

ACTIVITY: Wading

CASE: GSAF 2009.12.29

DATE: Tuesday December 29, 2009

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Indian Ocean at Port Alfred, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

NAME: Simon Bruce

DESCRIPTION: He is a 20-year-old male from KwaZulu-Natal.



BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Full Moon, December 31, 2009

SEA CONDITIONS: The sea was flat, but the water was murky.

ENVIRONMENT: The incident took place on a sandbank.

DEPTH OF WATER: Chest-deep

TIME: 08h30

NARRATIVE: “I was walking out into the sea when I felt a bump on my foot. I didn’t feel the bite at all,” said Bruce. “Then I felt the shark rub against the top of my legs and I freaked. I assumed straightaway it was a shark.” He immediately headed back to the beach. While he was wading back to shore his foot started to “feel funny” and he realised he had been bitten.

INJURY: He sustained five lacerations to his left foot, three of which required sutures.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: Two friends on the beach wrapped his foot in a towel and took him to hospital. He received an anti-tetanus injection, the bite wounds were disinfected and stitched, and his foot was bandaged.

SPECIES: Bruce did not see the shark. Jeremy Cliff of the Natal Shark Board speculated that a ragged-tooth shark may have been responsible. “Without having sight of the wound, it is difficult to say with any certainty, but it appears on the face of it to be a fairly superficial injury, which would be consistent with a bite by a ragged-tooth shark,” he said. He said this species is common in the Port Alfred area and is often encountered close inshore.