

Curious public tracks great white shark off US coast

May 20 2014



A sign reads, "Swim at Own Risk" at Ballston Beach on Cape Cod on August 12, 2012 in Truro, Massachusetts

An enormous great white shark swimming along the eastern US coastline is arousing more curiosity than fear as scientists and the public follow her every observable move.

The 14-foot (4.3-meter) shark, nicknamed Katharine, surfaced near Key

Largo, Florida Monday night, announcing her presence with a ping from a tracking device placed on her dorsal fin last year.

Weighing 2,300 pounds (1 tonne), Katharine is being followed by the website Ocearch, which is run by a group that tracks a number of sharks to learn more about their habits.

Researchers follow Katharine's [migratory movements](#) with the help of the tracking device Ocearch attached to her in August 2013, which pings the researchers whenever it comes to the surface.

In the past month, Katharine has appeared off the coast of Georgia and then swam south to Florida, coming within a few miles (kilometers) of Miami Beach on Saturday, according to the website.

Although the website is updated every half hour, Katharine doesn't surface nearly so often.

With almost 4,000 Twitter followers, the great white's @Shark_Katharine account, managed by Ocearch, is dedicated to answering questions about the life of sharks and debunking myths.

Tagging their posts #GoKatGo, followers have cheered on the great white as "Katharine" weighs in on subjects like eating humans.

"What makes anyone think we'd really want to eat them #notmyflavor" she tweeted Tuesday.

Through Katharine's movements, scientists hope to gain much more information than just her whereabouts.

"If Katharine returns to Cape Cod this August, then it's likely she's not pregnant," Ocearch founder Chris Fischer told the Miami Herald

newspaper.

"If she doesn't go back, then she's likely to be pregnant."

© 2014 AFP

Citation: Curious public tracks great white shark off US coast (2014, May 20) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-05-curious-tracks-great-white-shark.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.