

# “ON EFFORT”

## Newsletter

### Summer 2015

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### THE DOLPHIN PROJECT

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**[thedolphinproject@gmail.com](mailto:thedolphinproject@gmail.com)**

**[www.thedolphinproject.org](http://www.thedolphinproject.org)**

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!

We've an interesting weather this season - hot and wet - making it challenging for our survey crews. Rest assured we always keep our crews safe. Please check the website for the survey dates and register ASAP if you can participate. The dates are also posted within this newsletter. The more boats out there; the better our research.

Speaking of research – the next SEAMAMMS (SouthEast And Mid-Atlantic Marine Mammal Symposium) will be held in Savannah in Spring-2016 ....a first for Georgia since SEAMAMMS started!!!! Savannah State University with one of our scientific advisors, Dr. Tara Cox will be hosts and TDP has offered assistance. When a date has been assigned we'll let you know. SEAMAMMS is a great opportunity for TDP folks to hear/see the latest research directly from the scientists themselves, comment and ask questions.

We've been busy attending conservation-related meetings and events...Palmetto Pipeline, seismic testing, offshore drilling, ASR (Aquifer Storage Recovery), Georgia's marsh buffer regulations and Brunswick toxins. It's all depressing to think about but desperately needs our attention.

While summer is typically quiet for education outreach, we're already filling our calendar for fall festivals. Check the calendar posted in this newsletter. It will soon be posted on our website. We can always use your help at outreach events. Email [thedolphinproject@gmail.com](mailto:thedolphinproject@gmail.com) if you're available to lend a hand.

If you are interested in serving on our Board, we'll have an opening for 2016. Contact Peach for details.

Get Well wishes and prayers go out to two of our special Skippers: Walt Coward and Frank Sitera.

Thank you for your support.  
Peach

## 2015 FESTIVALS and EDUCATION OUTREACH EVENTS

We have a few outreach events coming up that still need volunteers. Please contact Peach if you can host a shift: [thedolphinproject@gmail.com](mailto:thedolphinproject@gmail.com)

**August 17-18** Georgia State Retirees Assoc. Conference in Savannah at the Coastal Georgia Center on Fahm Street.

**October 3** Coastfest at DNR HQ in Brunswick, GA

**October 16-18** Great Ogeechee Seafood Festival Richmond Hill, GA

**October 24** Skidaway Science Day at SKIO, Savannah, GA

**October 24** Isle of Hope Festival

## DOLPHINS and DESSERTS

Thank you to Sandy and Tom Workman, who hosted the July Dolphins & Dessert social in Richmond Hill in July. Attendees enjoyed a Low Country Boil prepared by Ron Sattelle followed by a presentation by Steve Stuart, a past Commander of the Lake Norman Power Squadron, located north of Charlotte, NC.



They traveled from northern Illinois, down the Mississippi, and out to the Gulf, ending their journey on the west coast of Florida. It was a great bonding trip for the pair, and an interesting one. Steve shared photos and stories from their trip. He also talked about how the Power Squadron assists NOAA by surveying the aids to navigation, and discussed how these aids helped them to navigate during their voyage.

Steve and his son took a trip on their boat via the "Great Loop."

A good time was had by all.

Next Social: **November 7th.**

We'll be having a **Movie Night** featuring GPS documentary "Dolphin Drama" which was filmed in the Savannah area. Stay tuned for details.

## REGISTER FOR RESEARCH SURVEYS...

**SEPTEMBER 12**

**OCTOBER 10**

**NOVEMBER 7**

Boats and crews needed for the remaining 2015 surveys. Please register online as soon as you're available.

## 2015 TRAINING DATES...

Have friends that might like to join TDP? Need a refresher course or updates?

