

ACTIVITY: Scuba diving

CASE: [GSAF 1993.06.11.a](#)

DATE: Friday June 11, 1993

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Caribbean Sea at Santa Rosa Shallows, a dive site on the southwest side of Cozumel Island, Mexico.

NAME: Mary Eggemeyer

DESCRIPTION: She was a 42-year-old female from Allen, Texas, and head of the Dallas Youth Services Corps. She was an experienced diver. She had been to Cozumel five times, and was on the weeklong trip with six students and five parents and teachers of the Winston School in Dallas, Texas, where one of her three children was a student. She is a former board member of the school, which serves 150 students with dyslexia and attention-deficit disorders. The trip was not officially sanctioned but had become an annual ritual, according to Dr. Rita Sherbenou, head of the Winston School.

BACKGROUND

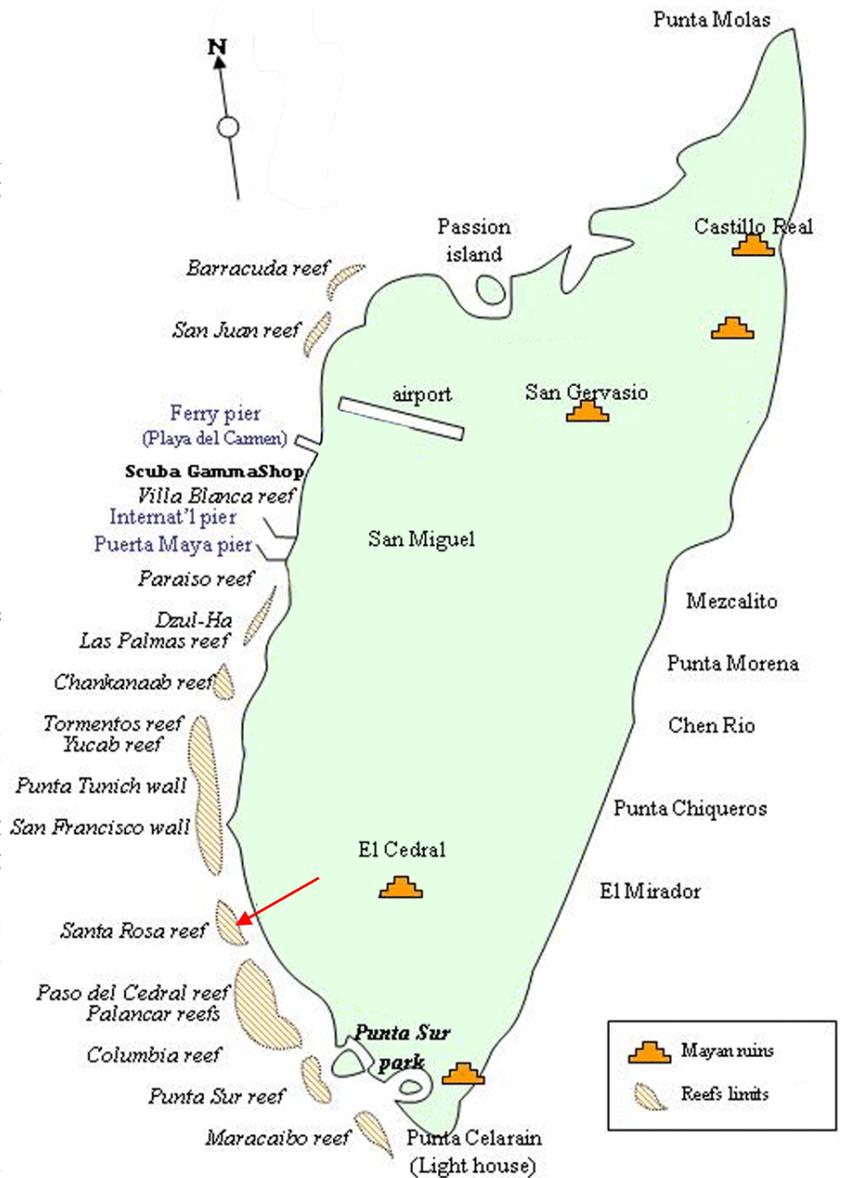
MOON PHASE: Full Moon, June 15, 1993

ENVIRONMENT: Santa Rosa Shallows ranges from depths of 20 to 50 feet and is characterized by healthy patches of coral teeming with fish and sponges. Divers often visit the area at the end of a deep wall dive as shallow second dive. There is a pure white sandy bottom from area to area with a relatively mild current. Sponges are abundant as well as are a variety of hard corals, angel fish, box fish, snapper and many trigger fish.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 200 metres

TIME: 19h30

NARRATIVE: This was Mary Eggemeyer's fourth dive on this week-long trip, her second at Santa Rosa Shallows. The excursion started about 18h00 and the dive was to last 40 minutes.



Ms. Eggemeyer was the last diver to enter the water. By then, she had drifted slightly past the ledge (50'), where the sea floor drops off. The American instructor reported that as he returned another wayward diver to the boat he saw Ms. Eggemeyer swimming without difficulty back to the ledge. But within moments the local dive guide came to surface saying he saw a dive light going over the ledge very fast. After a head count found Ms. Eggemeyer missing, eight vessels in the area joined a search that continued until early the next morning.

INJURY: Next day, at 08h30 the diver's remains were found floating near a beach. Both legs had been severed at the buttocks, the left arm was missing and there was severe damage to the abdominal cavity.

SPECIES: The incident was thought to involve a tiger shark but shark involvement prior to death is not known.

SOURCE: The Dallas Morning News, June 15, 1993



Santa Rosa Shallows