

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** GSAF 2010.11.30.b

**DATE:** Tuesday November 30, 2010

**LOCATION:** The attack took place in the Red Sea at Coral Bay, Sharm El-Sheikh, South Sinai, Egypt.

**NAME:** Lyudmila Stolyarova

**DESCRIPTION:** She is a 70-year-old female from Moscow, Russia, a guest at Coral Bay Resort.



*Lyudmila Stolyarova*

### **BACKGROUND**

**WEATHER:** At 15h00, Sharm El-Sheik recorded clear skies and an air temperature of 84.2°F [29°C], dew point 39.2°F [4°C], humidity 20%, sea level pressure 30.01 inches and wind direction was NNE at 5.8 mph.

**MOON PHASE:** New Moon, December 5, 2010

**SEA CONDITIONS:** The sea surface temperature was 82°F [28°C] to 84.2°F [29°C], warmer than usual for this time of year. Underwater visibility was approximately 10 metres due to turbulence. (Visibility is normally up to 100 metres at this location.)

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 40 metres?

**DISTANCE FROM THE JETTY:** 10 metres

**DEPTH OF WATER:** 10 to 12 metres

**TIME:** 14h55

**NARRATIVE:** Lyudmila's husband, Vladimir Stolyarov, said that his wife asked him to go for a swim but he wanted to read a book and declined. About 30 minutes later a woman ran up to him and said something terrible had happened to his wife. "I jumped on my feet and saw people carrying my wife on a sun bed. I ran up to her and could hear her gasping 'Shark! Shark! Shark!' She somehow managed to push the shark away from her. The shark bit off her arm, but she managed to swim closer to the shore. Before she got out of the water, the shark attacked again and bit off her foot," Vladimir said.

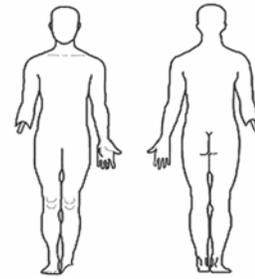
Hassan Ali, a guide at Coral Bay resort, entered the water at 14h30 and had been diving with a client for 25 minutes. About 10 minutes before the end of their dive, the shark approached him. Hassan assumed an upright vertical position, arms held close to his body in an effort to make himself look larger, a posture that often deters an overly-inquisitive shark. This shark, however, circled the two divers, several times, then swam between the two divers, and then approached Hassan from behind and swam above his head. Hassan described the shark's movements during this period as "nervous and tense". Then he saw the shark shoot upwards to Lyudmila, who was on the surface, grab her leg and push her above the surface. Hassan saw that the woman's foot was gone, but the large amount of blood in the water obscured further observation.

Hassan took his client over to divemaster/guide Fabio Casarotti, who was 20 to 40 metres from the reef and handed her over to him. Then Hassan surfaced, shouting to swimmers to get out of the water and initiated first aid to Lyudmila.

**INJURIES:** Left Foot: Severed at ankle, surgically amputated below the knee.

Left Hand: Defense wounds to palm and fingers. It appears that she pushed the shark away with a flat open hand, sustaining these lacerations.

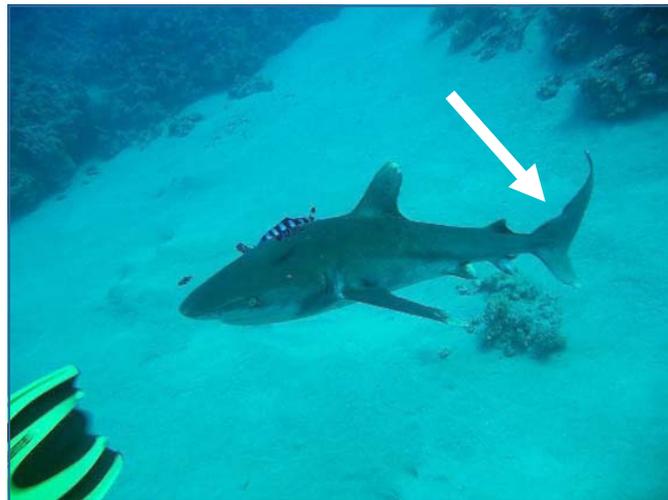
Right Lower Arm: The forearm was severed below the elbow, bone denuded. The remaining wound is elongated, indicating she was able to pull her arm partly out of the shark's mouth before it was severed. It appears the shark grasped her forearm and she reacted instinctively.



**FIRST AID / TREATMENT:** When Hassan reached the jetty and surfaced, the lifeguards had just picked up Olga Martskino, who had been attacked less than 15 minutes earlier at Maritim resort. At the jetty, Hassan attempted to control Lyudmila's blood loss and the ambulance arrived three or four minutes later. Both women were transported by ambulance to the hospital in Sharm El-Sheikh.

According to the hospital records, Lyudmila arrived at the hospital at 16h15. Her wounds were cleaned and sutured. Surgeons amputated her left leg below the knee, the right arm below the elbow and a finger on her left hand. Her hemoglobin was 8.5 ml after two units of blood were given. The two women were later airlifted to Nasser Hospital in Cairo. On Sunday December 5, 2010, they were flown to Russia by charter jet and arrived at Sheremetyevo International Airport near Moscow. Both women were hospitalized in Moscow for further treatment.

