

drawing on the experience of others in coping with the terror threat.

Prehosp Disaster Med 2017;32(Suppl. 1):s116–s117

doi:10.1017/S1049023X17003326

Crocodile Human Encounter Patterns in Sri Lanka

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Study/Objective: Aim of this study is to identify what species of crocodile's attacks humans, their pattern when they attacked, where they attacked, what parts of the human body they prefer to grab most, why do they attack humans, and how crocodile human encounters are minimized so both species can live peacefully.

Background: Crocodilians represent one of the oldest constant animal lineages on the planet, in no small part due to their formidable array of predatory adaptations. As both human and crocodilian populations expand, they increasingly encroach on each other's territories, bringing morbidity and mortality to both populations. Sri Lanka has two species of crocodiles – the Mugger Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris* or “crocodile of the marsh”) mainly found in freshwater tanks, and the Saltwater Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus* or estuarine crocodile) which prefers estuaries and lagoon habitats. Research found both were responsible for attacking humans.

Methods: The reported cases of crocodile attacks from year 2010 to year 2015 were reviewed. During the 5 year period 150 attacks were reported and 51 were fatal. The aim was to identify the attacks by two different species of crocodiles that live in Sri Lanka. We studied timeframe, location, causes, and how they attacked humans.

Results: The popular belief is only salt water crocodiles are man eaters, and muggers are less aggressive. But our research shows that fatal attacks are done by both groups. The saltwater croc attacked and killed 27 people, and the muggers killed 49 humans, not much difference. The usual attack sites for both groups are either in shallow water or close proximity to croc infested water. This amounts to nearly 60% of attacks (90 incidents), of which 116 (77%) victims were males. They were attacked during bathing, washing clothes, swimming, collecting grass in marshy lands and playing in the water. Females were attacked while bathing, washing clothes and utensils. There were three rare cases where people were ambushed by saltwater crocodiles in a marshy area when they regularly collect firewood. Ninety-five percent of the victims were dragged to the water by both groups of crocs. Most of the incidents limbs were attacked; there were reports of attacking to the head and torso by both groups of crocodiles. Most of the victims (>92%) were aware that the water sources are infested with crocodiles, but did not care enough to think of the impending danger. We found that some people were attacked non-fatal, by salt water crocs when they approached a croc nest, the attacks launched to defend the nest. An interesting observation that emerged from the accounts on crocodile attack victims and witnesses, was that it appeared that the animals had observed people engaged in water-based activity, like bathing and washing clothes, over a period of time before the attack.

This would imply that at least some attacks, were not the result of a casual encounter with potential prey, but the culmination of a hunt at a spot where prey was known to gather. Hunting the reptile for meat or for skin made them endangered species. It has been observed that reptiles were poisoned after attacking humans, in some parts of the island. The climatic change is also an important factor as temperature decides the gender of the siblings. Reducing the croc land due to encroachment by humans, sand mining and destruction of mangroves, made reptiles attack humans as well as loitering in the land areas searching for food.

Conclusion: In this review, we examined the features of crocodilians that contribute to explaining their evolutionary success, as well as the potential hazard they pose to humans. Only by understanding reptiles' capabilities and respecting its right to live, it is possible to mitigate the potential threat to life and limb of humans.

Prehosp Disaster Med 2017;32(Suppl. 1):s117

doi:10.1017/S1049023X17003338

Perceptions on Medical Clowns in the Israeli Field Hospital after the Nepal Earthquake

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Study/Objective: Following the 2014 disastrous earthquake in Nepal, the Israeli Field Hospital (IFH) was deployed to Kathmandu to assist and treat the thousands wounded. Five Israeli Medical Clown (MCs) volunteers arrived with the IFH. The impact of a MCs in a disaster zone has yet to be described or considered at all. The objective of this study was to assess the effect of the MC presence on the work of a field hospital in a disaster zone.

Background: The use of MCs for alleviating pain and distress has been well documented. There is evidence showing the effect of a MC on the well-being of patients, especially regarding painful and distressful procedures. There is no known description of MCs in a disaster zone.

Methods: An online survey was sent to all available members of the IFH (medical and technical) with questions regarding their perception of the MC impact on the IFH staff

Results: The survey was a Likert based questionnaire (grading the impact from 1 = very little to 5 = very high). Of 92 available members, 75 completed the survey (81%). The participants were of an average age of 40.5 years old, and 75% were male. The participants were from every part of the IFH (medical and technical) and included enlisted, reserve and volunteer participants. There were 67.2% of the participants found a very positive impact on the staff, with 48.3% finding a very high impact of clowning on staff performance. Staff with previous exposure to MCs were more likely be impressed by MC.