SST and the climatological SST. These anomalies are calculated on a weekly basis.

Positive SSTAs are usually correlated with increased regions of convection (cloudiness and rainfall) while negative SSTAs are usually correlated to reduced convection.

SSTAs can be used as an indicator of the phase of global climate fluctuations, such as the El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

The data displayed in this map is the weekly average, centred on the date shown.

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John Campion shows the bite mark in his surfboard.

Shark bite survivor offers tips to avoid being attacked

A surfer bitten twice by a white pointer has offered advice to beachgoers on how to avoid being attacked. John Campion was attacked by a shark while surfing near Streaky Bay on South Australia's Eyre Peninsula in 2012. "Took me by the arm and took me under for a while, just had to fight it off, had a chance to hit it in the eye," he said.

He made it to shore and then hospital with the help of family and friends. John Campion shows the bite mark in his surfboard. Nerves in his arm were severed in five places, but surgeons at the Royal Adelaide Hospital were able to repair them. "They've given my hand back, my fingers back, and my thumb back where before I had nothing," Mr Campion said.

He says ocean awareness can easily save lives. His advice is to take 15 minutes to watch the sea before diving in. "If there's any school's of fish or anything unusual, well then, you know not to swim in there," he said. "You always look for rips and currents and that's very important for the kids."

So far this week there have been 11 shark sightings along South Australia's coastline, from Semaphore to Normanville.

Fellow shark attack survivor Rodney Fox also had this advice. "If you've seen sharks in the area, leave it for a few days until they've moved on," Mr Fox said.

SOURCE: Peter Caldicott, 7News Adelaide, January 16, 2014,
<http://au.news.yahoo.com/a/20800963/shark-bite-survivor-offers-tips-to-avoid-being-attacked/>