

"On Effort"

Newsletter
WINTER 2012

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FROM THE HELM

Happy Holidays!

We wrap up 2012 with deepest gratitude for our hard-working volunteers and generous sponsors. Our newsletter notes our accomplishments for this past year and expectations for 2013. Our new survey and training dates are posted here on our website. Take note of the special articles and information within this newsletter.

We wish you all the blessings of the season.
Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy New Year

Peach
TDP President

2013 Board of Directors...

Our 2013 Officers and Board of Directors are listed to the left. Gayla Jones retired from the Board and we thank her for her dedication to TDP over the years. We welcome Lucy Robinson as a Director. Lucy's enthusiasm is infectious and we're excited to have her on board. We thank Don, George and Donna for their continued support and service to the BOD.

2013 SURVEYS

January 12

February 9

March 9 + Dolphins & Desserts social

April 13

May 18 + Dolphins & Desserts social

June 22

July 20 + Dolphins & Desserts social

August 17

September 21

October 12 + Dolphins & Desserts social

November 9

Mark your calendars and sign up early

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

Training...

Training hours: 10am to 12noon

SAVANNAH training will be held at the **Southwest Chatham Library** (behind Target at Savannah Mall) 14097 Abercorn Street, Savannah 31419

February 23—May 4—July 27—September 7—October 26

ATLANTA training will be held at **REI**, 1800 Northeast Expressway NE, Atlanta 30329

March 2—May 4—July 27— October 26

Additional dates are being scheduled for Hilton Head Island.
They will be posted on our website when confirmed.

Survey Crews ...

We strongly encourage crew members to attend a training workshop if you have not done so in the past 3 years. We have added a wealth of additional information about our local dolphins in addition to new survey forms and procedures. Being current on our survey format will keep the teams cohesive and in compliance with our NOAA permit. Please check our training dates and mark your calendars.

DOLPHINS & DESSERTS ...

Our DOLPHINS & DESSERTS socials are a wonderful way to learn more about our marine life and The Dolphin Project and enjoy scrumptious treats.

We will be confirming some of our speakers over the next few weeks but are excited to let you know that we do have **HARDY JONES** slated to speak to us on May 18h. Hardy is an award winning filmmaker and produce, with over 75 films to his credit, who has dedicated his life to saving our oceans. With his friend Ted Danson, he started **BlueVoice.org**. His most recent book: "**Voice of the Dolphins**" is a MUST read. Be sure to get your reservations in early for this special presentation.

March 9, May 18—HARDY JONES, July 20, October 12

Hardy Jones has spent more than thirty years investigating and working to save dolphins. He began unique research on dolphins in the Bahamas in 1978 that has led to four internationally broadcast films and many awards. In 1979 He broke the story of the slaughter of dolphins at Iki Island, Japan which led to international outrage and helped shut down the killing of dolphins in several villages in Japan. Since then Hardy has worked at Futo and Taiji to stop the last vestiges of slaughter on Japan's main island. Hardy has covered the increasing levels of toxic chemicals in the oceans and their connection to disease in dolphins and human beings. Hardy is a former journalist with CBS News. He attended Tulane University and studied law at Columbia University under a CBS Foundation Fellowship.



Seismic Testing ...

From TDP Vice President Don Bender:

On December 4, 2012, Lucy Robinson, a new member of the board of TDP, and I joined 15-20 other people in Johnson Square in Savannah to rally against seismic air gun testing off shore along the Atlantic coast. The concern is a request by the oil and gas industry for a permit from the Department of the Interior for this testing from Florida to Delaware. The rally was led by Katie Parrish, representing Oceana, an international organization, based in Washington DC. At the rally, Katie explained that seismic air guns are towed behind ships and they send loud blasts (250 decibels) of compressed air deep into the oceans. These blasts are loud enough to penetrate a mile into the ocean floor and bounce back creating a map of where deep pockets of oil can be found.

The first and immediate concern is the loud noise released every ten seconds, 24 hours a day for months. Such testing can harm whales, dolphins and other marine animals in the Atlantic, including causing temporary and permanent hearing loss, abandonment of habitat and disruption of vital behaviors such as feeding, mating, and birthing. The Department of Interior's own estimates are that this testing would injure 138,500 dolphins and whales. Along the coast of Peru, beginning in late January of this year, seismic testing was done and beginning in early February hundreds of dolphin carcasses began appearing on an 85 mile stretch of beach near to where the testing had been done. Seismic air gun testing is an immediate threat to the bottle nosed dolphins that we at TDP are committed to protect.

