

"On Effort"

Newsletter
Spring 2013

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

FROM THE HELM

Greetings!

We've been in high gear since the beginning of 2013. And we're still full steam ahead with our research surveys, Dolphins & Desserts socials, and Education Outreach lectures and events. This newsletter will give you an idea of what's happening in The Dolphin Project.

Peach

TDP President

25th Anniversary?!?!?!?

??????????WHAT??????????

We can hardly believe that we are actually starting to plan our 25th Anniversary which will take place on

July 19th 2014.

If you know of any TDP members who were involved in the late 80's and 90's, let us know. If you can recommend sponsors, please contact us.

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



Thanks to Krystal Goodwin, we've got a great Facebook page.

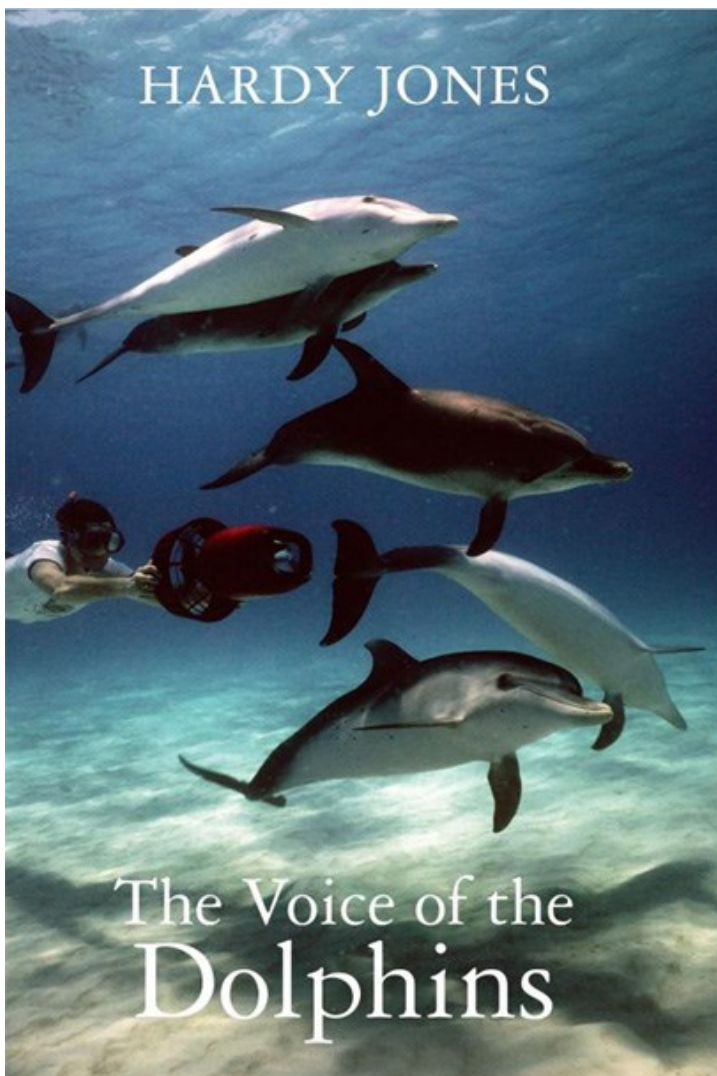
Please check us out and be our 'friend' and have your friends be our 'friend' too!

www.facebook.com/TheDolphinProject

HARDY JONES - MAY 18th ...

Join us on **May 18th** to meet and hear **HARDY JONES** at our **DOLPHINS & DESSERTS Social**. Hardy is an award winning filmmaker and producer, with over 75 films to his credit. He 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, email: dolphinsanddesserts@gmail.com Bring your friends.

MAY 18th Program: “Meetings with Remarkable Dolphins”. The story of 35 years with dolphins in the wild. Meeting dolphins and whales face to face in the Bahamas, Tahiti and Norway fjords. The fight to stop dolphin slaughter in Japan, how toxic chemicals are accumulating in dolphins and in the entire marine food chain – how dangerous for all of us. The latest from Peru where we investigated a massive die-off of dolphins.



