

# “ON EFFORT”

## Newsletter

### Fall 2014

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#### **THE DOLPHIN PROJECT**

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The Dolphin Project is an all-volunteer, non-profit research, conservation and education organization, founded in 1989, dedicated to the protection of wild estuarine Bottlenose dolphins and our shared environment. Tax ID# 58-1914176

#### **FROM THE HELM**

Greetings Crew!

What a summer! Oppressive heat and constant rain!!! We even had a downpour for the 25th anniversary celebration—but it didn't spoil the fun. Fall brings us to festivals, where we can reach out to folks of all ages to tell them about protecting dolphins. Fall also gears us up again for student lectures now that school is back in session.

As we near the end of 2014, we're looking forward to an exciting year ahead. There are many ways you can help The Dolphin Project: Check out the festival schedule inside to see how you can lend a hand... Sign up for a research survey... Volunteer for a Board position or serve on a committee. It's fun!

Take a look inside for news and party pixs,

Peach

#### **SURVEY CHARTS**

The survey charts are being updated based on the recent NOAA updates. They will be uploaded to the website as they are completed. More zones are being added to the website list as well which will include many zones for the southern portion of the Georgia coast. The new and improved zone charts are clearer and easier to read. HALLELUJIA!

#### **ELECTIONS**

It's election time for The Dolphin Project. If you would like to serve on TDP Board of Directors, please submit your name to [thedolphinproject@gmail.com](mailto:thedolphinproject@gmail.com). Directors serve for two years and are required to attend 4 board meetings, typically held on the Sunday after the survey day that also has a social. Meetings start at 11:am and usually last about 2-3 hours.

## FALL FESTIVALS



*TDP volunteer/skipper Matt Crist offers information at 2013 Bluffton Art & Seafood Festival.*



*TDP volunteer/skipper Andrew Zeigler helps*

- OCTOBER 4**      **ROCK SHRIMP FESTIVAL. St. Mary's, GA**    Event: 9-6  
Vol shifts: 1 [8:00-11:30], 2 [11:00-3:00], 3 [2:30-6:30]
- OCTOBER 18**    **BLUFFTON ART & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL**, Bluffton SC.    Event: 10-5  
Vol shifts: 1 [9:00-12:00], 2 [11:30-2:30], 3 [2:00-5:30]
- OCTOBER 19**    **BLUFFTON ART & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL**, Bluffton SC.    Event: 10-4  
Vol shifts: 1 [9:00-12:00], 2 [11:30-2:30], 3 [2:00-5:30]
- OCTOBER 25**    **SKIDAWAY MARINE SCIENCE DAY**, Savannah    Event: noon to 4:00  
Vol Shifts: 1 [11:00-2:15], 2 [1:45-5:00]
- NOVEMBER 6**    **MAY HOWARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCIENCE NIGHT**,  
Wilmington Island- Savannah    Event: 5:30-7:30  
Vol shifts: 1 [4:30- 5:45], 2 [5:30-8:00]

Join us for these fun events.

Education Outreach events are posted on our website. Check it occasionally for additional events.

To volunteer for one or more shifts for any of these events, contact Peach at  
[thedolphinproject@gmail.com](mailto:thedolphinproject@gmail.com)

## SEPTEMBER SURVEY

TDP members Tom & Sandy Workman have a home in Richmond Hill GA but currently are working and residing in the Charlotte North Carolina area. They joined the Lake Norman Power Squadron there and told the folks about TDP. They became interested and wanted to help. Peach & Hub journeyed north to train the group and enjoyed the hospitality of the Workmans. Fifteen new NC members with four boats have signed on for the September 20th survey. Experienced Team Leaders and Photographers will join the crews to guide and train the new members. We're hoping for good weather

and lots of dolphins.