Of course a second concern is that should the testing reveal deep deposits of oil and gas, the extraction would be a risky process that could do much damage to the coast and the tourism that is so critical. Paul Woolf, a Tybee Island councilmember, said at the rally that a 2009 report by Environment America said that the south Atlantic region derived 25 billion dollars a year from tourism, commercial and recreational fishing. The total reserves were valued at 30 billion. He asked "Why would we even consider risking our annual income and quality of life for barely more than a years oil revenue?"

David Kyler of the Center for a Sustainable Coast also spoke and said "Using this destructive exploration method will work against the interest of the coast of Georgia by destroying marine mammals".

A decision on the request for a permit is expected early in 2013. The time for comments ended in July but clearly there was an effort to keep this application under the radar. A similar request was denied in California by their coastal commission due to the activism of environmentalists there. The effort to move this process along quietly was no doubt based on a concern that such activism here could stop this permit. At this point our only recourse is to raise the awareness in the media and lobby our congressional representatives. My partner, Judy and I plan to be in Washington in early January and will be visiting and lobbying our senators and representatives.



Additionally you can help the cause by signing a petition on Facebook set up by OCEANA:

<http://ow.ly/ensoY>

Photo: Foreground—Katie Parrish of OCEANA and TDP member Marilyn Sobowick.

Background: TDP VP Don Bender with Clean Coast President Karen Grainey

VIP Survey Crews ...

The Dolphin Project conducted 23 surveys in 2012 thanks to our survey crews. While all of our crew members are important, we couldn't do any surveys without our Skippers:

Frank Sitera/ 8
Walter Coward/ 3
Mike Estvander/ 1
Roy Hubbard/ 1

Robert Calhoun/ 1
Joe Powers/ 3
Doug Busch/ 1
Peach Hubbard/ 1

Richard Crowe/ 2
Gary Udinsky/ 1 survey
Don Nelson/ 1

Team leaders & Permit Team Leaders

Herb Joe/ 1
Dolores Engle/ 1
George Scuurzo/ 2
Lori Muskat/ 3
Pat McGuire/1

Don Bender/ 3
Amanda Coward/ 1
Krystal Goodman/ 3
Joni Chastain/ 1

Barbara Conway/ 2
Tom Workman/ 3
Peach Hubbard/ 3
Margaret Brown/ 2

Assistant Team Leaders

Amy Lewis/ 2
Carole Crowe/ 2
Krystal Goodman/ 1
Stephanie Davis/ 1
Joyce Albright/ 1
Rose Padgett/ 1
Margo Smith/ 1

Cheryl Yeoman/ 4
Natalia Gulton/ 2
Maureen Bozovich/ 1
Maureen Boggs/ 2
Dee Doss/ 1
Polly Varhol/ 1

Kylie Furguson/ 1
Charlotte Kennoy/ 4
Kate Young/ 1
Kenny Boggs/ 2
Allie Biellauskas/ 1
Darlyne Maranto/ 1

Photographers

Lori Muskat/ 3
Robert Visconti/ 2
Donnissa Busch/ 2
Michael Tiemeyer/ 4
olyn Rasche/ 1

Connie Marcy/ 6
Cara O'Rourke/ 1
Doug Busch/ 1
Kimberly Morton/ 1
Richard Rasche/1

Linda Kittendorf/ 2
Sandy Workman/ 3
Steven Graham: 1
Amy Schneider/ 2
Ellen Morales/ 1

Car-

Survey Registration Fees ...

Many crew members have been concerned about the expenses incurred by our Skippers to operate their boats. All participation in TDP research and education activities are tax-deductible due to our non-profit status. Some Skippers are able to absorb the costs of operating a survey boat but many are not despite the tax-deductions. In these harsh economic times, many of our regular skippers have been unable to participate in surveys due to the rising cost of fuel and other boat expenses.

TDP Board of Directors voted to raise the survey registration fees for 2013 in order to subsidize a fund to offer stipends to our skippers for fuel and lift expenses. WE will also be pursuing grants and sponsorships for our research surveys. Beginning in January 2013 the survey registration fee for Team Leaders, Assistant Team Leaders and Photographers will be **\$25.00**. Skippers will not pay survey fees due to the high costs of operating their boats.

Skippers who would like to request a stipend for a completed survey are to contact Frank Sitera at thedolphinproject@gmail.com.

VIP Education Outreach volunteers ...

