

NEWSLETTER



# San Jose Flipper Dippers

APRIL  
2023

GENERAL MEETINGS HELD  
3RD WEDNESDAY  
OF EACH MONTH  
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## 1st woman to graduate from the U.S. Navy's Deep Sea Diving School

Did you know that in 1975 Hull Technician 3rd Class Donna Tobias made history when she became the first woman to graduate from the Navy's Deep Sea Diving School as the Navy's first female hard hat diver?

She chose the rate of a hull technician when her recruiter told her "no way, women can't get in" as a diver. With persistence she worked for a waiver to attend dive school. After graduation, without the ability to get sea duty orders at the time, her first assignment was as an instructor at the Submarine Escape Training Tank at Submarine Naval Base in New London. Tobias was involved in search and salvage operations in Long Island Sound and the Atlantic Ocean, and participated in the sinking of a World War II ship to construct an artificial reef in Chesapeake Bay.

Navy divers are trained at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center (NDSTC) in Panama City, Florida. Initial training is an arduous 8-10 month process from when someone enters "boot camp" until they are rated as a navy diver.

Learn more about women's journey to join the U.S. Navy's diving community in this online exhibit at the U.S. Naval Undersea Museum: <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/undersea/explore/exhibits/online/women-divers.html>.

Also, see more women making history across the U.S. Navy in the Women in the Navy e-book: <https://buff.ly/41Y2J17>. ★

## March 11th S3 Dive; On March 18th

Andrew Grice

After yet another rescheduling, the Dippers waited out the poor weather and dove on March 18th. But oh boy the conditions were worth the wait. **Andrew Grice**, **Taylor Sullivan** and **Sim Upadhyayula** met up at McAbee Beach this beautiful morning and arrived to a glassy, calm ocean and warm sun beams.

Sim swapped out a large portion of his dive kit, so we spent some time collectively working on his newly assembled backplate and wing setup. This included spending 15 minutes watching videos on the sidewalk on how to properly thread a tank strap and putting this info immediately into practice. Taylor had just completed a side mount certification class in Florida and shared some great advice regarding ditchable vs non-ditchable weighting which led to further adjustments.



Before long, many other divers showed up to take advantage of the beautiful day, and a few new friends were made. By the time the three of us made it into the water, we were sweaty and ready for the chilly Monterey Bay to cool us down. We made a long surface swim out until we found a nice spot to descend amongst the kelp. Unfortunately, at this point, Sim had some gear problems and had to abandon the dive. Taylor and Andrew watched to make sure their comrade made it back to shore before descending for what would be the one dive of the day. Visibility was fantastic – perhaps 20–25 feet. The plan was to dive straight out and bear left once we hit the edge of the kelp. However, we unexpectedly saw so much interesting life and structure on our outwards route that we never made a turn.

There were a host of various fishes, sea stars, metridiums, and nudibranchs. We even spotted a pair of rare, shy creatures tucked away in a crevice. We suspect they may have been adolescent sharks of some kind. While dives at McAbee typically max out at around 35 feet or so, we made it down to a depth of 48 feet. After around 45 minutes, we surfaced close to where we descended and made the surface swim back in to shore, enjoying the warm sunshine as we kicked our feet. Unfortunately, Taylor blew an O-ring in her dry suit, and it was starting to get late, so we decided to call it a day after our one dive. But in Taylor's words – "If that dive is the only dive we get in today, then that's fine with me." While we would've loved to dive more, our one dive was a dive to remember. ★

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



It looks like our great dive conditions are back! I have been reading great dive reports for Monterey online for the month of March, and heard good things about the Club's rescheduled S3 dive on March 18th. But more storms are coming, so make sure you check conditions reports before you dive in!

I'm currently in Australia and due back on April 13th. Dippers **Howard Chien** and **Frances Lee** were also in Australia in March and we hope to have some great stories to share with you at the April General meeting. Our trips involved one of week diving the Coral Sea and the Great Barrier Reef, including the famous Yongala shipwreck, and then a couple of weeks sightseeing around Australia.

As I noted in last's month column, there were a couple of important events scheduled in Monterey in March. The Monterey Marine Protected Area Day and the Marine Resources Committee Meeting. The G2KR project had a table at these events and reported good feedback and making good connections to further the project.

The Dippers have a lot of activities planned this month, including our usual Second Saturday SCUBA (S3) dive, a trip to Cozumel, and our Annual Underwater Easter Egg Hunt. Plus we'll be making reservations on April 1st to dive Point Lobos for our May 13th S3 dive.

I look forward to seeing you in the water soon!

