

ACTIVITY: Swimming

CASE: GSAF 2013.06.18

DATE: Tuesday June 18, 2013

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Pacific Ocean at Mahaiula Beach, Kona Coast State Park, Kekahakai, Hawaii, USA.

NAME: James Kerrigan

DESCRIPTION: He is a 28-year-old male from Kailua-Kona. He moved to Kona nine months ago. He works for the Transportation Security Administration.



Kekahakai State Park's Mahaiula Beach

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE:

SEA CONDITIONS: The water was "perfectly calm and clear" according to Kerrigan.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 100 yards

DEPTH OF WATER: 12 feet

TIME: Just before 12h50

NARRATIVE: "It was a beautiful day," reported James Kerrigan. He was swimming with his fiancée when he was bitten. He was swimming to shore when he was bitten by the shark. "I just felt something grabbing on my back leg and at first I just thought it was one of my friends messing with me," Kerrigan said. "It bit me. It was a quick bite. It thrashed around a little bit. And then, boom! Gone! Once I saw the blood, the adrenaline kind of kicked in and I don't even remember anything beyond getting to shore, just swimming in as fast as I could."



INJURY: Right calf and thigh bitten. The bite missed tendons, arteries and bones, although some were visible in the bite, which caused major blood loss from his thigh and calf. The injuries were not life-threatening. Kerrigan said the major damage is to his calf. "There's multiple deep lacerations," said Kerrigan. "They had to sew a lot of the muscle back together. I got real lucky. It didn't break any bones. It didn't cut any arteries or anything."

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: The Hawaii County Fire Department Chopper 2, based in South Kohala, transported the patient to the Kona Community Hospital. He was discharged on Thursday, June 20, 2013.

SPECIES: Kerrigan did not see the shark. After the incident, the county fire department spotted a large tiger shark (12 to 14 feet in length) in the water while flying the patient to the North Kona Community Hospital. DLNR Division of Conservation and Resources

Enforcement officers and state parks staff evacuated Mahai'ula Bay and nearby Kua Bay, closed access to the bay and posted shark warning signs at the park 2.6 miles north of the Kona airport. The Department of Land and Natural Resources reported that the beaches will remain closed through at least Thursday morning after eight reef sharks, five to six feet long, were reportedly spotted by the county fire department helicopter in the vicinity of Mahai'ula Bay.

SOURCES: Hawaii News Now, Tuesday June 18, 2013,
<http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/story/22626748/br-eaking-officials-say-swimmer-bitten-by-shark-at-big-island-beach>

KHON2, Wednesday, June 19, 2013,
<http://www.khon2.com/2013/06/19/man-recovering-after-shark-attack-off-kona-beach/>

Amador Ledger Dispatch, July 9, 2013,
http://www.ledger-dispatch.com/news/local_news/article_5c4e2556-e8c6-11e2-b8df-0019bb30f31a.html



James Kerrigan