To educate the public about wild dolphins, recruit new members and host training workshops, TDP volunteers host booths at festivals and offer lectures to schools, clubs and various public and private organization. Many thanks to all of our volunteers:

Tom & Karen Stack
Peach & Roy Hubbard
Clare & Andrew Zeigler
Sandy & Tom Workman
Don & Judy Bender
Margaret Ann Brown
Bob & Augusta Livingston
Lori Muskat
Joanne Parker
Carole Pacheo

Cheryl Tilton
Cheryl Yeomans
Anique Britton
Charlotte Keenoy
Krystal Goodwin
Jim Buchanan
Joy Davis
Cara O'Rourke
Amy Lewis
Gayla Jones

Donna Calendine
Pat McQuire
Joni Chastain
Marilyn Sobowick
Michael Tiemeyer
RK Nelson
Bill Baugh
Earnest Eason
Natalia Guitton

VIP Volunteer Staff ...

Besides are hard-working Board members who wear many hats, The Dolphin Project is most grateful for it's VIP Staff of Volunteers who work behind the scenes....CHERYL TILTON chairperson of our merchandise, DON BENDER, Atlanta Education Outreach Chairperson, DONNISSA & DOUG BUSCH who review the photos post survey, MARGARET ANN BROWN who conducts our Atlanta training sessions assisted by her husband JIM BUCHANAN, KARLA JOHNSON who coordinates our elections, HERB JOE our survey logistics and membership chairperson, CHARLOTTE KEENOY Adopt A Dolphin Chairperson, DOLORES DYSON ENGLE our social chairperson assisted by husband REED ENGLE, MAUREEN MORALES Atlanta Publicity, JOE POWERS Volunteer Coordinator for Special Events and FRAN LAPOLLA –TDP Advisor. *HUGS to you all!!!!*

Get out the popcorn! ...

We're in the movies!

Three 8th grade students, Brookey, Angel and Harrison, at Savannah Country Day are making a PSA about The Dolphin Project as a school project. Besides making the short film, they also volunteered their time pasting TDP labels on brochures and working at our booth at the Skidaway Science Day. We're looking forward to seeing the finished product in May at it's premier at the school.

Shea Lord and Alex Bunda, film students at SCAD, under the guidance of their professor, Kevin McCarey, are making a film about The Dolphin Project. They were able to get some great footage of our dolphins and interviews with TDP crew members while on a survey this fall. WE were impressed with their professionalism and focus on TDP. We're looking forward to a premier early in 2013 and hoe to use this film as a promotional piece for TDP.

ADOPT A DOLPHIN ...

It intrigues us to see where our adoptions come from. Several of our adoptions come directly from children. We are most grateful for the support of TDP from across the United States. Alabama—1, Connecticut—1, Georgia—10, Illinois—1, Kentucky—1, New York—2, North Carolina—2, Pennsylvania—2, South Carolina—1.

Our Adoption packages make great gifts to give and to receive for any occasion.

Beggar the dolphin ...

Sarasota, Florida ([News-Press](#)) -- Southwest Florida's most famous bottlenose dolphin was found dead, the victim of bad human behavior. Beggar, an adult male dolphin that has been begging food from people near Nokomis for at least 22 years, was found dead Sept. 21 near the Albee Road Bridge in Sarasota.

Although he survived more than two decades approaching boats for handouts, Beggar was not a healthy animal, said Randy Wells, manager of the Sarasota Dolphin Research Program, a partnership between Mote Marine Laboratory and the Chicago Zoological Society. "He was 89 kilos (195.8 pounds) below the weight of a male his size," Wells said. "He got away with what he was doing for 22 years before it caught up with him." Wells estimated that Beggar was 25 to 35 years old; researchers have documented male dolphins living as long as 50 years in the wild, and a female in Sarasota Bay is 62 years old. Feeding dolphins is bad for the animals and illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act; penalties can be fines up to \$100,000 and one year in jail.



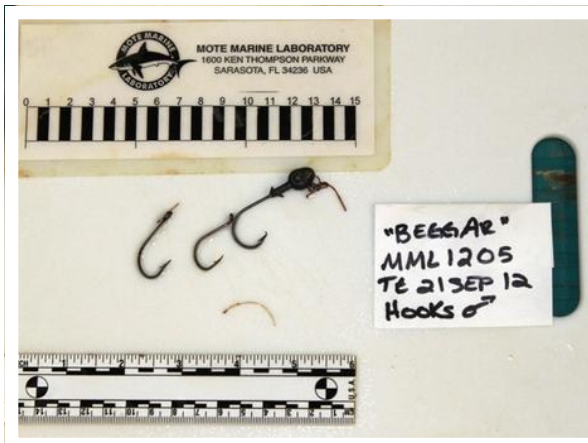
Wells and other scientists studied Beggar extensively over the years. In the most recent study in 2011, researchers recorded 189 instances of illegal feeding in 100 hours of observation. Researchers also documented 121 attempts to touch Beggar, which resulted in nine bites on humans. That and other studies showed that people fed Beggar pretzels, crackers, candy bars, meat and cheese sandwiches, potato chips, hot dogs, cookies and beer.



