

Shark Research Institute Newsletter



Shark Research Institute Global Headquarters
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White Shark on Display



The Monterey Bay Aquarium has just put a white shark in their tank. It is the only captive white shark now on display in the

world. Hours after being placed in the aquarium tank the shark began feeding on salmon fillets, the first time a captive white shark has accepted food in an aquarium and it continues to eat — a hopeful sign that they may be able to maintain the animal on display.

Commercial halibut fishermen inadvertently snagged the young female fish in their nets off the coast of Huntington Beach and she was kept in a four million gallon pen until she was transported to Monterey Aquarium's 3,000 gallon tank. The shark is 52 inches long and could grow to about 21 feet and weigh more than a ton. No aquarium has ever exhibited a white shark for more than 16 days. The last time the Monterey Aquarium exhibited a great white was in 1984, and the shark died after 10 days in captivity.



The shark thrived in this ocean pen from July 29 to August 4

Monterey plans to keep the shark on long-term exhibit in its million-gallon Outer Bay tank with 75 other large fish and turtles. Aquarium officials hope the exhibit will encourage protection of protection of this species. For those SRI members that want to (cage) dive with white sharks in their natural habitat, there are still spaces available on the boat to Guadalupe Island November 26-30, 2004. Contact SRI for more information. Cost per participant is \$2,850.

Crisis in the Galapagos - Again!

The president of Ecuador, Lucio Gutiérrez, has removed Galapagos National Park Director Edwin Naula, a professional biologist and dedicated defender of the park, and replaced him with Fausto Cepeda, who is pro-fishing, pro-development and anti-conservation. Cepeda is now the *ninth* GNP director since Gutiérrez took office in January 2003!

This move brings to an end the efforts of the National Park to protect the Galapagos National Park Marine Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, from illegal fishing activities. In short, the marine life of the Galapagos will be devastated if this appointment stands.

The president of Ecuador is bowing to political pressure from fishermen, many of whom have recently moved to the Galapagos after the crash of the fishing industry on the mainland. The tourist industry actually brings far more money into the Galapagos economy than fishing.

The time has come to demand that Ecuador protect these islands, puts an end to corruption, and the illegal exploitation and mob violence by fishermen.

National Park Rangers are now on strike in support of Naula. All of us who care deeply about these profoundly unique islands support the rangers. The Galapagos National Park has seen crisis after crisis, each more violent and threatening than the last. This present crisis is the most serious to date and marks the first time that the President of Ecuador has directly intervened to shut down conservation in the National Park.

Please, contact the following people and demand reinstatement of Director Edwin Naula.

Presidente Lucio Gutiérrez
Palacio de Gobierno, Garcia Moreno 1043
Quito, Ecuador
Email: monica.iza@presidencia.gov.ec

Continued on Page 2

Crisis in Galapagos -, continued

Continued from Page 1

We also ask that you email this information to everyone in your email address book, asking each to send a protest, then forwarding the request to all in their address books, etc.

Breaking News:

SRI just received word from a contact in the Ecuadorian government that Cepeda is out. Victor Carrion, an environmentalist and conservationist, has just been appointed Director of the Galapagos National Park

Our sincerest thanks to all of you that responded to the email alert by sending letters and emails!

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

To Neil Hammerschlag

The 2004 outstanding young environmentalist award for the state of Florida (as part of the Florida Jaycees Outstanding Young Floridian Program) was awarded to Neil in recognition for the Florida shark education programs that he developed and conducted, as well as his shark research, education and conservation efforts. Neil was in high school when he began working with SRI in the field. Today he has his PhD from Rosenstiel School of Marine Science, University of Miami, and is employed by the PEW Institute for Ocean Science.



To Sarang Kulkarni – Sarang headed up a joint program (SRI and Reef Watch Marine Conservation) in the Lackshadweep Islands to track the movements of nurse sharks, and worked with us in Gujarat to secure protection for whale sharks. He recently received the *Earth Hero* award from Sanctuary magazine (India) for his contributions in the field of marine conservation for his efforts in securing protection

for endangered marine animals including whale sharks and nine other species of sharks, giant groupers, corals, cucumbers, seahorses and several species of shells.

