

Australian Shark Incident Database – Annual Report Summary for 2025

The Australian Shark Incident Database (ASID) investigated 25 reported incidents of shark-human interaction in 2025. Of these, 22 incidents were confirmed cases of unprovoked shark bites, while the other three incidents were provoked, two were spearfishing and one was fishing.

Activities and Injuries to Victims:

There were ten incident involving swimmers (two fatalities), eight incidents involving surfers (three fatalities), and in two incidents people were spearfishing. The remaining five incidents involved one paddler, one snorkeler, one wind foiling, one fishing, and one kayaker.

New South Wales had the most incidents (ten incidents, two fatalities and six injured), while eight incidents were reported from Western Australia (one fatality and four injuries). Queensland and South Australia both reported three incidents (one fatality and two injuries) (see Table 1).

Incidents occurred over all seasons. Four attacks occurred in July and December, three incidents occurred in January and April, while a single attack occurred in each of February, March, May, June and October.

2025				
State	Cases Recorded	Fatal	Injured	Uninjured
NSW	10	2	6	2
QLD	3	1	2	0
SA	3	1	2	0
WA	8	1	4	3
VIC	1	0	1	0
TAS	0	0	0	0
NT	0	0	0	0
total unprovoked	22	5	12	5
total provoked	3	0	3	0
total cases	25	5	15	5

Table 1: Number of shark incidents reported in Australia in 2025 by state and outcome.

Note : An ‘unprovoked’ encounter is defined as an incident where a shark is in its natural habitat and has made a determined attempt to bite or bump a person with no provocation. A ‘provoked’ encounter occurs when a person attracts or initiates physical contact with a shark, such as a diver injured after grabbing a shark, interactions with spearfishermen while spearing fish, commercial diving while collecting aquatic animals, someone that steps on a shark, etc. Fishermen bitten while removing a captured shark from the water is not included in the database. The ‘uninjured’ category usually represents a bump or bite to a board, or kayak where the person was not injured.

Species of sharks

Seven different types of sharks were reported in 24 incidents. White sharks were responsible for eight incidents in 2025 including three fatalities, while bull sharks were responsible for six incidents including two fatalities, while tiger sharks accounted for one incident. Wobbegongs caused four incidents, while bronze whalers and unspecified whaler sharks were each responsible for two incidents. One incident was attributed to a black tipped reef shark and in one case, the species of shark was not identified.

Decadal Trends in Shark Incidents

The total of 25 incidents reported for 2025 was slightly below the decadal mean for all cases in the 2020s (Table 2). The total of 22 unprovoked incidents for 2025 was slightly above the decadal mean for unprovoked incidents in the 2020s. The total of five fatalities in 2025 was slightly above the decadal mean for fatalities (Table 3).

A

Annual Cases by Decade			
	Mean	Max	Min
1950s	6.6	11	4
1960s	5.2	11	2
1970s	3.6	8	0
1980s	6.5	14	3
1990s	8.2	13	5
2000s	16.4	28	10
2010s	23.3	33	14
2020s	27.0	37	19

B

Annual Unprovoked Cases by Decade			
	Mean	Max	Min
1950s	3.1	5	2
1960s	2.1	6	0
1970s	2.4	6	0
1980s	4.4	10	1
1990s	6.1	13	3
2000s	12	21	6
2010s	15.9	22	9
2020s	20.8	28	13

Table 2: Mean, maximum and minimum cases per year for (A) unprovoked and provoked shark incidents and (B) unprovoked shark incidents for each decade since 1950. Note 2020s include cases to the end of 2025.

	Cases Recorded		Fatal		Injured		Uninjured	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1950s	6.6	1.96	1.7	1.06	3.7	1.57	1.1	0.74
1960s	5.2	2.94	0.7	0.67	3.6	2.17	0.9	0.88
1970s	3.6	2.46	0.9	1.29	2.3	1.83	0.4	0.70
1980s	6.5	3.17	1.2	0.79	3.8	2.44	1.5	1.08
1990s	8.2	2.74	0.9	0.88	5.5	2.92	1.8	0.92
2000s	16.4	5.58	1.4	1.17	10.1	4.38	5	2.05
2010s	23.3	7.07	2.1	1.66	15.5	5.06	5.7	3.74
2020s	27.0	5.90	3.8	2.64	16	1.10	6.8	3.76

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of shark incidents recorded and the outcomes for each decade since 1950. Note 2020s included cases to the end of 2025

Year	All Cases Recorded	Fatal	Injured	Uninjured
2025	25	5	15	5
2024	19	1	16	2
2023	28	4	15	7
2022	25	1	15	8
2021	29	4	19	5
2020	37	8	16	13
2019	25	0	19	6
2018	30	1	23	6
2017	21	1	12	8
2016	32	2	17	13
2015	33	2	23	8
2014	25	5	17	3
2013	15	2	11	2
2012	23	2	13	8
2011	15	5	9	1
2010	14	1	11	2
2009	28	0	19	9
2008	14	2	6	6
2007	17	0	14	3
2006	10	1	6	3
2005	16	2	8	6
2004	23	3	15	5
2003	13	1	9	3
2002	11	2	6	3
2001	13	0	8	5
2000	19	3	9	7

Table 4: Number of provoked and unprovoked shark incidents recorded each year from 2000 to 2025 and the outcome of those incidents.

Shark incidents in Sydney

There were two incidents in Sydney in 2025, one of which was a fatality at a major surfing beach. This was followed four months later by three incidents within two days in January 2025. These incidents sparked interest in sharks in Sydney.

The first known shark incident in Sydney occurred in 1791 and was fatal. There have been 119 incidents in Sydney from 1791 to January 2026. Prior to 1912 all incidents occurred in Sydney Harbour including its associated bays and rivers, or Georges River. The first incident at one of Sydney's surf beaches occurred at Coogee in 1912. From 1912 until 2000 48 % of incidents occurred at surf beaches while the rest occurred in the Harbour and tributaries, Botany Bay and

tributaries or Port Hacking and tributaries. Since 2000 89% of incidents have occurred at surf beaches. This change likely reflects changes in the swimming habits of the population over the years.

Decade	Incidents	Fatalities
1870s	4	1
1880s	6	5
1890s	4	3
1900s	5	4
1910s	9	4
1920s	10	8
1930s	14	6
1940s	7	5
1950s	8	2
1960s	4	2
1970s	1	0
1980s	3	0
1990s	4	0
2000s	11	0
2010s	8	0
2020s	10	3
Total	108	43

Table 5: Total shark incidents and those resulting in fatalities, recorded for Sydney by decade from 1870 until January 2026.