

Shark Research Committee

'Save the sharks – Save the oceans'

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

February 10th, 2011

Pacific Coast Shark Attacks During 2010

There were 7 authenticated unprovoked shark attacks reported from the Pacific Coast of North America during 2010. There were 5 attacks (1 fatal) from California and 2 from Oregon. The attacks were distributed in the following months; July (2), August (2), September (1) and October (2). From 2000 to the present, of 56 total reported shark attacks, 28 (50%), occurred during the months August (10), September (8), or October (10). If we use the Southern Santa Barbara County line as a division between Southern and Central California, 1 of the reported attacks occurred in Southern California with the remaining 4 north of the division line. Both Oregon shark attack locations were about midway between the California and Washington borders at Winchester Bay and the Siuslaw River. Activities of the victims were; 3 Surfing, 2 Kayaking, 1 Paddle-Boarder, and 1 Boogie Boarder (fatal). The Great White Shark, *Carcharodon carcharias*, was positively identified or highly suspect in all 7 of the attacks.

The publication "*Shark Attacks of the Twentieth Century*" authenticated 108 unprovoked shark attacks from the Pacific Coast between 1900 and 1999. The Great White Shark was implicated in 94 (87%) of the 108 confirmed attacks with an annual average of slightly more than one shark attack per year. The 7 cases reported for 2010 brings the total number of unprovoked shark attacks occurring along the West Coast during the first decade of the 21st Century to 56. This is *'more than five times'* the Twentieth Century annual average and represents 52% of the total number of attacks reported for the entire Twentieth Century. The Great White Shark has been implicated in 48 (86%) of the 56 attacks reported during this Century. There have been 164 authenticated unprovoked shark attacks reported from the Pacific Coast of North America since 1900. The Great White Shark was positively identified or highly suspect in 142 (87%) of the 164 reported cases.

Victim activity for the 56 unprovoked shark attacks reported from the Pacific Coast since 2000 are distributed in the following groups; surfers 38 (68%) of the documented attacks with 5 swimmers (9%), 5 kayakers (9%), 3 divers (5%), 3 paddle boarders (5%), and 1 boogie boarder (2%). The number of adult, sub-adult, and juvenile Great White Sharks observed in Southern California during 2010 seems to support the contention that there is a possible change in their population dynamics and seasonal site preferences. The number of stranded marine mammal carcasses reported, specifically their location and time of year, would seem to support this observation. The Shark Research Committee will continue to closely monitor this activity. Please report any shark sighting, encounter, or attack to the Shark Research Committee.