On September 13, 2004 Sarang was awarded his Ph.D. by the University of Prune. He writes that he is very grateful for SRI's encouragement and support.



We are so very proud of all that Neil and Sarang have accomplished and are gratified to have been able to help them achieve these goals.

Costa Ricans March Against Shark Finning

On September 17, Costa Ricans marched through the streets of Puntarenas, Costa Rica's largest Pacific port, against shark finning and calling on Customs to enforce the national Customs law which says foreign vessels may not land at private docks. The foreign vessel landings at private docks are a major concern due to the hundreds of tons of shark fins that these vessels land, and the fact that not even government inspectors have free access to the private docks to supervise the landings and protect the public interest. The march, which targeted the Customs Department, was attended by students from schools in Puntarenas, national fishermen, members of the Puntarenas community, 15 NGOs as well as students and faculty from Costa Rica's two largest universities. "By allowing foreign shark finning vessels to illegally land at private docks the Costa Rican government is promoting shark finning," said Randall Arauz, President of PRETOMA. "And by promoting shark finning the Costa Rican government is doing two things: promoting the unsustainable depletion of ocean resources that our national fishermen need to make a living, and failing to protect the oceans for future generations of Costa Ricans."



Field Expeditions

La Paz, Mexico: Oct 2 - 9, 2004	Utila: Feb 5 - 12, 2005
Guadalupe Island: Nov 26 - 30, 2004	Feb 12 - 19, 2005
Galapagos Islands: July 31 - August 9, 2005 August 8 - 16, 2005	Thailand: April 11-21 2 spaces have become available

All expedition volunteers must be certified divers and pay their own expenses, some of which are deductible from US Federal Income taxes.

A Win for Shark Conservation

South Africa: The Pietermaritzburg high court has ruled in favor of divers who have been lobbying against shark hunting by distributing pamphlets accusing a local fishing operation of "senselessly slaughtering" sharks. The company sought an interdict, arguing the pamphlets were defamatory. "It's good news for shark conservation and forms part of our drive to increase awareness about shark conservation," said Trevor Krull, owner of Aqua Planet and leader of the protests.

DNA Kits Available

Molecular Biologist Dr. Jennifer Schmidt has made up kits for SRI field researchers that will make storage and shipping of tissue samples much easier. Contact SRI Headquarters if you need a kit.

Thank you to our Supporters

- Amphibico
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- Florida Aquarium
- Freeman Foundation
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- Galapagos Aggressor
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- Ocean Rover Cruises
- Pelican Products, Inc.
- Project AWARE Foundation
- Rohauer Collection Foundation
- The Philanthropic Group
- Underwater Video Images

