

**ACTIVITY:** Disentangling fishing net  
**CASE:** [GSAF 2000.08.27.R](#)  
**DATE:** Reported Sunday August 27, 2000  
**LOCATION:** The incident took place in Prince William Sound, Alaska, USA.

**NAME:** Bruce Wright  
**DESCRIPTION:** He is an ecologist with the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service.

**NARRATIVE:** Wright was conducting research on salmon sharks. Usually, the process of netting one of the 400-pound sharks — and getting it into a hammock-like crib so it can be measured and tagged — comes off without a hitch. But not always.

"In this case," said Wright, "the shark got caught in the webbing of the net and ended up outside of the cribbing on the back deck with all this webbing wrapped around it. So, Lee Hulbert, who works with us on the shark project, and I jumped on top of the webbing and started pulling the webbing clear of the shark's snout so that we could get it into the crib and then get it off the boat. As soon as we cleared the netting from the snout of the shark—and they seem to have a lot of flexibility, we've noticed—it turned around and grabbed my leg. Lee immediately grabbed the shark's head and tried to pull it off. The shark shook my leg a little bit and ripped a big hole in my Helly-Hansen rain gear and a big hole in my Carharts. So there was this big open gash in my Carharts with all this blood and then the shark turned around with this big chunk of rain gear in its mouth."

**INJURY:** Wright was back to work soon after his shark encounter, having suffered only minor cuts.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Salmon shark. This is a provoked incident because it involved a netted shark.

**SOURCE:** Bruce Wright



Doing the shark tango: For Bruce Wright of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the price of science is letting a salmon shark take a chunk out of your leg. "They seem to have a lot of flexibility," he said. Photo by Jim Lavrakas, Anchorage Daily News.