

Surfer's leg found after shark attack

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Horror: Kai McKenzie, 23, (above) was attacked by a 10-foot great white shark as he surfed near Port Macquarie, a small town about 200 miles from Sydney, Australia.

Are wild animals getting more aggressive? Recent attacks on humans suggest that global warming is bringing the natural world uncomfortably close.

What's happening?

Imagine sitting by the beach on holiday. Suddenly, you spot something red and fleshy washing up on the golden shore. When you look closer, you realise it's a human leg.

That is what happened on a beach in Australia last week, when a surfer named Kai McKenzie was attacked by a shark. Kai floated back to the shore and was rushed to hospital. When his leg washed up a few hours later, it was taken to the same hospital.

Last year, the number of deaths caused by sharks doubled — with 40% taking place in Australia. Rising temperatures make it harder for many animals to find food. They are forced to leave their usual hunting grounds and sometimes then attack humans.

Find out more

Studies suggest dogs become aggressive if they are too hot. Even relatively peaceful creatures are showing signs of violence towards humans. Otters have **assaulted** people in Singapore, squirrels have attacked people in New York.

These attacks might show that conservation efforts are working and animal populations increasing. For example, wolves have been successfully reintroduced to European highlands in a process known as **rewilding**.

They should not draw attention away from the real victims of climate change though. In the past 50 years wildlife populations have declined dramatically. And the food industry kills around 79 billion land animals each year.

People should perhaps think twice before calling other animals aggressive. Most are looking for food and shelter — just like their human cousins.

Are wild animals getting more aggressive?

Some say

Yes! Global warming means less space for wildlife, so more animal attacks on humans seem inevitable.

Others think

No! Predators are a vital part of a healthy ecosystem. Occasional attacks shows that efforts to protect wildlife are beginning to work.

FOR YOUR SUMMER READING CHALLENGE CLUE GO TO STEP SIX IN THE SIX STEPS TO DISCOVERY BELOW.

Six steps to discovery

Some people say

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - What do you think would be the best way to overcome a fear of sharks?

Mahatma Gandhi (1869 – 1948), Indian independence leader

What do you think?

2. Wonder

What questions do you have? - For example: Which animals kill the most humans? And which animals do humans kill the most of each year?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - The article says that the total number of people killed by sharks has doubled. Find out the actual number of deaths, and explain whether you think this is a problem.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - Imagine you are a politician in Australia. How would you respond to the rise in shark attacks? Write an article for a newspaper arguing what should change in the future.

5. Express

What do others believe? - In groups, come up with a list of five rules for humans so that they can interact safely with wildlife.

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Summer Reading Challenge Day 9 Clue: what “r” describes bringing animals back to places where they have died out? Download your challenge entry form [here](#) and fill in the answers to the clues.

Glossary

Assaulted - Physically attacked.

Rewilding - Returning developed or farmed land to its natural state by reintroducing species that once lived there.