Many thanks to TDP skippers Bob Calhoun, Walt Coward and Roy Hubbard for also volunteering their boats for the 9/20 survey. We're also grateful to the crews: Krystal, Michael, John, Kate, Maureen M. Maureen B, Jackie, Loree, Mary, Ron and Gary

## Your HELP is needed...

There are only 55 Maui's dolphins left in the entire world, and all of them live in the waters off the coast of New Zealand. But classified documents show that the government opened up the dolphins' habitat for petroleum exploration -- putting the dolphins in potentially lethal danger.

New Zealand's Green Party says that the government included more than 3,000 square kilometers of the West Coast North Island Marine Mammal Sanctuary in a designated area in which oil giants can explore for petroleum.

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This development could be the last straw for the few remaining Maui's dolphins, so we need to take action immediately. Even beyond the potential for oil leakage once any drills are in place, the seismic surveys used by companies in the process can



permanently damage dolphins' hearing or drive them into deadly fishing nets.

**Sign the petition to save Maui dolphins:**

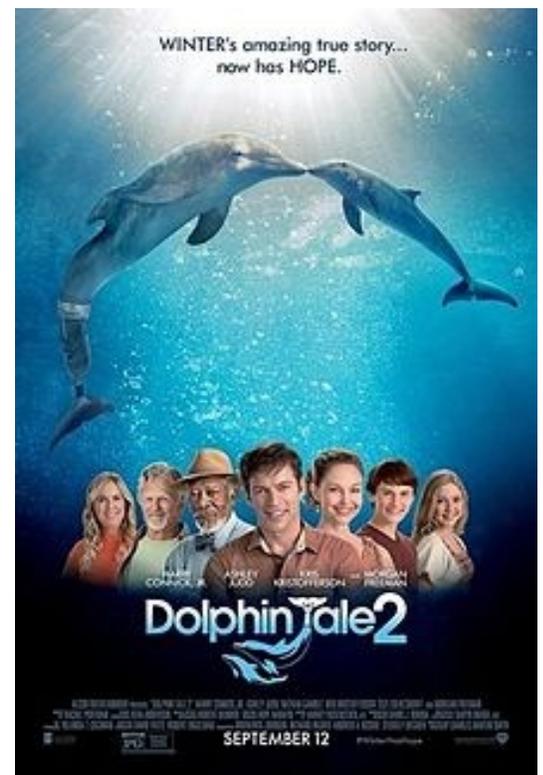
<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/738/886/597/urge-nz-government-to-take-a-stand-for-remaining-55-mauis-dolphin/?z00m=21234269&redirectID=1465609538>

## DOLPHIN TALE 2

The movie "Dolphin Tale 2" opened on Friday, September 12th. The Dolphin Project received permission from the manager of the Regal Cinema off Abercorn in Savannah to setup a table display. Peach and Hub setup the display, viewed the film that evening and enjoyed it... keeping in mind, that like it's predecessor (Dolphin Tale), it's the "Hollywood" version of the story.

This sequel focuses on the rehab team and dolphin rescuers which hopefully will be inspirational for young folks looking to help dolphins. The story involves the rescue and release of a large dolphin as well as the rescue of a small calf.

The calf, named Hope, was found in the same vicinity as Winter, in the Indian River Lagoon, five years and one day after Winter's rescue. The calf was found trying to nurse on its deceased mother. Be sure to stay for the credits at the end of the movie. There is actual footage of the rescue which features our friend, Steve McCullough, renown dolphin rescue expert. (Steve also helped with the rescue of Wilma in Savannah)



## CAPTIVE DOLPHIN IS SET FREE

If you were held captive for years, wouldn't you yearn for your freedom? That happened to a dolphin named Sampal. Her story will touch your heart.

Native to a small island off the shore of South Korea, Sampal was accidentally caught in a fishing net when she was 10 years old. Instead of being released back to the open sea, she was sold to Pacific Land Aquarium and kept in a small pool and forced to learn tricks for food. She lived this cruel life of captivity for three years.

Thanks to concerned citizens, including Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon, the Korean High Courts ordered Sampal and two other captive dolphins to be released to open waters. Preparing the mammals to return to the wild, a rehabilitation facility was set up to help teach the creatures how to survive in their natural habitat and without the intervention of humans. The mayor helped another dolphin named Jedol last year, who had a similar story.

