

ACTIVITY: Shark fishing

CASE: GSAF 2006.12.06

DATE: Wednesday December 6, 2006*

LOCATION: The incident took place at Cape Vidal in the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

28°07,7'S, 32°33,7'E

NAME: Peter Willoughby

DESCRIPTION: He is a 25-year-old male from Pretoria. He was wearing blue shorts.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Full Moon, December 6, 2006.

SEA CONDITIONS: At St Lucia and Cape Vidal muddy water from the Umfolozi River discoloured the sea. Both the Wetland Park Authority and Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, as a general precaution, warn visitors to the coastal areas of the park not to enter the sea after sunset. The sea surface temperature was 25°C.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: Five metres

DEPTH OF WATER: 12 inches to waist-deep

TIME: 20h00

NARRATIVE: Willoughby, a rock and surf angler, was fishing with other experienced fishermen. He was standing in the water when the shark was hooked off the beach. As he was trying to unhook the shark, a wave washed the shark against him and it bit him.

INJURY: The angler sustained injuries to his hand, thigh and calf. One of the shark's teeth apparently went into his right thigh and then scraped down his calf. He was also bitten on the hand as the shark tried to roll away from him. "The young man was very lucky it was a raggie, which has sharp, pointed teeth rather than cutters," said EKZNW spokesman Jeff Gaisford.

FIRST AID /TREATMENT: Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife staff immediately arranged for the fisherman to be taken to St Lucia, where he was treated by Dr Jan Combrink. Some 63 or 65 sutures were needed to repair the fisherman's injuries. An ambulance was also summoned but Willoughby chose to return to Cape Vidal and return home on Thursday.

SPECIES: The incident involved a two-metre, 150-kilogram ragged tooth shark.

NOTE: *Pretoria News and the Natal Mercury reported that the incident took place Tuesday evening, December 5, 2006, while Mr. Willoughby and the Citizen reported that the incident



took place Wednesday evening, December 6, 2006.

This is considered a provoked incident because it involved a hooked shark.

SOURCES: Peter Willoughby; Peter Immerz and Christofer Johannsen, GSAF; SharkAttackSurvivors.com;
Pretoria News, December 8, 2006, page 4; http://www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=14&art_id=vn20061208011644640C718820;
The Citizen, December 14, 2006, <http://www.citizen.co.za/index/article.aspx?pDesc=29203,1,22>;
Chris Jenkins, Natal Mercury, December 8 and 9, 2006