

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# North Carolina's Surge in Shark Attacks

The Mid-Atlantic state is experiencing a record number of shark attacks this summer.

BY CODY CRANE

Swimming, sun, sand, and—sharks? That's what some visitors to North Carolina beaches have been experiencing this summer (JULY 2015). Since June, the state has had eight shark attacks—the greatest number ever recorded there in any one year. Though all the victims survived, some suffered severe injuries.

Shark attacks are typically very rare in the area, and experts aren't sure what's causing the increased incidents with the fearsome fish. They think a combination of factors near North Carolina's shores might be to blame. Officials say the only surefire way to stay safe in the area right now is to keep out of the water.



## A DANGEROUS COMBO

Fishing near swimming areas could be one reason North Carolina is seeing a surge in shark bites. Some of the recent attacks happened within 100 yards of piers where fishermen were **chumming**, or throwing chopped-up fish as bait into the water, to attract a catch. The practice sometimes draws in hungry sharks too.

"It's like if they allowed bear-feeding stations next to playgrounds at Yellowstone National Park. That would be crazy," Marie Levine, director of the Shark Research Institute in New Jersey, told the website Live Science.

Chumming isn't a problem during most seasons, but it could be a problem in the summer, when beaches see a huge **influx** (arrival in large numbers) of visitors. Levin says separating fishing areas from swimming areas could help prevent shark attacks.

## BLAME THE WEATHER

A hotter-than-average June could also be contributing to the record number of shark attacks. The warm weather has caused large schools of fish to **migrate** (move from one region to another) north earlier than usual. Sharks follow and feed on these fish.

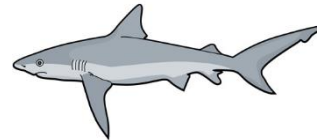
Parts of North Carolina have also received very little rainfall recently. Without rain to replace the ocean water as it evaporates, the **salinity**, or salt content, of water close to shore has increased. Most sharks prefer these saltier waters, which could be bringing them closer to the coast in greater numbers than usual. "You put all these things together, and you've got a mix of humans and sharks in abundance," George Burgess, director of the International Shark Attack File at the University of Florida's Florida Museum of Natural History, told Live Science.

1. What alliteration is used in the second paragraph?

2. What is the *dangerous combo* that the article talks about?

3. Marie Levine compared chumming to “bear-feeding stations next to playgrounds.” Make up your own comparison that fits with the story.

4. Make up a sentence using the word *influx*.



5. According to the article, what is the best way to avoid a shark attack?

6. Make a list of the causes that the article says may have led to the increase in shark attacks.