– **Barbara**

## **IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN! 14th Annual U/W Easter Egg Hunt A Fourth Saturday Scuba – Such a Deal! April 22nd at Del Monte Beach**

(See Page 7 for Details)



## San Jose Flipper Dippers

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# Dippers Celebrate 59 Years!

The San Jose Flipper Dippers, one of the oldest and most active dive clubs in Northern California, began its odyssey back in 1964 with a small group of SCUBA instructors and other devoted divers dedicated to the promotion of safety and diver training. By 1965 the Club had a "Charter Member" list of 46 divers strong. The first edition of this newsletter was published in April 1965 and consisted of two pages! Happy Birthday!



This year's anniversary salutes those who have been Club members for:

### 30 or more consecutive years

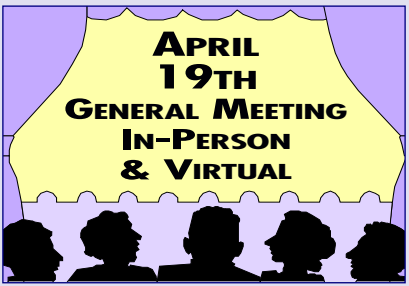
**Carl Tuttle '72**  
**Barbara Davis '93**

### 20 or more consecutive years

**Mike Chalup '88**  
**Kelly Drake '88**  
**Hunter Reid '88**  
**Don Mercado '88**  
**Greg Davis '94**  
**Dennis Nasont '98**

### 10 or more consecutive years

**Jim Rezowalli '05**  
**John Snyder '07**  
**Howard Timoney '07**  
**Tom Gardner '09**  
**Jackie Gardner '11**  
**Teresa Hanson '12**



We'll be having our in-person General Meeting this month. If you come please bring a refreshment to share – safely! We'll again have a live Skype connection to communicate with those who still prefer to meet virtually. ☆

## RAFFLE NEWS

On hold until reinstated at our in-person general meetings. ☆

## MEMBERSHIP

*Ken Agur*

We're a dive club and we're diving! If you're looking for a dive buddy look no further. See the Club's website for more information on becoming a member. (Membership Requirements). We'd love for you to join us!

**Happy Birthday!** This Dipper has completed the annual trip around the Sun this month: **Jim Rezowalli**. ☆

## One of the rarest whales in the world stuns group

A very rare whale was spotted in the Monterey Bay in early March. A group of whale watchers got a 15-minute glimpse of "one of the rarest whales in the world" off the California coast. The North Pacific Right Whale, which has only had "18 confirmed sightings" off the state's coast since 1955, was spotted in Monterey Bay on Sunday, March 5, according to a Facebook post from Monterey Bay Whale Watch.

The company described the whale species as "critically endangered." There are only about 500 North Pacific Right Whales left in the world, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries. Photos posted on social media by the company show the whale's back, along with its flipper and fin popping up just above the water's surface. "We honestly were not even sure what we were looking at until we studied our photos closely: this right whale had barnacles, which are not commonly seen in this species," the whale-watching company wrote.

Facebook users were in awe of the whale-watching company's encounter, with one calling it "absolutely amazing" and another referring to the animal as "the Holy Grail." "What an incredible sighting," another user commented.

The whale-watching company said the last noted sighting of the whale off the coast was last April in Half Moon Bay. Before that, the

species was last seen "off Anacapa Island in the Channel Islands" in May 2017 and off La Jolla the month prior. Endangered species remains threatened. The animals were listed as an endangered species in 1970 after "commercial whaling greatly reduced right whale populations in



the Pacific Ocean," according to NOAA Fisheries. "They were deemed the 'right whale to kill' by whalers, because when killed they would float," the whale-watching company said. The species is also "very slow moving" and spends much of its time on the surface, according to the company. While whaling is no longer a threat, human activity, like "entanglement in fishing gear," vessel strikes and climate change, still threaten the species, NOAA fisheries said.

Given the species rarity, any "data collected... is extraordinarily valuable to the scientific community," the whale-watching company said.

Those who happen to spot the rare creature should snap as many photos as possible and call 831-375-4658 to aid researchers, the company said. ☆

## 33 swimmers accused of harassing pod of dolphins in Hawaii

Nearly three dozen people are being accused of harassing a pod of dolphins in Hōnaunau Bay, Hawaii officials said.

Thirty-three swimmers are accused of "pursuing, coralling, and harassing" the dolphins in the bay on Sunday, according to a press release Tuesday from the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources.

It's against federal law to swim within 50 yards of spinner dolphins in Hawaii's nearshore waters. The prohibition took effect in 2021 amid concerns that so many tourists were swimming with dolphins that the nocturnal animals weren't getting the rest they need during the day to be able to forage for food at night.