Three organizations set about this task. In May of this year, the Korean Animal Welfare Association, Ewha University and the Cetacean Research Center transferred the dolphins to a temporary sea pen for rehabilitation. Ric O'Barry, director of Earth Island Institute's Dolphin Project, was invited to assess the group for physical and psychological concerns. "They need to be un-trained what they learned at Pacific Land and retaught how to live in the ocean," said O'Barry. His opinion was the dolphins should fare well once returned to their home area.

Release was scheduled for later this summer. However, Sampal had other ideas. After a month of rehabilitation, the net tore open a hole and Sampal found it! Dolphins don't usually swim through small openings but Sampal must have realized this was her chance. Swim through she did, and while hanging around the ocean just outside of the sea pen, she saw people gathering. Sampal took this as

her cue to swim free.

The good news is Sampal was tracked and found to be back with her pod. On June 27, the Cetacean Research Institute reported a confirmed sighting of Sampal about 100 kilometers away from the sea pen that she escaped. She found her family of about 50 dolphins and it appeared they had welcomed her back. Elephants aren't the only animals with long memories.



### About Dolphins...

Dolphins are remarkable creatures. They are considered the most intelligent non-human species. A little known fact is dolphins sleep with only half of their brain at a time to prevent drowning. The other half stays awake in order to keep breathing. They use echolocation — like bats — to find and capture food necessary for their carnivorous diets.

Communication is performed through whistles, clicks and burst pulses. The Wild Dolphin Project (WDP) is a scientific study that has been ongoing since 1985. Among WDP's goals and objectives are maintaining a long-term database tracking family units, non-invasively. Newer technology has allowed WDP to create digitized recordings with the goal of decoding dolphin vocalizations. Won't that be the day when humans can reciprocally communicate with dolphins?

Happy days are ahead for Sampal and her captive pool mates. Thanks to the many South Korean citizens and Mayor Park Won-soon for giving Sampal's life back to her. Too bad corporations like Sea World don't show compassion to the captive dolphins and other creatures its company profits from. These magnificent beings do not belong in captivity for the mere entertainment of humans. Perhaps Mayor Park could consult with activists in the United States to teach how it is done?

## NEW DOLPHIN SPECIES

A new species of river dolphin has been found, the first of its kind for a century.

Tomas Hrbek of the Federal University of Amazonas in Manaus, Brazil, and colleagues took DNA from river dolphins in the Araguaia and Tocantins rivers. He found they differed from all other species in Brazil. They also only have 24 teeth per jaw, rather than the 25 to 29 found in the Amazon's other river dolphins. He calls the species *Inia araguaiaensis*.

The team's analysis of *I. araguaiaensis*'s genes suggest that the species formed 2.08 million years ago, when the Araguaia-Tocantins basin was cut off from the rest of the Amazon river system by huge rapids and waterfalls. River dolphins are slow swimmers that rarely leap, so the shifting landscape isolated the dolphins from their fellows.

Hrbek thinks the formation of rapids has been crucial to river dolphin evolution. The Madeira river's *Inia boliviensis* arose 2.87 million years ago when the



Teotônio rapids formed, while the Casiquiare rapids in the Orinoco river gave rise to the subspecies *Inia geoffrensis humboldtiana*.

However, a different obstacle poses a threat to *I. araguaiaensis*. Hrbek says dam construction on the Araguaia and Tocantins rivers may wipe it out. "Its future is pretty bleak," he says. "The Araguaia-Tocantins basin suffers huge human disturbance and there are probably less than 1000 *I. araguaiaensis* in existence." That means it could soon follow in the footsteps of China's iconic baiji, which was declared extinct in 2007.

"It's exciting evidence for a previously unrecognized species within the ancient lineage of Amazon river dolphins," says Scott Baker of Oregon State University in Newport. "Yet it's already rare, and its habitat is now fragmented by dams."

