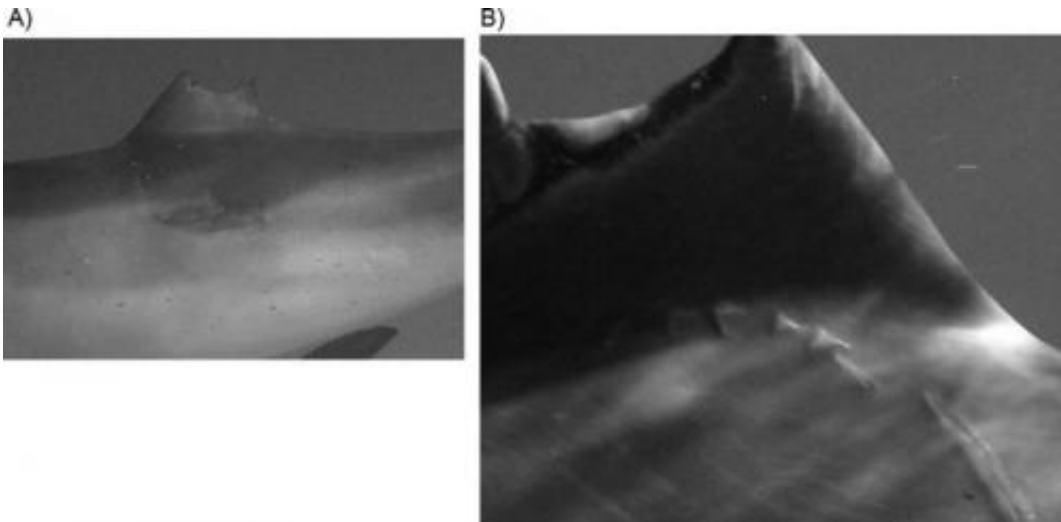


Study assesses shark attacks on Atlantic spotted dolphins near the Bahamas

August 4 2014



These are photographs, taken on 5 May 2010, of an injury to a female *S. frontalis*, ID#087. A) Note the damage to left side and B) the uniform scars, on the right, just below the damaged dorsal fin, suggesting the possibility that as many as five of the shark's teeth became embedded in the dolphin's flesh. Credit: Marine Mammal Science

A *Marine Mammal Science* analysis on failed shark attacks on the approximately 120 Atlantic spotted dolphins that are residents of the waters near Bimini, The Bahamas, has found that a total of 14 dolphins (15% of 92 cataloged animals) showed some sign of shark attack, and a further 15 (16%) exhibited scars that could not conclusively be classified as shark induced or not.

Of 14 the shark attacks, there was no difference in scars or wounds between the sexes, and there was no significant difference between the location of bodily scars and wounds. No shark-related injuries were observed on the head. It is assumed that sharks will have a greater success rate if the softer, ventral side of a dolphin is attacked.

"This type of scar analysis has never been completed for spotted [dolphins](#). It gives us insight into the predation pressure these dolphins might face from sharks in the area," said lead author Dr. Kelly Melillo-Sweeting.

More information: Melillo-Sweeting, K., Turnbull, S. D. and Guttridge, T. L. (2014), Evidence of shark attacks on Atlantic spotted dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*) off Bimini, The Bahamas. *Marine Mammal Science*, 30: 1158–1164. [DOI: 10.1111/mms.12082](https://doi.org/10.1111/mms.12082)

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