"The unfortunate thing is that the more a dolphin's behavior is changed, the more it's going to continue until people stop doing what they're doing," said Stacey Horstman, NOAA Fisheries bottlenose dolphin conservation coordinator.

Beggar the dolphin ... (continued)

"Beggar was the poster dolphin of the natural consequences of illegal feeding. "He was a local icon. People loved him. But he represents the very real consequences of what can happen."



Although a necropsy (post-mortem examination) could find no definite cause of death, several findings showed that Beggar's ill health was due to human interaction:

- Multiple broken ribs and vertebrae, the probable results of collisions with boats.
 - Healed boat wounds on the dorsal fin, a healed puncture wound on the right pectoral fin, a healing puncture wound between the blow hole and dorsal fin.
 - Hooks and fishing line in the first stomach, two squid beaks (squid are not natural food for Sarasota Bay dolphins) and several ulcers in the third stomach.
- Dehydration, possibly from not eating a normal dolphin diet.

Incidents of human-dolphin interaction are on the rise, said Assistant Special Agent Gregg Houghboom, of NOAA Fisheries' Office of Law Enforcement. "An old supervisor told me, you kill them with kindness," he said. "People want to be near these animals. They're beautiful animals, intelligent, and people just want to have contact." Not everybody feels so warm and fuzzy toward dolphins: Among the increase in human-dolphin interaction are cases of people shooting and throwing pipe bombs at dolphins and a case this summer in Perdido Bay, in which a dolphin died after someone stabbed it in the head with a screwdriver.

As for Beggar's death at a relatively young age, Wells blames people, not the dolphin. "If people had left him alone, it might have been a very different outcome," he said.

Previous stories on Beggar: June 20, 2007 Nokomis, Florida - You expect it from sharks, but marine researchers are concerned about the growing number of dolphin bite cases. Most of the problems are happening in the same area, near the Albee Street Bridge in Sarasota County. Mote Marine Laboratory researchers say a dolphin named Beggar bit a woman from Lakeland June 7th when she reached out of the boat to pet him. And they say it's not the first time. Boaters have been illegally feeding Beggar for years and researchers say the wild dolphin is becoming more aggressive around people.

Jason Allen, Sarasota Dolphin Research Program: "It seems more reasonable to understand why you wouldn't feed a bear or something more dangerous appearing but these are wild animals. They are wild animals with lots of sharp teeth. It's dangerous for the animals to feed the animals, and it's dangerous for the people when you feed the animals." Based on years of studying Beggar, researchers believe he is the only dolphin in the Bay area that reaches up to boaters and sometimes bites them. **It's illegal to feed, harass, swim with, or follow wild dolphins. You could face a misdemeanor charge.**

SEAMMAMS ...

The 2013 Southeast and Mid-Atlantic Marine Mammal Symposium (SEAMAMMS) will take place March 22-24, 2013, in Jacksonville Florida hosted by the University of North Florida.



SEAMAMMS has been attended since its inception by The Dolphin Project as an opportunity to learn about marine mammals in our area and to meet the scientists who are doing the research. TDP has developed lasting relationships with renowned scientists on the Eastern seaboard by attending SEAMAMMS over the years. TDP encourages anyone interested in learning more about marine biology and our regional marine mammals to attend SEAMAMMS. Several of our Board members will be attending the Jacksonville event. It's educational, inspirational and fun!

SEAMAMMS is a forum for biologists conducting research on all species of marine mammals in waters from New Jersey to Texas. The purpose of the conference is to bring together scientists and students to present their latest research results in a regional student-oriented meeting format.

SEAMAMMS provides an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to present their research to their colleagues. Awards will be given for the best student oral and poster presentations. The 2013 conference will mark the twentieth year for this productive annual meeting.

There will be a mixer on Friday night, followed by presentations all day Saturday and Sunday morning. A banquet will be held on Saturday night and a business meeting will be held on Sunday morning to conclude the conference. All activities will be held on the campus of the University of North Georgia, Jacksonville, Florida. More information will be posted on the website in the coming weeks for lodging, registration and directions: <http://www.unf.edu/coas/biology/SEAMAMMS.aspx>

Mailbag ...