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.

SEAMAMMS...

Seven TDP members attended the annual SEAMAMMS [SouthEast And Mid Atlantic Marine Mammal Symposium] which was held this year at the University of North Florida. Dr. Julie Redmond and her staff were our hospitable hosts. Our crew (Don & Judy Bender, Lori Muskat, Lucy Robinson, Krystal Goodwin, Michael Tiemeyer and Peach Hubbard) was given a tour of their new Biological Sciences building which opened in 2012. It has a greenhouse on the roof which raises corals and sea grasses! We were also shown the fabulous necropsy lab and classroom workstations. Almost made us wish were back in school—but not for long!



Roof greenhouse. Center: Krystal Goodwin and Dr. Julie Redmond
Photo by Lucy Robinson



Krystal Goodwin, Lori Muskat, Michael Tiemeyer,
Judy Bender, Don Bender, Peach Hubbard.
Photo taken by Lucy Robinson

It was wonderful reconnecting with all of our marine scientist friends like Dr. Rob Young, Adam Fox and Justin Greenman from Coastal Carolina University, Dr. Tara Cox and her students from Savannah State, John Ososky from the Smithsonian, Marilyn Mazzoli from Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and so many others. These are folks that we can contact for help or advice when we see unusual dolphin situations. Thanks to Adam Fox and Rob Young for sharing their great mudding (strand feeding) video with us which we use in our education outreach programs and training workshops.

The Keynote speaker was Barb Zoodsma of NOAA who presented a report co-authored by Clay George, GA-DNR, about the endangered Right Whales that calve off the Georgia coast. The Right Whale's existence has been threatened since it was named 'right' whale by whalers about 800 years ago because

they swim slowly, close to the surface, close to the coast and when killed they float due to abundant blubber. They were just about extinct back in the 30's. Currently 396 whales have been identified with about 50 breeding females. The species has an estimated 2% per year increase. Aerial surveys are monitoring the status of these whales. Deaths occur due to vessel strikes, entanglements and neonatal issues. Three-fourths of the whales have significant scarring. Ten whales are known to be entangled in commercial fishing gear right now! Barb showed us video of the Marine Mammal Stranding Network crew trying to disentangle a whale from fishing lines. It's dangerous work getting close to a 50foot, 120,000 pound whale! A critical habitat was designated off the Georgia coast in 1994. In 1997, NOAA established the 500 yard "keep distance" rule and ship speeds must be 10km for boats 65 ft. and over. Ships have been fitted with EWS—Early Warning System which can detect whales and avoid strikes. Researchers take genetic samples of the calves using dart guns. Acoustic research is also on-going to learn the vocalizations of moms and their calves.

We heard presentations about manatees, Northern elephant seals, Amazon River dolphins, Kogia's (whales) Steller sea lions and Minke whales. While all were fascinating programs, our focus was on those scientists that did Bottlenose dolphin research....

SEAMAMMS ...

Some of the presentations and posters at SEAMAMMS 2013:

- Skin lesions on Bottlenose dolphins near Brunswick and Sapelo Island, Georgia. (59% of 392 sightings have lesions)
- Use of mark-recapture techniques to estimate abundance of inshore Bottlenose dolphins in South Carolina.
- Behavioral patterns of the common Bottlenose dolphin around Savannah Georgia.
- Protected species monitoring in the proposed undersea warfare training range offshore of Jacksonville FL
- Bottlenose dolphin relative abundance and acoustic behavior during a severe harmful algal bloom* in Tampa Bay FL (*HAB=red tide; attacks central nervous system)
- Social differentiation in common Bottlenose dolphins that engage in human-interaction behaviors near Savannah Georgia.
- It's a spiny situation: fish spines and stingray barbs in Atlantic Bottlenose dolphins (1)
- Assessing human interactions with common Bottlenose dolphins in the Savannah Georgia area using social science surveys.
- Beg events by Bottlenose dolphins in relation to time and location of a vessel near Savannah Georgia
- An investigation of *Helicobacter cetorum** and its role in the development of gastritis in Atlantic Bottlenose dolphins in the southeastern U.S. (*a gram-negative bacterium similar to *Helicobacter pylori* which is associated with gastritis, peptic ulcers and adenocarcinomas in humans)
- The spatial distribution of Bottlenose dolphins in relation to shrimp trawlers near Savannah Georgia
- Begging by Bottlenose dolphins at a commercial shrimp trawler in Savannah Georgia
- Seasonal variation in group size of Bottlenose dolphins in Savannah Georgia
- Preservation and display of the skull of an entangled Bottlenose dolphin calf.
- Social associations and spatial patterns exhibited by Bottlenose dolphins that interacted with a research trawler near Savannah Georgia

