



"On Effort"

Newsletter
September 1, 2011

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All members in The Dolphin Project are volunteers and receive no compensation for their services

FROM THE HELM

Ahoy there Crew!

We've got a busy fall coming up and will need your help for several outreach events. Details on the events are on the next page. These events involve a little bit of work and a lot of fun. Besides some regularly scheduled events, we will also be participating in the Savannah Ocean Exchange—an international symposium where people worldwide come together to share solutions to problems that impact our oceans and coasts. Please note the date change on this event from the previous newsletter. For more information on SAVOXX, go to

<http://www.savannahoceanexchange.org/>

There have been a high number of dolphin deaths documented this summer on the coast of Georgia. See article within newsletter.

Mark your calendars for the quarterly dinner at Johnny Harris Banquet Hall on October 15th. Dr. Eric Montie will be our guest speaker and will focus his program on marine bioacoustics, on addition to his research on neuroimaging - how pollutants affect brain and behavior. Both of these topics should be very interesting to TDP members. Details about the dinner, menu and speaker are noted within this newsletter. Don't forget to sign up for the survey that day too.

If you have a talent that you'd like to share with The Dolphin Project, please contact me. We'd love to have you on our team.

See you soon,
Peach
gadolpin@comcast.net

Comments? Ideas? Critiques? We're open to it all:
info@thedolphinproject.org

TDP Training

The training date for the Savannah area has been changed from September to **October 1st**. It will be held at **Conference Room 'D' in the main building of Memorial Health Hospital at 10am**. For anyone just interested in learning about dolphins, they can come to the first half of the training program. The second half details what we do on the surveys. Everyone is welcome although the program is geared toward those over 12 years of age. If you know of anyone that might be interested in joining TDP, please let them know about it.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED...

The following events are in need of hosts for our dolphin booth. Some events will have a coloring contest for children which will need supervision. Help with setup and breakdown of the booth is especially appreciated. Please contact Joe Powers for scheduling joe@thedolphinproject.org

All these events are located in the greater Savannah area.

Tuesday—September 13 AASU (Armstrong Atlantic State University) Volunteer Fair 11am-2pm

Saturday—September 24 Savannah Ocean Exchange at Lazaretto Creek 10am-? (details still coming)

Saturday—October 15th Skidaway Institute of Oceanography Science Day 10am-4pm

Sat/Sun—October 22nd-23rd Bluffton Seafood Festival Sat/10am-5pm Sun/10am-4pm

WE TALK DOLPHIN!

Does your club or school need a speaker? The Dolphin Project has speakers available in the Atlanta area and on the coast. We have dolphin programs geared toward all age groups.

Stipends are greatly appreciated which help support our education outreach programs.

Typically for our IN-School Field Trips, students are requested to each bring in a \$1.00 donation.

This arrangement is negotiable.

In the Atlanta area, contact Don Bender at Don@thedolphinproject.org.

On the coast, contact Gayla Jones at gayla@thedolphinproject.org



SAVANNAH OCEAN EXCHANGE

The Dolphin Project has been asked to participate in the Savannah Ocean Exchange (SAVOXX) to be held during September 2011. It is an international organization started by NOAA to garner new ideas to help save the ocean. They are meeting in Savannah and the winner with the best idea will get \$100,000 from Gulfstream. They get representation from all over the world at the meeting. On September 24th, SAVOXX has invited TDP to participate in a public outreach at Lazaretto Creek. Mark your calendars to volunteer. The SAVOXX schedule is still being organized. This is another wonderful opportunity for TDP to gain recognition in the international marine science community and do local education outreach as well.

For more information about the Savannah Ocean Exchange go to:

<http://www.savannahoceanexchange.org/>

i-GIVE

We received a donation check from **i-Give** last month thanks to those of you who purchase items on line through **i-Give**. **i-GIVE** is a web site that when you buy online and go thru **i-GIVE** there is a percentage of the cost of the purchase that will be donated to the Dolphin Project if you designate that to be your cause. It is a very easy way for TDP to get additional funding. TDP gets \$5 just for signing on and another \$5 for the first time you actually use it. What an easy way to help TDP! The list of participating companies is quite lengthy. You register and then when you are interested in buying something online, go to the **i-GIVE** website and click on the store and purchase that way. A percentage of your purchase will then be donated to TDP. Please check into it and inform your friends. This could turn out to be a beneficial fundraiser for The Dolphin Project with everyone participating.