Dear Dolphin Project,

Hi, My name is Jasmine, and I am 10 years old. My parents adopted (dolphin) Number 9 for me for Christmas last year. I am so glad that you are helping the dolphins in the wild. It helps kids like me who love the ocean to be able to help a little. I have been saving money for number 9.

My middle name is Kai and since I learned that, I started reading and learning about the ocean and dolphins. I get so excited every time I see dolphins when I am on vacation. They are so smart and amazing.

Thanks for all you do for number 9.
Jasmine
Ft. Thomas, Kentucky



This is me and my little sister Jade who LOVES wolves!

Pilot Whale strandings ...

BEAUFORT CO., SC (WTOC) December 6, 2012- A whale died Thursday after being stranded on the shore in Fripp Inlet near the Nature Center at Hunting Island State Park. Now, there are several other whales facing similar fate. It's certainly is not something you expect to see in the lowcountry, an 18 foot pilot whale, weighing almost a ton, beached on the shore. "We get to see a lot of wildlife here, dolphins and such but I've never seen a whale, it's pretty amazing," said Whit Suber, Fripp Island resident.

But officials say this whale should have never turned up here. "It generally lives off shore," said Al Segars, veterinarian, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. "The fact that he's here in the Fripp Inlet tells me something is very wrong." Unfortunately, Segars says this is one of several pilot whales in this same situation. "Pilot whales are very social animals," said Segars. "They don't strand alone and so generally when one pilot whale comes ashore, there are other whales coming ashore. They have a very strong social bond in that pod of animals. We've had reports from fishermen about other pilot whales aimlessly circling near shore so we were concerned we were going to have a mass stranding event and that's what's happening now. We know four additional animals that have come ashore today and possibly several more are to come ashore still.



Experts are not sure why this happens. "There are theories as far as parasites, maybe navigational errors, there could be a diseased animal that's maybe the leader of the pack and the group follows even though it's not in their best interest," said Segars. While they'd like to save these whales, they say there just are not many options. "We know if we put this animal back in the water, it's going to come right back on shore," said Segars. "It's happened time and time again. So with this species, when you get a mass stranding event, you're really limited."

Fishermen in the area say they have noticed other struggling whales over the last day. "Sometimes we see them five or six miles out, but never as close as we have lately. I could see the fin sticking up," fisherman Robert Gay said.

The whale has been loaded up and taken to the NOAA lab in Charleston so they can perform an animal autopsy to hopefully find out more about why these animals do this and what causes it..

December 7, 2012: So far, three pilot whales that have died including the one in the Fripp Inlet on Thursday, the one found on Edisto on Tuesday and a third one discovered dead Thursday in the Story River, which is about a half mile from the one in the Fripp Inlet, according to the DNR.

Read more here: <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2012/12/06/3710811/pilot-whale-beaches-itself-dies.html#storylink=cpy>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieX1MXxtN-k>

I-GIVE ...

You can help The Dolphin Project when you shop on the internet. Just go to www.igive.com BEFORE you shop to see if your merchandiser is on their extensive list. If it is—register with them indicating TDP as your charity and then TDP gets a percentage of the sale!!! It's EASY!. Every little bit helps.



STOP SEAFOOD FRAUD...

From **OCEANA.org**:

We need your help to stop seafood fraud. We're working hard to push the SAFE Seafood Act, but Georgia Rep. Kingston hasn't signed on yet. Dishonest labeling hurts consumers and the oceans, and the disturbing statistics show that for commonly swapped species like wild salmon, cod and red snapper, **up to 70% of seafood might be mislabeled.**

[Your member of Congress still hasn't signed onto the SAFE Seafood Act that will fight fraud by requiring traceability from bait to plate and tightening enforcement against rulebreakers. Now is the time to tell Rep. Kingston to support SAFE seafood today»](#)

We know you care about what you eat. But you can't make the right choices if you can't trust the labels on your food. Your sustainable "wild" salmon may actually have come from an unsustainable fish farm, treated with antibiotics and fed wild-caught fish. Your white tuna sushi may actually contain escolar, leaving you with an upset stomach.

In addition to hurting consumers, seafood fraud leaves the oceans vulnerable. Some seafood producers operating illegally or unsustainably find it easy to lie about the species name, where the fish came from, and how it was caught. Once the fish passes hands, ocean-conscious consumers have no way to tell the fraudulent seafood from the rest.

