Students Combatting Shark Misconceptions
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Abstract
For years, Great White Sharks have been the subject of negative media attention and general public fear due to countless shark movies and news articles centered around gruesome shark attacks. Because of these general fears, convincing the public to work to conserve Great White Sharks is difficult. Great White Sharks are apex predators in many ecosystems, and their position at the top of the food chain means that they play an important role in limiting the populations of their prey animals. Losing great white sharks could cause catastrophic trophic cascades, as without them their prey, such as seals, could grow without limits, meaning that they could depopulate the organisms they eat.

Contacts
Bryan Legare – Center for Coastal Studies
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Great White Sharks are currently classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List

Survey Results

There is an average of 19 shark attacks in the US per year.

On average, there is one fatal shark attack every two years.

50% of shark attacks are on surfers.

For every human killed by a shark, two million sharks are killed by humans.

Possible methods of public education
- College campus movie nights
- Info sessions
- Social media outreach
- Elementary school lessons

Staying safe around sharks
- Avoid large seal populations
- Don’t enter water while bleeding
- Swim in groups
- Stay out of the water between dusk and dawn

References