If any of these presentations interest you in particular, contact Peach and she can give you more information.

When eating, humans occasionally get bones stuck in their throats. Dolphins can get fish spines stuck in their throats, lungs and other organs causing infections which can lead to death!

One of the presentations we found captivating was the one about the fish spines and stingray barbs in dolphins.(1) The research took place on the west central coast of Florida regarding 467 stranded dolphins from 2003-2012. Necropsies were performed on 345 of these dolphins and 38 were documented with injuries associated with fish spines or stingray barbs. The spine or barb was the cause of death in 24 cases. Stingray barbs as a factor in cetacean mortalities is well documented but fish spines have not been and may account for a significant proportion of mortality. Fish spines are hard to find when performing necropsies. The presentation showed many necropsy photos (blood & guts!!!) where fish spines could have been easily overlooked. A small spine in the liver caused infection in one dolphin. Under further investigation, other dolphins had spines in their hearts and lungs and other organs that were overlooked. The conclusion was that necropsies should be better detailed with photographs and documentation of the spine/barb interactions.

On Saturday night we were treated to a delicious buffet dinner at GTM NERR (Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Reserve) in Ponte Vedra which has a wonderful interactive display of all the wondrous things related to the Estuary there. A great place for kids with all the hands-on activities and, weather permitting, hiking trails and outdoor activities. There was a heavy rain while we were there so we couldn't take advantage of the beautiful marsh views. We also had to try the 'Killer Whale Cream Ale' from the Bold City Brewery at the dinner.

For more information about GTM NERR go to: <http://www.gtmnerr.org/Home.php>

SEAMAMMS ...



LEFT— Facsimiles of a Bottlenose dolphin next to a Right Whale with it's calf behind her which hang from the ceiling of the GTM-NERR Center.

BELOW— TDP's Lucy Robinson with Dr. Rob Young, Coastal Carolina University standing beneath the Right ..

Keith Rittmaster of the NC Maritime Museum presented a fascinating albeit disturbing poster presentation on the devastating effects of discarded monofilament line on marine life—a dolphin in particular. He was gracious to share the photos and poster with The Dolphin Project for us to use in our Education Outreach and training.

It's heartbreaking to think what this poor dolphin lived through before it died



Pectoral flipper

Upper and Lower Mandibles deformed from the fishing lines



Education Outreach ...

We're on the road again - reaching out to the public, of all ages— about protecting our wonderful wild dolphins. We've been spending a lot of time recently in the Hilton Head/Bluffton area, offering programs to The Coastal Discovery Museum, P.E.O., NARFE, Osher Lifelong Institute at UNC-Beaufort, Hilton Head Greater Island Council and Spanish Wells Community Club. And there's more on the schedule...

If you know of an organization in need of a speaker or school that would like a program on wild estuarine Bottlenose dolphins, email: thedolphinproject@gmail.com



Spanish Wells on Hilton Head Island

photo by Lucy Robinson

We especially love talking to children. We were invited to speak at Midway Middle School in Liberty County last month where we gave four presentations.



Teacher Susan Croon (far right) with some of her students

DID YOU KNOW???? Male Orcas stay with their mothers for LIFE!

Spring Festivals ...

The weather is getting warmer, the azaleas are popping and the gnats have arrived (on the coast). It's time for outdoor festivals!