[The SAFE Seafood Act will make our food and our oceans safer. Sign today»](#)

http://act.oceana.org/letter/l-seafood-safe-2/?akid=2586.983682.8gqChv&rd=1&source=mailing&t=5&utm_campaign=seafoodfraud&utm_medium=mailing&utm_source=advocacy

It's time to take seafood fraud seriously. Our oceans and our health are being threatened. The SAFE Seafood Act will make it harder for illegal fishermen and producers to sell their product in U.S. markets, and it will protect consumers like you from being cheated or harmed from dishonest labeling

HUFFINGTON POST 7/24/12 **Seafood Fraud: Oceana Study Finds 31% Mislabeled In South Florida**

A recent study by international ocean advocacy group [Oceana](#) revealed that nearly a third of the seafood being sold in South Florida is mislabeled.

The study targeted red and yellowtail snapper, grouper, wild salmon, yellowtail and white tuna, as these are fish regionally significant to Florida, and also because they've had a history of being mislabeled in other studies like these.

The worst offender was king mackerel being sold as grouper. King mackerel is so high in mercury, that pregnant women and other people with certain health restrictions are often told to stay away from it.

STOP SEAFOOD FRAUD... (continued)

HUFFINGTON POST 7/24/12 Seafood Fraud: Oceana Study Finds 31% Mislabeled In South Florida

Report author and Oceana senior scientist Dr. Kimberly Warner had this to say: Our results suggest that South Floridians may be receiving a completely different fish than what they're paying for. Not only does seafood fraud cheat consumers and hurt honest seafood businesses, it also puts our health at risk and undermines efforts to eat sustainably.

As Mike Clary of *The Sun Sentinel* points out, the state of Florida has rigid inspection guidelines and can audit restaurant invoices to make sure things check out. "Restaurants can be fined up to \$1,000 for mislabeling seafood, and its license revoked or suspended." This means that, as Dr. Warner puts it, "something is not working."

For those who may live outside South Florida, before you breathe a sigh of relief about your city's seafood, you should know that similar studies have found even more alarming results in other areas, "We've conducted studies like this in other cities, and the results from Los Angeles and Boston were even more striking -- 55% of seafood in L.A. was mislabeled and 48% in Boston."

Sushi restaurants are frequently the worst offenders in these studies: nine out of ten samples from sushi restaurants were mislabeled in this LA study, and 58% mislabeled in the South Florida study.

According to the South Florida report, every single sample of "white tuna" collected from sushi vendors was actually escolar, a fish that Oceana says can make people sick.

If you are interested in truth in labeling seafood, contact your state's US representatives and encourage them to support this bill.

FYI: When shopping for seafood, always check the labels on the packages. The front of the package of frozen fish may state in large letters: "WILD ALASKAN" but look on the back and it most likely will state that it actually comes from China or another country beside the U.S.

FYI: When eating out, ASK where the seafood comes from. If they don't know—don't eat it. Learn more about farm-raised imported seafood. Once you do, you'll probably won't eat it again.

Could your seafood contain toxic chemicals?

Investigation reveals substances that could cause serious health issues

When you think of tainted seafood, you may think of the Gulf oil spill. But 80 percent of the fish and shrimp Americans eat actually comes from overseas — and a TODAY investigation that aired Tuesday found that some of that seafood may contain toxic chemicals that can cause serious health problems.

Footage taken by a U.S. advocacy group of seafood being raised in Vietnam, for example, showed fish in dirty sewage water, pumped with toxic antibiotics and banned drugs just to keep them alive, boosting production and driving down costs.

Could your seafood contain toxic chemicals?.....

'Disturbing number'

Ron Sparks is commissioner of the state Department of Agriculture in Alabama — one of the few states that tests imported seafood for drugs like chloramphenicol, nitrofurans and malachite green, chemicals so toxic to humans that they're banned in all food. "In some cases, between 40 and 50 percent of our tests will come out positive," Sparks said. "That's a disturbing number." State tests in Oklahoma, Mississippi and Georgia show similar results, all targeting seafood with the worst record of contamination: shrimp, catfish, crabmeat and tilapia imported to the U.S. from China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia — ending up in American restaurants and grocery stores in many cases, officials say.

"Unfortunately, consumers can't tell if any of these compounds are in their seafood," said Joe Basile, a seafood chemist for the Alabama Department of Agriculture. "You can't smell it, can't taste it, you can't cook it out."

Scientists say that over time, eating seafood contaminated with such chemicals could cause anemia, cancer and even birth defects.

