

**ACTIVITY:** Body boarding

**CASE:** [GSAF 2007.04.22](#)

**DATE:** Sunday April 22, 2007

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Atlantic Ocean at Waveland Beach on Hutchinson Island, St. Lucie County, Florida, USA.

27.5°N, 80.3°W

**NAME:** Matthew Honyak

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 12-year-old male, a student at Falcon Cove Middle School, Weston.



### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** At 12h53, there were scattered clouds, visibility was 10 miles [16.1 km], and there had been no rain. The air temperature was 75.9°F [24.4°C], dew point 54°F [12.2°C], humidity 46%, sea level pressure 30.21 in [1022.8 hPa] and wind direction was ENE at 13.8 mph [22.2 km/h].

**MOON PHASE:** First Quarter, April 24, 2007

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 25 yards

**TIME:** 12h30

**NARRATIVE:** Matthew was visiting the beach as part of a friend's 12th birthday. He was body boarding with five of his friends when he opened his eyes underwater and saw the shark about a leg's length away. He told authorities he saw the mouth of a shark as it bit his left ankle. lifeguards raised a red flag warning on the beach, keeping people out of the water.

This was the fourth incident in the waters off Hutchinson Island in the past six weeks. On March 11, at Tiger Shores Beach in Martin County 29-year-old Adam McMichael sustained deep lacerations to his right forearm. Less than three weeks later, on March 31, there were two incidents within an hour of each other in St. Lucie County: surfer Larry Olson was bitten on his right ankle at Normandy Beach, and a 9-year-old boy sustained minor injuries to his buttock and thigh at Waveland Beach.

**INJURY:** The boy sustained puncture marks from his left ankle down to his toes.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** Paramedics transported the boy to Martin Memorial Health Center. He was treated and released the same day, according to hospital records.

**SPECIES:** It was thought the incident involved a blacktip shark or a spinner shark. Jordan Schwartz, owner of Stuart's Ohana Surf Shop, said it's not uncommon for surfers to see 30 or so spinner sharks in a day. Generally these small-toothed sharks are chasing bait fish and sometimes nip swimmers and surfers after mistaking them for food. "They'll just bite you and let go," Schwartz said. "You'll get stitches and you'll be surfing again in two to three weeks."

**SOURCES:** CP24, City News; Jeremy Ashton, PC. Palm; Sun-Sentinel.com

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/southflorida/sfl-423shark.0,1300735.story?track=rss>

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