

*The blue shark that bit Mark Rackley  
Photo by Mark Rackley*



*Mark Rackley*

**ACTIVITY:** Photographing a shark

**CASE:** [GSAF 2015.04.13](#)

**DATE:** Saturday April 13, 2015

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean off Mile Marker 20 in the Florida Keys, Monroe County, Florida, USA.

**NAME:** Mark Rackley

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 48-year-old male, a shark videographer from Big Pine Key, who has filmed sharks for Discovery Channel and National Geographic. His website is:

<http://www.markrackleyproductions.com/about-mark.html>

## **BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** Waning Crescent, 33% of the Moon was illuminated. Last Quarter, April 11, 2015.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 300 yards.

**NARRATIVE:** Mark Rackley had never seen a blue shark in the Keys so when he spotted the shark, he followed it. "I maneuvered to be in front of her to take photos. When I was over her, she swung her head around and clamped onto my shoulder and bicep. It happened before I could blink."

Rackley let go of his camera and grabbed the shark, which immediately let him go. But even while being bit, Rackley said, "I thought to myself, 'What a beautiful shark'"

**INJURY:** Lacerations to shoulder and left bicep

**TREATMENT:** Rackley described the bite as initially painful but numbing after a few seconds. It caused him to be lightheaded and he passed out in the emergency room. He was transported to Lower Keys Medical Center on Stock Island where the injuries were repaired with 58 stitches, each three quarters of an inch apart so any infectious germs could drain from the wound. Recovery was smooth and infection-free.

**SPECIES:** Blue shark, eight to nine feet in length. Rackley said his bite won't stop him from interacting with sharks in the future. He admitted, "I kind of made this happen; this didn't have anything to do with shark behavior."

**SOURCES:** Miami Herald, April 25, 2015

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/florida-keys/article19457022.html>

KeysInfoNet.com, April 25, 2015

[http://www.keysnet.com/2015/04/24/502411\\_big-pine-man-is-bit-by-a-shark.html?rh=1](http://www.keysnet.com/2015/04/24/502411_big-pine-man-is-bit-by-a-shark.html?rh=1)

Daily Mail (UK), April 30, 2015, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3062244/Veteran-diver-insists-shark-attack-left-needing-58-stitches-fault-said-people-not-scared-incredible-animals.html>