The Food and Drug Administration says that the risks are long-term and not fully understood. While the FDA is responsible for keeping the nation's food supply safe, TODAY's investigation found that the FDA tests less than 2 percent of imported seafood. "I would certainly suggest that the FDA do more," Sparks said.

'Cat-and-mouse game'

Government tests show that U.S. seafood is free of these contaminants, but as far back as 2007, a congressional report found that "seafood imports remain especially problematic" and that the "FDA lacks sufficient resources and authority to ensure food safety." The FDA declined to speak with TODAY on camera, but said it is doing the best it can, targeting its testing on companies and countries that are repeat offenders and rejecting their products until they are proven safe. Yet the problem keeps happening: In fact, according to test results obtained by NBC News, this year alone 8 percent of the seafood the FDA tested from China was tainted, and 16 percent of seafood tested from Taiwan was tainted.

John Connelly, who runs a trade group representing the imported seafood industry, said, "Any unauthorized use of an antibiotic is inappropriate. The vast majority of seafood coming in does not exhibit any kind of problems." Connelly said most importers follow the rules, and that the problem is being overblown as a trade issue. "Unfortunately, there are bad actors in every industry," he said. Federal law requires grocery stores to identify the country of origin of the seafood they sell, but in restaurants, it's a different story: Most states do not require them to tell patrons where the seafood they serve comes from.

Connelly said that "studies do not indicate that Americans are deeply interested in the source of their fish or other proteins. "I think that consumers should feel comfortable that the FDA does a good job," he added. But some officials say that until more seafood is tested, consumers are at risk. "It is a cat-and-mouse game," Joe Basile said. "They quite honestly don't care about the health of United States citizens." And officials say it is not just a health issue. American fishermen who play by the rules say they're losing their jobs because they can't compete with importers who cut corners and sell their tainted fish much cheaper in the U.S.

Recommendations...

BOOKS:

DOLPHIN IN THE MIRROR by Dr. Diana Reiss

“Dolphins are among the smartest creatures on the planet — fully conscious, creative, and highly communicative, with an intelligence rare in nature,” writes Diana Reiss in “The Dolphin in the Mirror.” Now Director of Dolphin Research at Baltimore’s National Aquarium, Reiss has spent three decades proving that these “nonterrestrial thinkers” can recognize themselves in mirrors, practice deception and solve problems in ways usually associated only with human beings and great apes. In fact, dolphins’ creation of elaborate bubble rings may prove that these charming mammals have an artistic sensibility. “The aesthetics and easy inventiveness that take place around the bubble rings belie the cognitive abilities that bubble-ring production demands,” she writes. “Here we have dolphins making arbitrary play objects appear out of thin air.”

Reiss, who served as an adviser on the Oscar-winning 2009 film “The Cove,” which documented bloody dolphin hunts in Tajii, Japan, writes passionately about the need to protect these sentient creatures who she believes are capable of empathy. “Scientists and trainers who have worked with dolphins routinely see such behaviors . . . as if the dolphins feel the distress of a buddy in a difficult situation,” she writes of dolphins who rush to the aid of sick companions and, sometimes, injured humans.

VOICE OF THE DOLPHINS by Hardy Jones

In 1978 filmmaker Hardy Jones was swept into the universe of dolphins. In his work as a filmmaker he came to know many of these magnificent animals as individuals. “I know when I’m with them that I’m relating to creatures as intelligent, social, and imbued with emotion as I am.” Hardy’s life became even more closely entwined with dolphins when he learned that he and the dolphins share a genetic trait that imperils both his life and the survival of dolphins worldwide. Starting with the film that came from his first life-changing encounter with spotted dolphins in the Bahamas, he’s made over 70 documentaries for PBS, National Geographic, Discovery Channel, and foreign broadcasters. “Filming became my entrée into the world of dolphins but not my ultimate purpose there. My true aim was to get inside the minds of these enormously intelligent and friendly animals.” In coming years Hardy would apply what he had learned to killer whales in the Arctic fjords of Norway, and sperm whales off the Galapagos and the Caribbean Island of Dominica. “I became a pioneer in a parallel universe inhabited by highly intelligent, friendly, curious aliens. I came to love them and felt an intense need to protect them.” For more than three decades Hardy has fought to end the slaughter of dolphins by Japanese fishermen and was instrumental in converting a dolphin hunter to a dolphin watch tour leader. In the late 1980s Hardy became aware of a threat to dolphins even more insidious than the blades of dolphin hunters – rising levels of chemical toxins in the oceans that were impacting marine life and human beings. Over succeeding decades these contaminants have reached crisis level. In 2003 Hardy was diagnosed with an incurable form of blood cancer that is linked to chemical toxins. “I’ve struggled with the side effects of medications, but my first lab tests after beginning treatment brought stunning results. My burden of monoclonal cells had been reduced by ninety-eight percent.” The diagnosis spurred Hardy to seek the sources of the pollutants in his own body and to document their impact on marine life and human beings. Hardy continues treatment and maintains an active life traveling the world to campaign for dolphins, the oceans and the welfare of humanity.