**Dolphin Program and Training Workshop at the Richmond Hill GA Library from 10:30AM-1:00PM**

**September 19**

**November 14**

## NMFS/NOAA Permit



Dr. Lori Muskat

### We have been RENEWED!!!

Every five years, our NMFS/NOAA permit to conduct research has to be renewed. ALL similar research permits go through this process. Dr. Lori Muskat, TDP Board member and TDP's Principal Investigator with NMFS/NOAA, worked diligently for almost two years to seriously comply with renewal protocol requirements. We are grateful for the guidance of one of our Science Advisors, Dr. Tara Cox of Savannah State University for sharing her knowledge of renewal procedures. Typically once the renewal application is submitted, NOAA returns it with additional comments and/or questions. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts by Lori, our permit was approved as submitted and we now have a 'Letter of Confirmation No.19088' which will be valid until July 15, 2020. Our goal is to have a permitted TDP member on every survey boat to achieve the best possible photographs and research data. This allows us to safely turn and follow dolphins within the 50 yard limit provided we don't interact with dolphins and avoid stressing them. We're almost there. Updating names on the permit should be a simpler and quicker process than getting the actual permit. Thank you Lori!!!

## TDP Fun Times at the May Social



Charlotte Keenoy, Patricia Sprunt and friend



Peach Hubbard with Katherine Doyle of SSU, who authored a research paper comparing TDP and SSU photo-ID dolphin research



Don Bender, Patric Boles, Gerry & Ron Sattelle, Judy Bender



Tom & Sandy Workman, Gayla & Tim Jones



# SEISMIC TESTING & OIL RIGS THREE MILES OFF OUR COAST !?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?

very bad for coastal residents, businesses [coastal ecology and marinelife].”

A resolution against drilling is expected to be on the Aug. 11 agenda of the Myrtle Beach City Council. “Myrtle Beach residents opposed to drilling need to call the Mayor and their Council members. The oil and gas industry is lobbying them hard. The people who live there should have their voices heard too,” urged Howell. Howell also said she hopes coastal residents call, write or visit their two

U.S. Senators and House members. Only Congressmen Mark Sanford (R-1stDistrict) and Jim Clyburn (6thDistrict) have opposed drilling off South Carolina’s coast.

For Information: SODA Steering Committee  
JeanMarie Neal, resident of Pawley’s Island  
[jmneal@aol.com](mailto:jmneal@aol.com) 202-841-9829

## TDP Volunteers :-)



Crisley, Hannah, Peach & Mary at the Savannah Seafood Festival

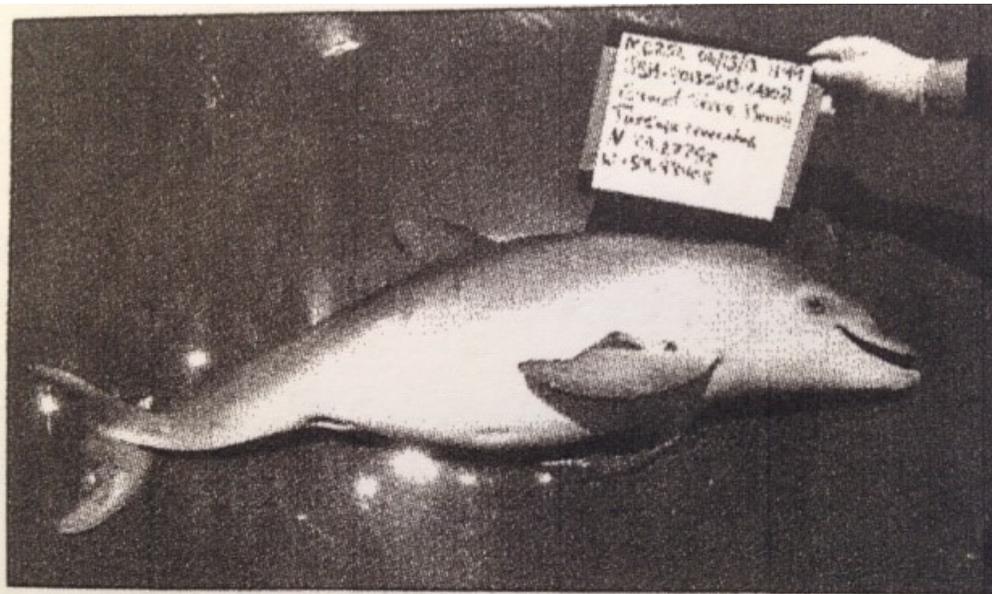


Peach and Chris Hines (in the sea turtle costume) at NOAA’s FareWhale Festival on Tybee Island GA

