



North Carolina Shark Attacks Project

Note: The following article describes the shark attack that occurred on August 15th, 1993 in Pamlico Sound near Brant Island Shoal in Carteret County. The article appeared in the *Wilmington Morning Star*, August 20th, 1993.

PAMLICO SOUND

Shark that bit woman was likely a bull shark

Associated Press

MOREHEAD CITY — A bull shark about seven feet long is being blamed for an attack on a swimmer in Pamlico Sound over the weekend, a shark specialist said Wednesday.

Frank Schwartz, a professor at the University of North Carolina Institute of Marine Sciences, based his conclusion on teeth marks and the shape of the woman's wounds. He said the shark's teeth left distinctive triangular gashes.

Bull sharks occasionally are found in the state's sounds, unlike some sharks that rarely leave ocean waters. Dr. Schwartz said they often swim near humans without incident.

"They're not out there to look you up and gobble you up," he said.

Bull sharks, like others found in North Carolina waters, are "almost no threat at all," he said. "It's just the circumstances — if you're right there at the right place and something sets them off."

Petra Rijdes, 19, an N.C. State University student from Hillsborough, suffered severe lacerations on her legs and abdomen after the attack Sunday morning. She was hospitalized for three days at Carteret General Hospital in Morehead City before being discharged Wednesday.

Coast Guard officials said Ms. Rijdes was attacked while she and another woman were holding onto a rope trailing behind her father's sailboat. The 35-foot boat was cruising near Brant Island Shoal, about halfway between the mouth of the Neuse River and Ocracoke.

The attack Sunday was the first shark attack reported in North Carolina in seven years. In 1986 a shark bit a surfer's hand near Masonboro Inlet off Wrightsville Beach.

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