April 2nd, TDP had a booth at the 2013 opening of the Richmond Hill GA Farmers Market held in J.F. Gregory Park. It was a beautiful day and the humans outnumbered the gnats!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for lotsa fun and a little work ...

Saturday, April 13th

TDP will be at the Chattahoochee Nature Center Earth Day Festival in Roswell GA.

Saturday, April 20th

TDP will be at the Savannah Earth Day Festival in Forsyth Park.

Saturday, April 27th

Turtle Trot on Tybee Island. This is an early morning event....7:30-9:30am

Saturday, April 27-28th

Inman Park Festival in Atlanta

If you can lend a hand, email: thedolphinproject@gmail.com

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

BLUFFTON training will be held at the Hargray Building at University of South Carolina-Bluffton

May 11

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.

PROJECTS...

We've got some exciting projects in the works...

MIDDLE SCHOOL WILD ESTUARINE DOLPHIN PROJECT

We're producing a narrated DVD about our residential wild estuarine Bottlenose dolphins and The Dolphin Project research surveys. A CD will accompany this DVD which will have copies of navigational charts and corresponding completed survey event sheets. A teacher workbook will also be included. After watching the video, the students will be required to locate on the charts where dolphins have been seen according to the data on the events sheets. Other tasks will be given relating to the dolphins, the tides, etc.

BOOK

We have already published a children's activity book about our residential dolphins which includes games and puzzles. This book is for sale for \$5.00 at education outreach events, at TDP socials and training workshops. We are most grateful to Republic Services for producing this book for us. We have discovered there is a need for factual information for everyone over the age of 10. So we're publishing a book based on our Education outreach and training program about Georgia's dolphins. It was originally going to include lower South Carolina, but we recently discovered a book titled: 'The Dolphins of Hilton Head: a Natural History' is already available. The Dolphin Project book will be based on fact and science and include some personal stories from TDP members. It will promote the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

SALINITY AND WATER TEMPERATURE TESTING

We would like to include salinity and water temperature testing on our research surveys. The Event sheets will be revised to include this data. Team Leaders will be instructed how to use a refractometer (it's easy!) and keep them in their Team Leader kits. This will add to our research data and can be shared with other scientists.

HELP!

If you have skills in movie making, writing, text editing, teaching science and/or math or grant writing—we could use your help. Obviously all our projects have price tags. They can't be completed without funding. If you know of any sources, please let us know. ...soon!

Email: thedolphinproject@gmail.com

FYI ...

RECOMMENDED READING: "Death At Sea World" by David Kirby

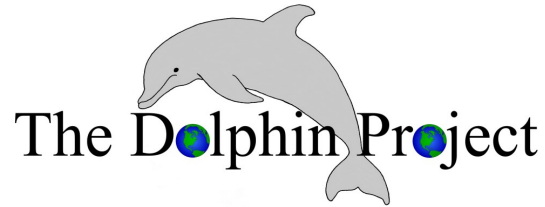
This is an account of the captive dolphin industry from its beginning. It follows the lives of several young people who didn't know each other originally (4 in particular) and their chosen career paths which were related to Orcas (Killer Whales). Some chose the path of true science; others chose careers as dolphin 'trainers'. Read how they came together 20 years later to protect Orcas. It's a captivating account of the abuse of these majestic animals. If you want the truth about captive dolphins/Orcas you must read this book.

YOU SHOP—The Dolphin Project earns \$\$\$

If you shop online, check out "I-Give". They have a list of hundreds of online retailers. Register with I-Give, and designate TDP as your charity of choice. When you need to buy something online, check out the list of I-Give retailers and make your purchase. The Dolphin Project will receive a percentage of the sale! It's EASY! www.igive.com

SEARCHING ONLINE? - The Dolphin Project earns\$\$\$...

Here's a Search Engine (like Google or Bing) that benefits your charity of choice each time you search for something online! "GOODSEARCH". Upload, Sign in, Register TDP as your charity and TDP wins!!! <http://www.goodsearch.com/addcharity.aspx>



LOVES OUR SPONSORS...



Sincere gratitude to Tammie Walz for her generous donation to The Dolphin Project

