



## North Carolina Shark Attacks Project

**Note:** The following article describes a shark attack that occurred on July 17th, 2000, at Wrightsville Beach in New Hanover County. The article appeared in the *Virginian-Pilot*, July 19th, 2000.

### **SURFER BITTEN, POSSIBLY BY SHARK, OFF THE COAST OF NORTH CAROLINA**

A 16-year-old surfer from Wilmington was attacked by what was believed to be a shark, marking the second such incident in a week in North Carolina waters.

Patrick G. Bruff was bitten Monday in the right foot while surfing near the Oceanic Pier. He was sitting on his board and dangling his feet in the water when he was bitten.

"You could see that he was bit pretty bad," said Justin Hovey, of Columbia, Md., who saw the attack from a deck at the nearby New Hanover Seaside Club.

Bruff told authorities he believed it was a shark, but doctors had not confirmed that it was a shark bite by Tuesday evening.

"It's not beyond the realm of possibility that it was a shark," said Andy Wood, with the N.C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher. "This time of year we have a lot of bait fish in the water, and predators follow that bait in."

Bruff was treated Monday and released at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, hospital officials said.

It was the third reported shark bite along North Carolina shores this summer, the second in the area in less than a week.

A 14-year-old surfer from Florida was attacked by a shark Sunday at Holden Beach, leaving him with gashes in his foot, a puncture wound in his heel and cuts on his toes.

And an Ohio girl vacationing with her family at Pine Island was attacked by a shark in shallow water on July 7, leaving her with a 9-inch crescent-shaped gash on her leg that required more than 300 stitches.