

Sharks on Edisto Beach

General Description

There are several different species of sharks in South Carolina, such as blacktip, tiger, bull, bonnethead, hammerhead, lemon, Atlantic sharpnose, nurse, blacknose, finetooth, spinner, and great whites. None of these sharks are considered threatened or endangered although overfishing is causing many of these populations to decline.

On Edisto Beach summer is a peak time for shark activity due to warmer water temperatures. Although there are hundreds of people in the water during the summer months here on Edisto Beach, shark bites are very rare.



Photo by Ken Tingman

Stay Safe

Here are some safety tips to keep sharks from investigating close to you on Edisto Beach:

1. Avoid shiny jewelry and clothing that might look like a fish flashing in the water.
2. Avoid swimming near people who are fishing from the shore.
3. Don't swim too far from the shore.
4. Don't splash a lot, and definitely get out of the water if you're bleeding.
5. Don't swim at dusk or dawn, and don't swim on the deep side of a sandbar.

If you see a shark, don't panic. Calmly exit the water if you feel uncomfortable. Just remember, you're in their environment and they normally feed on fish and other marine life. Humans are not on their menu!

Ongoing Research

If you'd like to track sharks, the marine research organization OCEARCH tracks sharks all over the world through tags that ping when the dorsal fin breaks the surface of the water. OCEARCH has tagged 416 sea creatures, mostly sharks, since 2012. Researchers are able to collect data from their paths to help us stay educated and maintain balance in the ecosystem.

Protect Our Sharks

If you see an injured shark, please maintain a safe distance and contact: SCDNR at 803-734-3886 (Monday through Friday, 8:30AM-5:00PM) or the RadioRoom at 803-955-4000 after hours.

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