NEW SCIENTIST. Journal reference: [PLoS One, DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0083623](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0083623)

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Dolphin Project's 25th Anniversary Celebration at JF Gregory Park in Richmond Hill, GA on July 19th was a joyous event thanks to all our generous sponsors, auction donors, members, guests, the awesome Christie Alan Band and fabulous caterer.—JThomas. A memorial acknowledgement was made by Penn Clarke in honor of TDP founder Beau Cutts. Cheryl Tilton managed the Bottlenose Boutique during the event.

The sponsors and auction donors include: GEORGIA WINERY, Starr Camp, Cason Photography, Hinzman Holdings, Leone Hinzman, Wyland Foundation, Joe Powers, Ron & Gerry Sattelle, Hub & Peach Hubbard, Nick Youdell, Arts On The Coast, Beverly Lucas Waite, Cheryl Tilton, Crab Shack Restaurant, Doug Busch, Driftaway Café, Fish Tales Restaurant, Go Fish Clothing, Jalapenos Mexican Grille, Lee Blair, Live Oak Restaurant Group, Marianne Izzo,

Mega Teeth/Bill Eberline, Plantation Lumber, Richmond Hill Historical Society, Sarah Volker, Tom & Karen Stack, Kathy Hatcher, Yonah Mountain Vineyards. Special thanks go to the setup and clean-up crew, bar tenders and auction hosts: Tom & Karen Stack, Gerry & Ron Sattelle, Krystal Goodwin, Michael Tiemeyer, Gayla Jones, Peach & Hub, Cheryl Tilton, Lori Muskat, Joni Chastain, Don & Judy Bender, Margaret Ann Brown



**25th ANNIVERSARY**



**Christy Alan Band is rockin!**

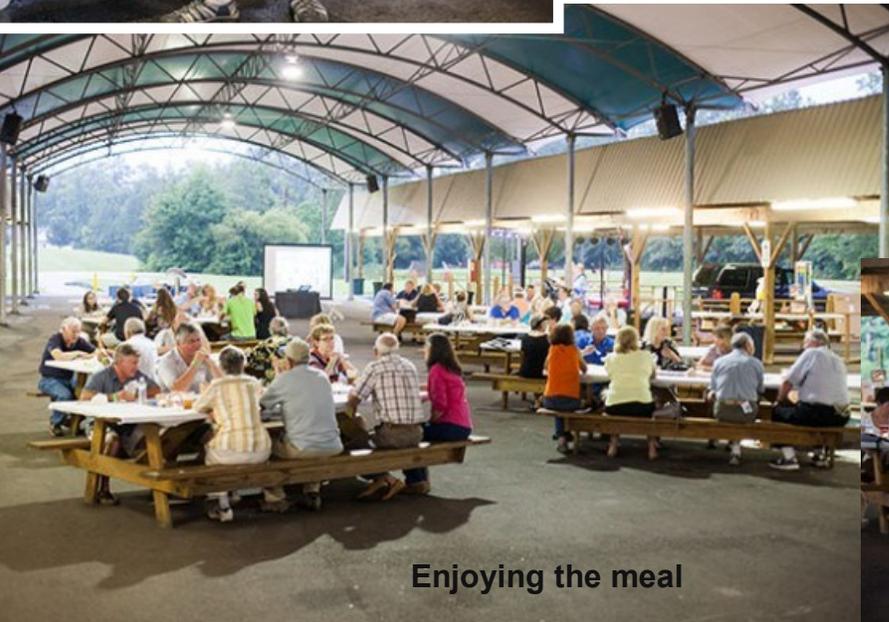
**The "Dolphinettes" - MargaretAnn, Peach & GA Winery Sponsors**



**Bartender Ron Sattelle**



**Lining up for Low Country Boil & BBQ**



**Enjoying the meal**



**Hatchers & Keenoys**

**John Scanlon, Terry & Barbara Conway,  
Joe & Martha Olive, & Don & Judy Bender**

