



**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** [GSAF 2007.06.12](#)

**DATE:** Tuesday June 12, 2007

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Gulf of Mexico at Turtle Beach, Siesta Key, Sarasota County, Florida, USA.

*27.3°N, 82.5°W*

**NAME:** Jeanne Schaefer

**DESCRIPTION:** She is a visitor from France and an avid swimmer. Both Jeanne and her husband, Hans, have been coming to Siesta Key since 1981.

### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** At 10h53, Sarasota recorded clear skies and visibility of 10 miles [16.1 m]. The air temperature was 84.9°F [29.4°C], dew point 71.1°F [21.7°C], humidity 63%, sea level pressure 29.97 inches [1014.8 hPa], and wind direction was West at 11.5 mph [18.5 km/h].

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon, June 14, 2007.

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The water was very murky.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Siesta Key is located approximately 60 miles south of Tampa. The Key is famous for its powder-fine sand; known as quartz sand, the grains squeak when you walk on them. J.R. Ayers, manager of lifeguard operations on Siesta Key, said it was not uncommon for lifeguards to spot sharks in the water, “especially this time of year with the tarpon still running.” Although none of his staff had observed sharks coming close to swimmers, he said when they spot sharks near the designated swim areas off the Siesta Key Public Beach, the lifeguards blow horns to warn people out of the water. Most of the time, Ayers said of the sharks, “they’re just kind of passing by,” heading to Big Pass, where they readily find prey.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** Seven yards

**TIME:** 11h00

**NARRATIVE:** Jeanne Schaefer was swimming with her husband. A few other people were in the water at the time, but none were close when she was bitten by the shark.

**INJURY:** Her right foot was bitten by the shark.

**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** A neighbor helped Hans rush his wife first to an emergency clinic on U.S. 41. However, the staff at that facility “said it was impossible for them” to undertake treatment, according to Jeanne. They referred her to Sarasota Memorial Hospital, then called ahead to make certain the Emergency Room staff was waiting for the Schaefers and their neighbor, Jeanne said.

The wound was not bleeding profusely afterwards, Schaefer said. Still, at the hospital, a doctor put 18 stitches in her foot. “It was not a long time between when I was bitten,” she added, and when she received medical attention.

Schaefer told the Pelican Press on June 28 that she was “really improving.” In a second interview on July 2, Schaefer said, “As soon as it was possible, I returned to the sea.”

**SPECIES:** Not identified. The size of Jeanne’s wound indicates she was bitten by a small shark about three to four feet in length, possibly a blacktip shark. It is likely that the shark was simply swimming in the shallows and blundered into her.

**SOURCES:** Rachel Brown Hackney, Sun-Herald, July 13, 2007  
<http://www.sun-herald.com/Newsstory.cfm?pubdate=071307&story=tp9ew15.htm&folder=NewsArchive2>’;  
*et al*