DR. ERIC MONTIE

Dr. Eric Montie is a Professor at University of South Carolina Beaufort in the Department of Science and Mathematics. Dr. Montie will be our speaker at our October dinner meeting on 10/15.

My research interests lie at the intersection of marine biology, endocrinology, neurobiology, bioacoustics, toxicology, and conservation biology. I am particularly interested in how anthropogenic chemicals, harmful algal blooms (HABs), and noise pollution affect the sensory and neurobiology of marine wildlife. These effects and interactions are complicated and require an understanding of normal anatomy and function, knowledge that is often lacking in marine animals impacted by these stressors. Thus, I spend much of my time learning more about the sensory and neurobiology of fish, sharks, and marine mammals. My goal is to integrate this information with data from experimental studies to assess and develop solutions to environmental problems. A large portion of my research has centered on marine mammals because these animals have the propensity to accumulate very high levels of persistent organic pollutants; they are extremely sensitive to marine neurotoxins associated with HABs; and they have exceptional hearing, which may be sensitive to excessive noise levels. However, my research interests are not marine mammal-specific, but rather are concerned with fundamental questions in sensory and neurobiology and conservation biology. My goal is to combine laboratory experiments with model organisms and field studies with wild animals in order to improve our knowledge of the natural world and its reaction to environmental factors.

SC. DOLPHIN DEATHS

Friday, Jul. 01, 2011

Rise in dolphin strandings worries marine scientists

By Bo Petersen

CHARLESTON — More than 30 dolphins mysteriously washed up dead in the Lowcountry this spring. The big spike in strandings alarms federal researchers enough that they are conducting extensive tests on the remains. From late February through early May, 32 bottlenose dolphins stranded, mostly in Charleston and Beaufort counties. That's three times as many as normally would be expected during those months. "Right now we don't know why they died," said Wayne McFee, National Ocean Service marine mammal stranding program scientist. "Most of the animals we've had have been really decomposed." The testing will take months, he said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has designated the strandings as a "unusual mortality event," because they were unexpected and involved a relatively large number of animals. The designation gives forensic researchers funding to do detailed testing of remains, because of potential environmental and human health threats. A dolphin that dies because of contamination or a virus can be bad news for people who live along the coast. Because the sea mammals are so close to humans in some ways, they are a prime "canary in the coal mine" of trouble in the water.

Marine mammal strandings along the South Carolina coast tend to spike in the spring and fall each year, when migrating animals are on the move. But in the past few years, strandings have spiked in mid-winter. The most likely explanation is the same winter cold snaps that led to mass bait fish kills along the beaches. The cold depletes the shallows of food – fish schools for the dolphin. Dolphins that already are sick can't catch enough to sustain themselves, so they weaken and gradually die, sometimes of pneumonia.

More than 10,000 bottlenose dolphin are thought to roam along the Southeast coast. Some 40 dolphins strand on South Carolina beaches each year

Stranded

An average of 52 marine mammals get stranded each year in South Carolina:

- 80% are bottlenose dolphins.
- 10% are pygmy and dwarf sperm whales.
- Most live strandings are single animals that are sick and dying.
- Most animals must be euthanized.
- 25% of bottlenose dolphins strand with evidence of human interaction, usually entanglements or ingested plastics.

Source: South Carolina Marine Mammal Stranding Network, Coastal Carolina University

GA. DOLPHIN DEATHS

The Georgia coast has reported a significant number of dolphin strandings this summer.

NOTE: Many dolphin strandings on the coasts of Georgia and lower South Carolina go undetected due to our muddy marshes and very high tide cycles. Georgia has one-third of the marshes on the Eastern seaboard. Dead or dying dolphins wash up into the marshes at high tide and remain there as the tide goes out. Therefore we aren't able to accurately access the number of dolphin deaths in this area.