## Deepwater Horizon's Impact

### Deepwater disaster's lasting impact:

It's been five years since the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 and releasing a torrent of petroleum into the sea. But despite a massive, multibillion-dollar cleanup effort, the effects of the largest marine oil spill in U.S. history may linger for decades. British Petroleum, which operated the rig, has already paid nearly \$3 billion in penalties, and under the Clean Water Act could end up paying roughly \$4,300 for each of the 3 billion to 4 million barrels spilled. But even as most of the Gulf's beaches appear clean and the seafood industry slowly recovers, the disaster's long-term environmental repercussions remain largely unknown. Just 25 percent of the oil spilled has been accounted for, and the impact of that missing oil on the Gulf's ecosystem could persist for generations. Much of the petroleum likely settled on the sea-floor, threatening deep-sea corals and bottom-dwelling fish. Bottlenose dolphins, whales, and porpoises have been



*Deepwater's death toll continues to rise.*

stranding themselves in large numbers along the shoreline, and the Gulf's populations of oysters, crabs, and endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtles have declined significantly. "Dolphin deaths continue, oil is still on the bottom of the ocean, tar balls keep coming up." Cynthia Sarthou, executive director of the Gulf Restoration Network, tells NPR.com. "And nobody really is able to say what we may find in five or 10 years."

## Bottlenose Dolphins need your help ....

A recent study found that in areas most impacted by the 2010 BP oil spill, bottlenose dolphins are dying at four times the normal rate. Earlier this year, a Louisiana federal judge ruled that BP should be held responsible for spilling 3.19 million barrels of oil into the Gulf during the 87-day disaster and face \$13.7 billion in pollution fines. The Department of Commerce can ensure that these fines be used for habitat and community restoration in the Gulf.

Stand up for dolphins and Gulf communities.

Send a message to Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker NOW!

<https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=15793>

## JANE GOODALL wants to see SeaWorld go extinct

The 81-year-old primatologist said whales and dolphins should never be held in captivity, and that the entertainment company known for its orca shows should be shuttered. "They definitely should be closed down," Goodall said in an interview with The Huffington Post earlier this month.

She's not alone. SeaWorld's stock price has been plummeting since July 2013, when CNN released the documentary "Blackfish." The film exposed the misery endured by SeaWorld's trained orca and the dangers posed to trainers working with stressed-out carnivorous whales.

One of the problems highlighted in "Blackfish" is that cetacea, the family of aquatic mammals that includes whales, dolphins and porpoises, communicate with sonar-like sound waves. When confined to tanks, Goodall noted, those waves echo back and create a hellish cacophony for the animals "When they are contained in these tanks ... that is acoustical hell," said Goodall, adding that her nonprofit organization, the Jane Goodall Institute, is urging aquariums across the country to free their whales. "The sounds bounce back from the walls of the tank."

SeaWorld aggressively refuted many of the film's claims, including allegations that its whales were unhealthy and that the company tried to cover up details surrounding the 2010 death of trainer Dawn Brancheau, who was mauled by an orca.

After the release of "Blackfish," SeaWorld saw a rapid decline in visitors, and with that, in the price of shares. But on Monday, Goldman Sachs upgraded the stock, optimistic that the company can retool its image as consumers start forgetting about the blockbuster documentary.

"Jane Goodall is a respected scientist and advocate for the world's primates, but we couldn't disagree more with her on this," Becca Bides, a SeaWorld spokeswoman, said in an emailed statement. "Zoos and marine mammal parks like SeaWorld allow



people to experience animals in a way that is inspiring and educational." Asked about the allegation that SeaWorld's tanks are detrimental to whales, Bides denied the claim, arguing that they are specially crafted to keep underwater noise levels quieter than the ambient ocean.

As of last December, SeaWorld held 22 orcas in its three U.S. marine parks, five of which were caught in the wild, according to the nonprofit advocacy group Whale and Dolphin Conservation. A total of 57 orcas are held in captivity around the world, the group notes. At least 160 orcas have died in captivity since 1961, and an additional 30 pregnant whales have miscarried or had stillborn calves.