Officers with the agency's Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement initiated cases against the swimmers during a routine patrol in the South Kona District. Officials released video and photos taken from a drone that showed the harassment.

Authorities were waiting onshore for the swimmers when they returned. The names of the swimmers have not been released.

Hawaii's Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement are investigating, according to the statement. 🌟



### See a dolphin? It may be trying to sleep

Hawaii's spinner dolphins feast on fish and small crustaceans that surface from the ocean's depths at night. When the sun rises, they head for shallow bays to hide from tiger sharks and other predators. To the untrained eye, the dolphins appear to be awake during the day because they're swimming. But because they sleep by resting half their brains and keeping the other half awake to surface and breathe, they may be sleeping even when they're maneuvering through the water. 🌟



## Here's a great dive story from Cozumel

*Lance and Kathy Williams*

Hi fellow Flipper Dippers! We're just about to depart Cozumel for home. At the young age of 78 I got in six dives!

We had purchased a soft waterproof case for my iPhone. Found out they don't work after you descend more than a couple of feet, just doing a back roll off the boat shut down my video and photo settings. Well I continued our dive at Eagle Reef Wall, which is the perfect description as we counted at least 17 rays.

Now, getting back to my iPhone story. Looking at the screen nothing was going on – no movement, nothing. Then at 102-feet my phone begins vibrating. I look at the screen and I'm call "Emergency 911." I laughed and said good luck in finding me at 100-feet in the ocean! As I begin my ascent I'm thinking, will the Mexico Coast Guard be there looking for me or helicopters flying overhead in a search pattern? Well none of that happened.

On my last dive, and for the first time in Cozumel, I had the pleasure of diving with a Loggerhead turtle. Man they have a very large head. I also found the home of a Cozumel octopus with a large number of empty shells littered about it's entrance. I was impressed with the fact they consume Conch. Close to the coral head there is a huge field of Conch's all waiting to meet their maker.

*Later Dippers! We'll be back in January 2024 🌟*

## USS Oriskany (CV-34)

It was one of the few Essex-class aircraft carrier completed after World War II for the U.S. Navy. The ship was named for the Battle of Oriskany during the Revolutionary War. On May 17, 2006, she was sunk 25 miles south of Pensacola, Florida in 210-feet of water, becoming the largest ship ever used to create an artificial reef. She's now earned the nickname "The Great Carrier Reef." 🌟



## Brazilian researchers find 'terrifying' plastic rocks on remote island

The geology of Brazil's volcanic Trindade Island has fascinated scientists for years, but the discovery of rocks made from plastic debris in this remote turtle refuge is sparking alarm.

Melted plastic has become intertwined with rocks on the island, located 1,140 km (708 miles) from the southeastern state of Espírito Santo, which researchers say is evidence of humans' growing influence over the earth's geological cycles. "This is new and terrifying at the same time, because pollution has reached geology," said Fernanda Avelar Santos, a geologist at the Federal University of Parana.

Santos and her team ran chemical tests to find out what kind of plastics are in the rocks called "plastiglomerates" because they are made of a mixture of sedimentary granules and other debris held together by plastic. "We identified (the pollution) mainly comes from fishing nets, which is very common debris on Trindade Island's beaches," Santos said. "The (nets) are dragged by the marine currents and accumulate on the beach. When the temperature rises, this plastic melts and becomes embedded with the beach's natural material.

Trindade Island is one of the world's most important conservation spots for green turtles, or *Chelonia mydas*, with thousands arriving each year to lay their eggs. The only human inhabitants on Trindade are members of the Brazilian navy, which maintains a base on the



Researcher Fernanda Avelar Santos looks through a microscope at "plastic rocks" found on Trindade Island in the state of Espírito Santo, at the laboratory of the Federal University of Parana, in Curitiba state of Parana, Brazil

island and protects the nesting turtles. "The place where we found these samples (of plastic) is a permanently preserved area in Brazil, near the place green turtles lay their eggs," Santos said. The discovery stirs questions about humans' legacy on the earth, says Santos. "We talk so much about the Anthropocene, and this is it," Santos said, referring to a proposed geological epoch defined by humans' impact on the planet's geology and ecosystems. "The pollution, the garbage in the sea and the plastic dumped incorrectly in the oceans is becoming geological material ... preserved in the earth's geological records."

### Rocks made of plastic also found on Hawaiian Beach

Scientists say a new type of rock cobbled together from plastic, volcanic rock, beach sand, seashells, and corals has begun forming on the shores of Hawaii. "The article is intriguing and fascinating," says geophysicist Douglas Jerolmack of the University of Pennsylvania, who was not involved in the work. "If these things can be preserved, then they might be a nice marker around the world of when humans came to dominate the globe and leave behind their refuse in mass quantities."

