

**ACTIVITY:** Feeding stingrays

**CASE:** [GSAF 2016.02.10.R](#)

**DATE:** Reported February 10, 2016

**LOCATION:** The incident took place in the Caribbean Sea at Stingray City Bar, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands.

19°22'33.18"N, 81°18'16.59"W

**NAME:** Sir Richard Branson

**DESCRIPTION:** He is a 65-year-old male and Britain's fourth richest man. He has floated down the Thames with the Sex Pistols, ballooned across the Atlantic, and been knighted by the Queen as he built his Virgin empire. He owns his own island and plans to send wealthy tourists into orbit for £130,000. He is also a shark and stingray conservationist.

### BACKGROUND

The stingrays began frequenting the area decades ago when fisherman cleaned fish on the shallow sand bars. The normally shy stingrays gathered to feast on the remains of the cleaned fish. Over time, the stingrays began to associate the sound of a boat motor with food. In the late 1980s, divers started feeding squid to the stingrays and the area became a tourist attraction.

**NARRATIVE:** Richard Branson joined renowned ocean conservationist Guy Harvey to observe the rays up close at Stingray City Sandbar. "We were surrounded by stingrays, as well as stunning coral reefs and tropical fish," said Branson. "But the rays were feeding all around, and they mistook yours truly for their food. Suddenly I felt a painful sensation on my wrist – they have one heck of a painful bite! Rays are actually part of the shark family, so I've now been bitten by a shark. We made it back to shore and I put on a brave face as I got some treatment. I'm still proudly campaigning to protect rays, even if I did get kissed! Apparently it gives seven years good luck."

**INJURY:** Minor injury to wrist

**SPECIES:** Southern stingray, *Dasyatis americana*

**SOURCES:** Richard Branson, February 10, 2016

<https://www.virgin.com/richard-branson/kissed-shark-and-hit-door>

The Mirror, February 11, 2016

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/celebrity-news/richard-branson-left-bloodied-cut-7349411>

AOL, February 11, 2016

<http://travel.aol.co.uk/2016/02/11/richard-branson-bitten-by-shark-pictures-cayman-islands/>



Photo credit: Mirror

Richard Branson and his "stingray kissed" wrist



Photo credit: Guy Harvey

Stingray City Bar



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