

Beat: Sports

Great white shark kills surfer in Western Australia

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USPA News - A 35-year-old man was killed Saturday when he was attacked by a shark while surfing near a beach in Australia's western region, local police said on Sunday. It marks the third fatal shark attack in the same area over the past decade.

The attack happened just before 9:10 a.m. local time on Saturday when Chris Boyd, an experienced surfer who moved from Queensland to Western Australia for his love of waves, was surfing off the coast of Gracetown. The area is well known for its many surfing spots but has seen a number of shark attacks in recent years. "Officers arrived at the scene and located a male person deceased. The injuries he received appear to be consistent with those that would be received in a shark attack," police spokesman Samuel Dinnison said. He said Boyd was swimming on his own when he was attacked by the shark, which is believed to have been a Great White. Officials warned people to stay out of the water near the site of Saturday's attack while rangers from Shire of Augusta Margaret River and the Department of Parks and Wildlife installed beach closure signs along approximately 8 kilometers (4.9 miles) of beach. The beach closures were lifted on early Sunday afternoon. About 20 minutes after Saturday's fatal shark attack, fishermen reported seeing a large Great White shark near an island off Perth, but it was too far from Gracetown to have involved the same shark. The sighting was followed by an incident near Rottnest Island at around 11:30 a.m. when a bodyboarder encountered a large shark but was able to push it away and escape. Gracetown has now been the site of three fatal shark attacks over the past decade, the most recent one in August 2010 when a Great White attacked a 31-year-old surfer at South Point. Bystanders went into the water in an attempt to save the victim, whose legs were shredded and ripped open, but he died soon after at a local hospital. According to statistics from the International Shark Attack File (ISAF) at the University of Florida, sharks killed at least seven people worldwide last year, following 13 fatalities in 2011 that represented the highest number in nearly two decades. Surfers were the most affected group, accounting for about 60 percent of unprovoked attacks.

Article online:

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