Goodall said she remains hopeful that humans are gaining a greater sense of empathy for animals and losing interest in watching them perform for entertainment. "It's not only that they're really big, highly intelligent and social animals so that the capture and confinement in itself is cruel," she said of the captive orcas, but also that "they have emotions like ours."

She welcomed the decision by Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus to eliminate elephants in its shows by 2018. "If you see what happens to those baby elephants, the way they're trained, it's absolutely chilling," said Goodall, who had a pendant in the shape of Africa hanging from her necklace. "They lose all of their young elephant playfulness, and then they can be trained."

## SHIFT SEEN ON CAPTIVE DOLPHINS...

*Public criticism has grown in wake of documentaries. Jennifer Kay, the Associated Press*

Follow Jennifer Kay on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/jnkay>.

Ric O'Barry feels the tide turning in his long quest to change the public's mind about dolphins in captivity.

He went from being a dolphin trainer on the beloved "Flipper" TV series in the 1960s to a notorious activist featured in the 2009 documentary "The Cove," which shows the killing of dolphins in Japan. His methods and protests against keeping dolphins on display often have been unwelcome as dolphin shows are popular and lucrative.

But in the wake of "The Cove" and the documentary "Blackfish," it seems O'Barry's desire to see all dolphins swimming free may have gained mainstream traction.



Ric O'Barry, Louis Psihoyos, Paula DuPre' Pesmen, Fisher Stevens

**The National Aquarium in Baltimore announced last year that it was exploring the feasibility of an oceanside sanctuary where its eight dolphins could retire.**

Elected officials nationwide also have taken up the issue of marine mammals, including dolphins. In November, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a non-binding resolution stating that whales and dolphins have the right to be free from life in captivity, and the city council of Malibu, California, issued a proclamation in

February proclaiming that all whales and dolphins swimming offshore have the "right to their own freedom and lives."

"Validation! I was right! I feel great about that," O'Barry, 75, said recently at his South Miami bungalow. "Yeah, finally! It only took 50 years but they finally get it. They don't belong in captivity, they're admitting that."

O'Barry's still considered an extremist, though, in an industry that questions why healthy dolphins with trainers who care for them would need sanctuary.

"I'm not sure when someone says a dolphin should retire that you're taking care of their mental and physical needs," said Rita Irwin, president-elect of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks & Aquariums, which includes over 60 marine parks, zoos and aquariums worldwide.

Irwin also is the CEO of the Florida Keys-based Dolphin Research Center, which in the 1990s took custody of a dolphin O'Barry released into the wild. The center said the dolphin was malnourished, while O'Barry maintained that the dolphin's health was good.

Irwin and O'Barry do agree, though, that many dolphins in captivity generally are not good candidates for release because of the amount of time they've spent under human care.

O'Barry didn't always advocate to free dolphins. He once helped capture and train them for the Miami Seaquarium, where "Flipper" was filmed. He had a change of heart after the series ended and one of the dolphins, ailing in a steel tank, died in his arms. Decades of civil disobedience, media campaigns and advocacy followed through his independent organization, DolphinProject.net.

## Shift seen on dolphins in captivity (continued)

O'Barry argues that dolphins in captivity have no educational value because their activities bear no resemblance to what they do in the ocean. Visitors only see dolphins appearing to play without understanding the damage caused by confining animals that rely on sonar to experience their environment, he says.

"The music is playing and it's your day off, you've got your family with you, the sun is out, the water is a beautiful, magic, sparkling blue, and the dolphin is smiling back at you. There doesn't seem to be a problem. Unless you're hitting the dolphin with a baseball bat, you don't see the optical illusion that I see," O'Barry said.

He wants to see dolphins that can survive in the wild released, and those that can't be retired to open water sea pens where they would be protected from predators and kept from breeding so more dolphins won't be born in captivity. He's cheered by news that some institutions with captive dolphins now may be seeing his way of thinking.

The National Aquarium dropped scheduled dolphin performances two years ago and instead allows visitors to watch trainers work with the animals throughout the day. Now it's evaluating whether a sanctuary or a national dolphin center would be better options for its dolphins as it plans a variety of changes to its visitor experience.

