



ACTIVITY: Spearfishing
CASE: [GSAF 2013.01.13](#)
DATE: Sunday January 13, 2013
LOCATION: Great Mercury Island, New Zealand

NAME: Kim Bade
DESCRIPTION: He is a yachtsman from Tauranga.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, 2% of the Moon was illuminated.

ENVIRONMENT: The Mercury Islands lie off the northeast coast of New Zealand's North Island. They lie 8 kilometres (5 miles) off the coast of the Coromandel Peninsula, and 35 kilometres (22 miles) northeast of the town of Whitianga. The group is still occasionally referred to by the earlier name of *Iles d'Hausse*. Great Mercury Island is a 5,000-acre island owned by Michael Fay, a prominent New Zealand businessman. The private island, which features two luxurious residences, can be hired for around \$20,000 NZD per day.

NARRATIVE: Kim Bade was spearfishing with friends. He and friend Rob Povie had just pulled a large blue moki into another friend's inflatable boat in one of the island's deepwater bays. As the two began swimming back to their fishing spot, Kim dived to about 10m with his speargun in hand. "I had my hand off to the side, not really watching, and I felt this nip and I reflexed and pulled my hand in and looked around. I thought it was probably a fish so I looked around and instead of a fish there was this shark looking straight at me. So I rushed to the top and said, 'There's a shark, there's a shark'. But it momentarily disappeared."

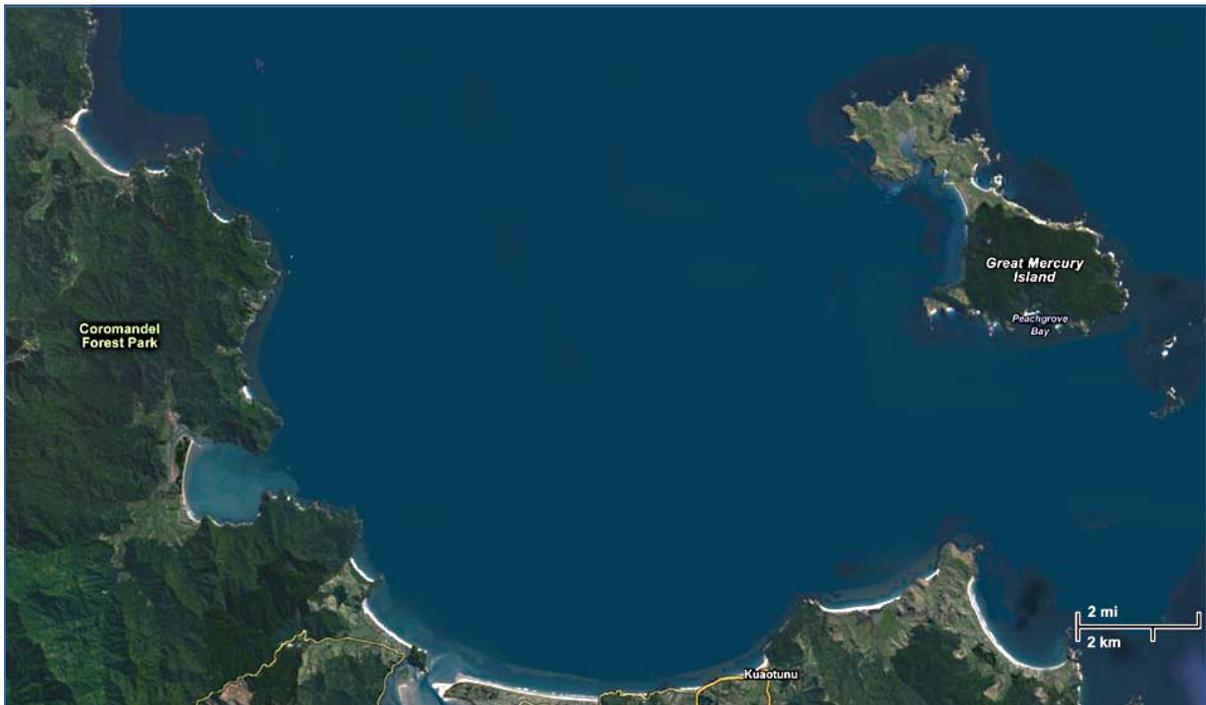
Kim waved to the friend in the boat for help. "At that moment the shark came back on Rob's side and sort of glided up to Rob. So he gave it a poke in the nose with his gun and it went away," he said.

Both men had floated in the water back to back, spearguns at the ready when the shark

returned. "It came back. It was probably 1.5m from us, trying to look at us. It was like that for about five or 10 seconds but it felt like a long time." After a few prods with the spearguns the shark left and the men got into the boat. Kim thinks the shark was probably more curious about the speargun rather than hungry for lunch. He hadn't realised he was bitten until afterward. "I think it must have been a bit inquisitive ... and my finger got in the way," Kim said. "It was the smallest bite from the biggest shark."

INJURY: Minor laceration to finger.

SPECIES: According to Kim, the incident involved bronze whaler shark about three metres in length.



Blue moki, *Latridopsis ciliaris*

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'It was the smallest bite from the biggest shark'

A fun fishing trip with mates turned into a thrilling man-versus-shark stand-off for a Tauranga yachtsman, who escaped his unexpected encounter with just a tiny scar.

Keen yachtsman Kim Bade had been spearfishing with friends at Great Mercury Island last Sunday when they encountered the friendly bronze whaler.

Mr Bade and friend Rob Povie had just pulled a large blue moki into another friend's inflatable boat in one of the island's deepwater bays.



As the two began swimming back to their fishing spot, Mr Bade had dived to about 10m with his speargun in hand. "I had my hand off to the side, not really watching, and I felt this nip and I reflexed and pulled my hand in and looked around. I thought it was probably a fish so I looked around and instead of a fish there was this shark looking straight at me," he said last night of his encounter.

Mr Bade estimated the shark to be a three-metre-long bronze whaler.

"So I rushed to the top and said, 'There's a shark, there's a shark'. But it momentarily disappeared." Mr Bade had tried waving to the friend in the boat for help. "At that moment the shark came back on Rob's side and sort of glided up to Rob. So he gave it a poke in the nose with his gun and it went away."

Both men had floated in the water back to back, spearguns at the ready when the shark returned. "It came back. It was probably 1.5m from us, trying to look at us. It was like that for about five or 10 seconds but it felt like a long time." After a few prods with the spearguns the shark left and the men got into the boat.

Back on dry land a few days later, Mr Bade thinks the shark was probably more curious about the speargun rather than hungry for lunch. He hadn't realised he was bitten until afterward. "I think it must have been a bit inquisitive ... and my finger got in the way," Mr Bade said. "It was the smallest bite from the biggest shark."

The Shark Research Institute says the bronze whaler shark is known for biting people, particularly spearfishers, and is a fast-moving shark that can leap out of the water. Bronze whalers were often found in warm temperate to subtropical waters and around offshore islands in deep water.

SOURCE: Kiri Gillespie of the Bay of Plenty Times Friday Jan 18, 2013
<http://www.bayofplentytimes.co.nz/news/diver-nurses-smallest-bite-from-biggest-shark/1722295/>