GLOBAL SHARK ATTACK FILE

AUSTRALIA: On July 10, Brad Smith, 30, was killed by two sharks at Lefthanders Beach, Margaret River, Western Australia. Two weeks later Mike Taylor and his son were fishing off Trigg Beach, Western Australia when a four-metre white shark mouthed their boat's motor and severed the anchor line. (That same weekend Yuji Torimi was fishing for squid off Susami, Wakaya, when a 350-lb mako shark leapt into his boat. He suffered broken ribs when the shark's caudal fin slammed against his chest. And in early August two fishing boats were damaged by white sharks along the coast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.) On August 2, a 30-year old man at Byron Bay, New South Wales, sustained puncture wounds in his leg from a shark. **BRAZIL:** On August 21 at Boa Viagem Beach in Recife, Wagner da Silva, 24, was bitten on the calf and both hands were injured. **RUSSIA:** Commercial diver Vladimir Skutelnik was working in the Kuril Islands when his calf and thigh were bitten by a white shark. He survived. **USA:** *California* - On August 15, Randy Fry, 50, was killed by a 16 to 18-foot white shark at Kibesillah, and five days later surfer Shannon Lehman's foot was bitten by white shark. *Florida* - On July 31, Kelly Getzfread, 20, was surfing at Cocoa Beach when her foot was bitten. On August 6, at St Petersburg, James Tiffie, 47, sustained injuries on his back, buttocks, and left side of his face from a 4-foot shark. On August 29 at Debbie Salamone, 38, was bitten on her heel. *North Carolina* - On July 27, Alexis Huegsen, 13, was swimming when her forearm and wrist were lacerated by a shark, and on September 4, at Apache Pier Meaghan Durham, 17, was bitten on the knee by an 8-foot shark. *Oregon* - On September 20, Seth Mead was surfing at Gold Beach when his leg was bitten by a white shark. *Texas* - On July 25, Aaron Perez, 11, was wading-fishing when his arm and knee were severely bitten and a documentary film on the incident has already aired on Discovery Channel. Two days later Erika Hailey was swimming at Galveston Island when her right foot was bitten by a shark, four to five feet in length.

The word "shark" was introduced into the English language by John Hawkins after his voyage to the Gulf of Mexico from 1567 to 1569, and is thought to have come from the Mayan word "xoc"

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WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.SHARKS.ORG

Seychelles Whale Shark Aerial Survey

The Seychelles monitoring programme is proceeding well this year with aerial surveys being continued through from the beginning of the year. A total of 84 survey flights have been performed so far this year, 28 by Cessna 150 fixed wing and 56 by the flex-wing micro-light, recording a total of 138 shark sightings to date. Details are as follows:

Microlight: 56 flights -110 sightings

Cessna 150: 28 flights - 15 sightings

Aerial sighting statistics compared with 2003:

Month/Year	#Flights	#Sharks	Average per flight
July 2003	2	1	0.08 / flight
July 2004	10	1	0.10 / flight
Aug 2003	34	56	1.65 / flight
Aug 2004	38	69	1.82 / flight
Sept 2003	27	220	8.15 / flight
Sept 2004	19	41	2.16 / flight

Note: Sept 2004 figures are up to the 18th only.

The weather pattern in Seychelles has been unusual this year with some corresponding changes to whale shark occurrence patterns. The South East wind season that started in May 'stalled' in June causing a dense plankton bloom to form off North West Mahe. This in turn encouraged a record influx of whale sharks with a total of 202 shark sightings reported during the month compared to only five sightings reported in June 2003.

September has had large amounts of very unseasonable rain limiting survey flights and the amount of sunlight; this has affected the aerial survey capability on the one hand and also decreased plankton productivity on the other.

Having said that, despite the reasonable number of shark sightings recorded by air in September 2003 (202), only three sightings were achieved as the sharks were largely out of accessible range. October in 2003 was the peak month with 188 sightings recorded and so the monitoring team is hoping for a busy coming month!

...David Rowat, Director, SRI Seychelles

Mark these Dates

October 2-14: CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna), Bangkok, Thailand

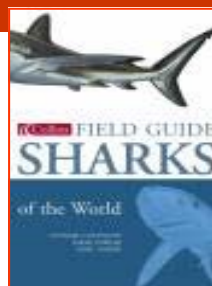
October 8-10: Adventures in Travel Expo (Booth 448) at San Mateo County Expo Center.

October 13-16: DEMA Show 2004 (Booth #1109) at the new George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston Texas.

November 3: Special Meeting on Whale Sharks convened by Convention on Migratory Species (Bonn Convention) as part of the IUCN World Congress in Bangkok, Thailand

January 14-16, 2005: Adventures in Travel Expo, Jacob K. Javits Center in New York City.

Member's Bookshelf



A Field Guide to Sharks of the World by Dr. L.J. V. Compagno, Director of SRI, and Sarah Fowler. Published by Harper Collins. Publication date is February 7, 2005, but it can be pre-ordered.