"Baby boomers grew up watching 'Flipper,' while for millennials it was 'Free Willy' and 'The Cove.' Our audience is evolving dramatically, and if we hope to remain relevant, we must ourselves evolve as well," CEO John Racanelli said in an email to The Associated Press.

Other facilities with dolphins are less willing to talk about the influence those recent films have had on their audiences.

Officials at Clearwater Marine Aquarium sought to

clarify revisions announced this summer for their dolphin displays. The aquarium is home to the rehabilitated dolphins Winter and Hope, made famous in the "Dolphin Tale" movies, and their interactions with their trainers will remain public, though "we don't do the big Broadway-type shows," said CEO David Yates.



Yates wanted to be clear, though, that he wasn't condemning choreographed dolphin performances. "We're not passing judgment on everybody else, we're just saying what we do," he said.

Last summer, Orlando-based SeaWorld said it would build larger environments for its killer whales. The announcement came amid falling earnings and park attendance and after the public criticism that followed "Blackfish," the 2013 documentary that argued that keeping marine mammals in captivity is inhumane.

While those in the industry call "Blackfish" and "The Cove" propaganda, O'Barry said they helped shift public opinion and push his work out from under the personal guilt he felt over his role in building the public's love for dolphins doing tricks.

"I helped create that mess," he said. "I was doing what I could to stop it, and I was coming from a place of guilt, but not anymore."

## CONGRATULATIONS!...

**Congratulations** to Chris Hines, TDP board member and Amanda Mahoney on their recent marriage!

**Congratulations** to (board member and team leader) Krystal Goodwin and her husband Dr. Michael Tiemeyer, (TDP photographer), on the July 4th birth of their daughter, Eleanor Alice. 20", 8 lbs10-1/2 oz.



## TDP FUN!

TDP hosted a booth at the Water Festival on August 2nd at the Chattahoochee Nature Center in Roswell GA. Besides having the fin-match game, Don Bender and Peach Hubbard introduced a new game: 'Fishing for Plastics/Cleanup the Ocean'. It's comprised of a dolphin-themed shower curtain, bamboo fishing poles (created by Roy Hubbard from backyard bamboo) and plastic trash embedded with magnets. Instead of a hook, the lines on the poles have magnets. The kids and parents loved it. We look forward to using it at Coastfest in Brunswick in October. Volunteers needed to help with games.



Survey team: Mike, Tracey, Peach, Connie, Martha



Survey team: Julie, Brianna, Loree & Ron

## Stop the Faroe Island Whale Slaughter ....

Each summer in Denmark's Faroe Islands, hundreds of dolphins and whales are lured in to shore and then brutally slaughtered. When activists try to intervene and protect the whales, the Danish Navy arrests them.

The government needs to stop supporting this horrifying slaughter. An online petition asking the government to stop the Faroe Island whale hunt, and stop using government resources to support it. The link to petition is at the end of this article.

Pilot whales are slaughtered in the highest numbers, but bottlenose dolphins, Atlantic white-beaked dolphins and harbor porpoises are also killed.

dolphins that could potentially escape back into the water are hooked in their blowholes and dragged onto the beach, rendering them helpless as the cries from their families rise around them.

People on the islands used to eat the whale meat from the hunt, but the local chief medical officers have declared that pilot whale meat now contains too much mercury to be safe for human consumption. This means these innocent animals are being killed solely as part of an antiquated ritual meant to demonstrate masculinity. **Now is the time to stop the Faroe Island whale slaughter.**



Dolphins and whales are incredibly intelligent, playful creatures. When the hunters surround them to drive them to the shore, the animals don't know that they're about to die – they think they're just playing with humans.

**Once the dolphins and whales are beached, gasping and terrified, hunters stab the animals in the spines, severing their spinal cord and the major blood supply to the brain. Whales or**

The Faroe Islands are an autonomous state in Denmark, but the Danish government is clearly expending resources to protect the hunt. If enough of us speak out and demand an end to the massacre, the government will be forced to respond, and withdraw support from the Faroe Islands.

**To sign the Petition go to:**

<https://www.change.org/p/end-the-faroe-islands-whale-slaughter>

PLEASE HELP US SUPPORT TDP SPONSORS