**SPECIES:** The attack involved a female oceanic whitetip shark approximately three metres in length. The shark was identified by Hassan as the attacker. He saw the shark just after it attacked Olga, and moments later as it attacked Lyudmilla. His client also took the photograph of the shark (at right) minutes before it bit Lyudmilla. The shark has a distinctive notch in her upper caudal fin. The shark was observed and filmed by divers in Ras Za'atar (Ras Mohamed National Park) around midday on December 3, 2010. Although she did not display any aggression toward the divers, the sighting was reported to officials immediately. On December 7, 2010, around midday, the shark was photographed again in Ras Mohamed and interacted with divers. Later in the week Mohammed Salem showed us a video of a divemaster hand-feeding the same shark. The divemaster kept additional food for the shark in a fanny pack above his buttocks.



*After the shark attacked Lyudmila, it harassed Fabio and the client. The client took this photo of the shark as they were kicking at it to drive it away. Note the notch on the shark's upper caudal fin.*

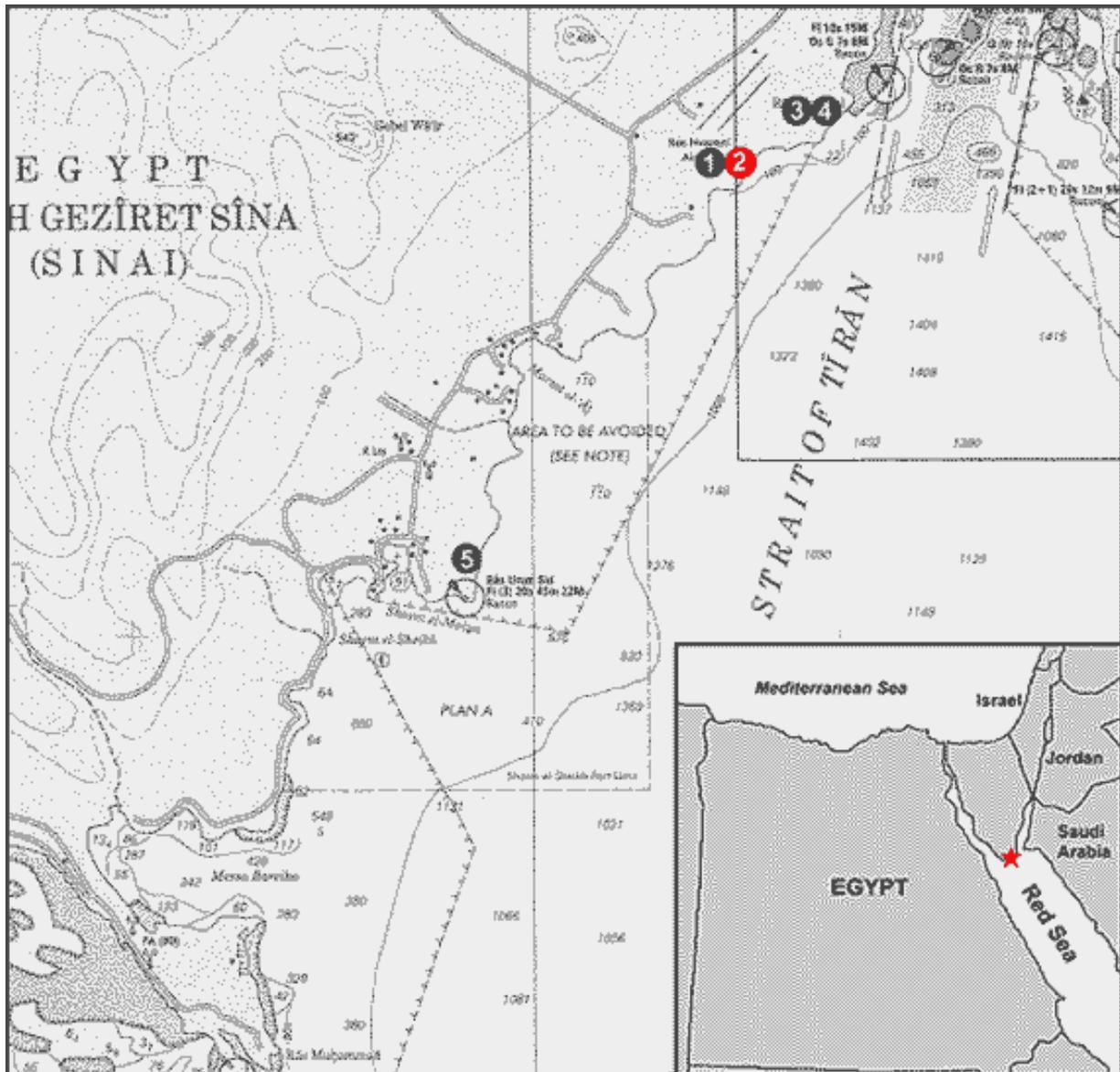
**DISCUSSION:** Multiple bites involve a very strong trigger. Food is one such trigger.

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Moments before attacking Lyudmila, the shark attacked Olga and removed her hand. "People must not feed sharks," said Hassan Ali, "The Russians (guests at the resort) feed bread to sharks, glass bottom boats feed the fish too."

**SOURCES:** Onsite Interviews with Hassan Ali (email: hassansal2@yahoo.com) who witnessed the attack, and divemaster Fabio Casarotti Interviews with medical personnel in Sharm-el-Sheik and Cairo, and interviews with medical personnel in Moscow by GSAF investigator and nurse Ekaterina Bryn.

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*This was the 2nd of a series of 5 attacks at Sharm-El-Sheikh from November 30 to December 5, 2010*