The Dolphin Project is a non-profit 501c3, all-volunteer research, education and conservation organization dedicated to the protection of the wild estuarine Bottlenose dolphins and our shared environment.

Recommendations...

BOOKS:

BEHIND THE DOLPHIN SMILE by Richard O'Barry

People who have faced death often speak of their lives flashing before their eyes. Something much different happened to dolphin trainer Richard O'Barry when one of the dolphins that played Flipper on television died of stress in his arms. He realized that most of his career as an animal trainer had been a mistake and that dolphins have as much right to freedom as humans. He vowed not to rest until he freed every last dolphin that could be returned to the wild successfully.

This is a true story that will move not only animal lovers but everyone who loves a well-told tale. Ric O'Barry had everything—money, flashy cars, pretty women—but it wasn't enough to keep his conscience at bay. He began to understand that dolphins were easy to train because of their great intelligence, not his great talent, and keeping them in captivity was cruel and morally wrong. While research and entertainment are important to human life, they are not worth the cost to these beautiful and gentle animals.

O'Barry was arrested trying to free a dolphin, but that didn't stop him, and he now devotes his life to untraining dolphins and returning them to their natural habitats. Once the pride of the billion-dollar dolphin captivity industry, he has since become its nemesis.

Ric O'Barry, founder of Dolphin Project Inc. (not TDP) and of Earth Island Institute's 'Save Japan Dolphins' campaign, is an advocate for dolphins. He starred in the Academy Award winning documentary 'THE COVE' and in his son Lincoln O'Barry's television series 'BLOOD DOLPHINS' on *Animal Planet* and *Planet Green*. He lives in South Miami, Florida.

Members...

Our members are important to us. We apologize to those who signed up this fall for not getting your membership cards out to you in a timely fashion. Our staff was overwhelmed with family and TDP commitments but hopes to have that problem resolved by the end of the year.

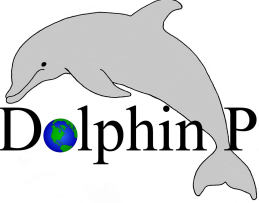
Wondering if your dues are current? Email thedolphinproject@gmail.com to find out the status of your membership. If you have a membership card, your expiration date is on your card. If you don't have a card, you're probably overdue.

We'd like to introduce you to one of our youngest members: Naomi is 11 years old and in 6th grade on



HH Island. She has always had a passion for dolphins since she was a small girl. She loves the ocean and became a certified diver when she turned 10 years old and has been on over 34 dives. She loves nature, swimming, surfing, scuba diving and kayaking and many other things. She has saved her allowance to become a member of The Dolphin Project. She has written many poems, one of them "Dolphins Watery Dreams" was recently published in the 2012 Poetry Collection.

She has volunteered many hours with several animal rescues and continues to show her big heart to all animals in need. She's looking forward to volunteering with TDP



The Dolphin Project

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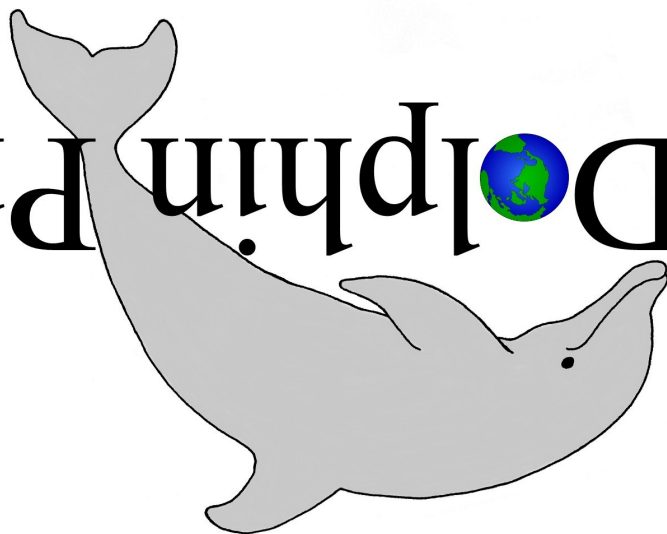
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