Beat: Health

Great White shark kills English expat in eastern Australia

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USPA News - An English expat was killed Tuesday when he was attacked by a Great White shark while swimming in shallow waters off Australia`s eastern coast, authorities said, just months after two fatal shark attacks elsewhere in the country. The latest attack happened at around 10:45 a.m. local time when a man was swimming from The Pass to Clarkes Beach off Byron Bay, a town in the far-northeastern corner of New South Wales (NSW), about 625 kilometers (390 miles) northeast of Sydney.

He was dragged onto the beach by bystanders when they observed him floating in shallow waters, close to the shore line. Surf Life Saving NSW said off-duty lifesavers treated the victim, who had suffered a significant leg injury, until an ambulance arrived at the scene. He was pronounced dead a short time later and identified as 50-year-old former IT worker Paul Wilcox, who was originally from Warwickshire in England and moved to Australia about 10 years ago. Witnesses said that Wilcox was wearing a black wetsuit and flippers, which made him resemble a turtle. The shark responsible is believed to have been a 3-meter (9.8 feet) juvenile Great White shark. A shark which was spotted at the same location a short time later - and caught on video by a news helicopter - was not the shark which killed Wilcox, authorities said. Beaches in the area were not being patrolled at the time of the attack because the official patrol season does not start until September 20, but Surf Life Saving NSW said it was taking extra measures after Tuesday`s attack. "Lifeguards will be on duty for at least the next 24 hours, ensuring the water remains clear from Belongil Beach to Tallows Beach across Byron Shire Council," a spokesperson said. In late March and early April, two people were killed in two separate shark attacks in Australia. A 38-year-old diver was taken by a shark in the Dawesville area of Western Australia on March 29, while a 63-year-old woman was killed by a shark on April 3 while swimming with a group of people off the South Coast of New South Wales. According to statistics from the International Shark Attack File (ISAF) at the University of Florida, sharks killed at least 10 people worldwide last year, following 7 fatalities in 2012 and 13 fatalities in 2011. The number of fatalities in 2011 represented the highest number in nearly two decades. Surfers are the most affected group, accounting for about 46 percent of unprovoked attacks last year.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com