The reported marine mammal deaths in Georgia this summer are as follows:

Reported 7/16/11 in Savannah- Richardson Creek. Male Bottlenose dolphin. 295cm. Body with some decomposition noted.

Reported 7/18/11 in Savannah— Williamson Island. Bottlenose dolphin calf with decomposition. 108cm.

Reported 8/2/11 on Tybee Island. Partial Bottlenose dolphin. Partial/135cm. Head and vertebrae. Scavenged by sharks.

Reported 8/6/11 in Savannah—Turner Creek & Bull River. Female Bottlenose dolphin. 246cm. Full body with some decomposition.

Reported 8/16/11 on Blackbeard Island. Male. 298cm. Badly decomposed and scavenged pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*) on beach.

Reported 8/22/11 on Tybee Island, live female pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia breviceps*) was found in surf. 239cm. *Kogia* was euthanized. No signs of trauma or interaction with humans noted. *Kogia* are offshore animals and stranding inshore is highly unusual.

Reported 8/30/11 on Blackbeard Island. Bottlenose dolphin. Estimated length 232cm. Head and vertebrae. Severe decomposition due to scavenging.

Reported 8/30/11 on Blackbeard Island. Male Bottlenose dolphin. 232cm. Body with decomposition.

In all cases, Level A data and photos are taken as well as teeth, skull and skin samples (where available) to determine genetics

Bottlenose Boutique

Now available: TDP caps with our logo on the front and our [website printed on the back](#) for a reasonable price. TDP caps are also in great colors available. Come to our October dinner to check out the **SALE** at the Bottlenose Boutique.

OCTOBER DINNER-MEETING...

Our Dinner-meeting will be held on **October 15, 2011** in a private banquet room at **JOHNNY HARRIS RESTAURANT** on Victory Drive in Savannah.

A fixed price buffet will be served and reservation are required to insure a minimum attendance requirement.

Come socialize around 6:30pm, dinner at 7:00pm, speaker around 8:00pm

MENU

Salad Bar

Low Country Buffet Boil: Steamed Shrimp, corn, sausage, new potatoes (cooked separately)

Savannah red rice

Fried Chicken

Pecan Pie, Banana Pudding

Coffee & Iced Tea included

Cash Bar

\$26.00 per person includes tax and tip

The seafood is local. We will have the banquet room all to ourselves, so external noise will not impose upon our conversations, guests and speaker. Guests are always invited. Directions to the restaurant will be posted on our website.

Please make your reservation by making your check to The Dolphin Project and mail it to

TDP Dinner c/o Dolores Engle, 621 East 51st Street, Savannah, GA 31405

RSVP deadline: May 14, 2011

Don't wait until the last minute to RSVP. Space is limited.

TDP SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

Tue. Sept. 13

AASU Volunteer Fair (SAV)

Wed. Sept. 14

(dolphin program) Charles Ellis Academy (SAV)

Sat. Sept. 17

TDP Survey

Thu. Sept. 22

SAVOXX/Greys Reef Ocean Film Festival (SAV) 7pm @Jepson

Fri. Sept 23

SAVOXX/Greys Reef Ocean Film Festival (SAV) 7pm @ Trustees Theatre

Sat. Sept 24

SAVOXX-TDP booth at Lazaretto Creek/ Tybee 10am—?

OCTOBER

Sat. Oct. 1

TDP Training /SAV

Mon Oct 10

(dolphin program) Sun City Hunt & Fish Club (HHI.SC)

Thu Oct 13

(dolphin program) Sun City Boat & RV Club (HHI.SC)

Thu Oct 13

(dolphin program) Atlanta Power & Sail (ATL)

Sat. Oct 15

TDP Survey

Sat. Oct 15

Skidaway Institute of Oceanography Science Day (SAV) 10-4

Sat. Oct 15

TDP Dinner meeting

Sat. Oct 22

Bluffton SC Seafood Festival

Sun Oct 23

Bluffton SC Seafood Festival

NOVEMBER

Wed Nov 9

(dolphin program) Callawassie Island SC Ecology Committee

Sat. Nov 19

TDP Survey