

21 August 1992

Dear Mary:

Your article in the Honolulu Weekly was well-written and interesting. I really enjoyed reading it, with one exception. That is, the quote you used from Brad Wetherbee without double checking the facts, or at least calling me to rebut his criticism. You wrote, Wetherbee says that Balazs' data, as presented, "misleads the public and leads to shark phobia." Nonsense. The data are straightforward, footnoted, and explained every step of the way, to the extent that information is available about each case. Brad Wetherbee may be misled, simply because he hasn't taken the time or doesn't want to read the information assembled. Prior to writing your article, I sent you a current copy of my revised list (July 1992) with tables summarizing the data in various ways. I enclose with this letter three pages from the list that demonstrate Wetherbee's statement to be false. Please note the footnoted section (p.28) labeled "compiler's opinion as to cause of fatality." The categories, a, b, c, & d, are clearly spelled out. Apparently category "d" is the one that bothers Wetherbee (Insufficient information upon which to base an opinion as to cause of death). It would appear that Wetherbee would assume that all of the fatalities in the d-category are not the direct result of shark attack, and therefore should be discarded-- thrown-out and ignored. In my view, that would be scientifically reckless, and certainly biased and inaccurate. If the circumstances of a case are unknown (no witnesses or compelling circumstantial evidence) then it should be cataloged as such. And that is exactly what I have done (see enclosed table on shark attacks involving fatality). Wetherbee has all of this information. I've made it a point to send it to him everytime I've updated my list. In my view, the most informative aspect of shark attack cases in Hawaii centers on the survivors, not on the cases involving fatality. The survivors have first-hand factual experiences to relate that offer insight into the less fortunate. You proved that point superbly by telling Jude Chamberlain's story. Look over my list again. There are numerous similar cases, and certainly more in recent years than in the past.

I look forward to working with you again on some future story.

Best regards,  
*Ernie Bole*

ANNOTATED LIST OF SHARK ATTACKS IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS 1779 - 1992

(\* = FATALITY INVOLVED)

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JULY 1992 REVISION

Case no.	Date	Location	Victim	Circumstances and literature documentation
1 <sup>*a</sup>	1779	Maliu, Hawaii	Nu'u-anu-pa'a hu	Young male gashed on one side of buttocks after being pursued while surf boarding. Subsequently suffered "great pain" and died at Pololu (Kamakau 1961; Anonymous 1983c).
2 <sup>*a</sup>	1828	Lahaina, Maui	Male	"A man out riding surf at 'Uo was killed by a shark which bit off his limbs and left his body floating." Attack witnessed by a number of Hawaiian chiefs (Kamakau 1961; Anonymous 1983a).
3 <sup>*d</sup>	2 June 1886	Hamakua, Hawaii	Two females	Washed into the sea while fishing from shore; one woman found bitten (fatal), the other woman disappeared (Morse 1953; Gilbert 1963).

## HAWAIIAN SHARK ATTACKS COMPILED BY G.H. BALAZS

Case no.	Date	Location	Victim	Circumstances and literature documentation
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**COMPILER'S OPINION AS TO CAUSE OF FATALITY**

<sup>a</sup>Fatality *directly* attributed to shark attack.

<sup>b</sup>Fatality *likely* attributed to shark attack.

<sup>c</sup>Fatality *likely* attributed to another cause (drowning, etc.) besides shark attack which was followed by mutilation or dismemberment by shark or sharks.

<sup>d</sup>*Insufficient information upon which to base an opinion as to cause of death, although mutilation and/or dismemberment by sharks had occurred. Fatality may have been directly attributed to shark attack, or may have resulted from another cause. This category also includes an absence of any witnesses or the absence of sufficient body remains to determine cause of death by medical autopsy.*

SHARKS.GHB  
revised 5/26/92

SHARK ATTACKS IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS INVOLVING FATALITY

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Years	Direct fatality (a)	Likely direct fatality (b)	Other causes (c)	Unknown (d)	Overall		Total no. cases
					No. fatal	No. non-fatal	
1990-present	1	3			4	5	9
1980-89		2	3	4	9	15	24
1970-79			1	2	3	8	11
1960-69			1	3	4	5	9
1950-59	3		1	3	7	7	14
1940-49				1	1	5	6
1930-39				1	1	5	6
1920-29	1				1	2	3
1910-19		1		1	2	1	3
1900-09	2		1	3	6	2	8
1779-1899	2			1	3	0	3
Total	9 22.0%	6 14.6%	7 17.1%	19 46.3%	41	55	96

a = Death directly due to shark attack.

b = Death likely due to shark attack.

c = Death likely due to drowning or other trauma followed by shark attack.

d = Insufficient information to base an opinion as to cause of death.

DECADE2.SHK

*George H. Balazs*