Geologist Patricia Corcoran of the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada, and Charles Moore, captain of the oceanographic

research vessel *Alguita*, stumbled upon the new rocks on a beach on the Big Island of Hawaii.

These stones, which they've dubbed "plastiglomerates," most likely formed from melting plastic in fires lit by humans who were camping or fishing, the team reports this month in *GSA*. Although anywhere there is a heat source, such as forest fires or lava flows, and "abundant plastic debris," Corcoran says, "there is the potential for the formation of plastiglomerate." When the plastic melts, it cements rock fragments, sand, and shell debris together, or the plastic can flow into larger rocks and fill in cracks and bubbles to form a kind of junkyard Frankenstein.

Corcoran says some of the plastic is still recognizable as toothbrushes, forks, ropes, and just "anything you can think of." Once the plastic has fused to denser materials, like rock and coral, it sinks to the sea floor, and the chances it will become buried and preserved in the geologic record increase. Corcoran and her team canvassed Kamilo Beach on the Big Island for more of the rocks and found plastiglomerate in all 21 sites they surveyed. She says people have already found plastiglomerate on another Hawaiian island, and she expects there to be much more on coastlines across the world. Plastiglomerate is likely well distributed, it's just never been noticed before now, she says.

Jerolmack agrees. "All around the world where there's trash being openly burned in mass quantities, you can imagine there are even larger melted plastic deposits" where plastiglomerate could form. The discovery adds to the debate about whether humanity's heavy hand in natural processes warrants the formal declaration of a new epoch of Earth history, the Anthropocene, says paleontologist Jan Zalasiewicz of the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom, who was not involved in the study. Plastics in general are so pervasive that they've been documented in a number of surprising places, including ingested in wildlife and on the sea floor. The mass of plastic produced since 1950 is close to 6 billion metric tons, enough to bundle the entire planet in plastic wrap. Combine plastic's abundance with its persistence in the environment, and there's a good chance



Rocks Made of Plastic Found on Hawaiian Beach

it'll get into the fossil record, Zalasiewicz says. "Plastics, including plastiglomerates, would be one of the key markers by which people could recognize the beginning of the Anthropocene."

How long the plastic will endure remains a matter of debate, however. Jerolmack says he doubts the material will stick around in the fossil record. After all, plastic melts, and rocks often pass through hellish depths and temperatures through tectonic processes and burial. Geologist Philip Gibbard of the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom says he imagines that plastics might "revert back to a source of oil from whence they came, given the right conditions of burial." But Zalasiewicz and Corcoran say that isn't true for all the plastic. Some of the material can be preserved as a thin carbon film, much like the way fossil leaves are preserved. Zalasiewicz says that in some rare cases, in that etch of carbon "you may well be left the shape for a flattened plastic bottle." 🌟

## ☆☆ Time Capsule Opened ☆☆

The San Jose Flipper Dippers celebrate 59 years this month. Below are some photos from those early years.



**In 1967 121 members of the San Jose Flipper Dippers gathered for a dive at Monastery Beach.**



**In 1969 members of the San Jose Flipper Dippers met for a dive at the Breakwater in Monterey. This was well before the park was put in.**

# DIVE & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

ANDREW GRICE

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APRIL 2023

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5 BUSINESS MEETING

The meeting will be held **virtually via Skype**. All members are invited to attend. Please email **Carl Tuttle** if you need the link to join. Bring your own food, drinks, and internet connection and we'll discuss ideas for upcoming dives and events.

## SATURDAY APRIL 8 SECOND SATURDAY SCUBA (S3) BEACH DIVE: LOCATION TBD

**- We're looking for a coordinator!**  
Join the Flipper Dippers for this month's Second Saturday Scuba! Plan is to make a 2-tank dive. Meet at 8:00. Be sure to watch your email for an update on a location and coordinator.

## SATURDAY, APRIL 15 NO SCHEDULED DIVE

**SATURDAY APRIL 22  
14th ANNUAL U/W EASTER  
EGG HUNT** Coordinator: **Jim Rezowalli**, jimandthebeach@gmail.com, 408-293-7390. Meet at

## GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19

The **in-person General Meeting** will be held at **7:30 PM** at the Knights of Columbus Santa Maria Hall 2211 Shamrock Dr., Campbell.

The **virtual meeting** will continue to be hosted via Skype.

Please contact **Carl Tuttle** for more details on the in-person meeting or a link to the virtual Skype meeting.

### Celebrate 59 Years of the San Jose Flipper Dippers!

Entertainment:

- **Social Hour**
- **Dive Plans and More**



8:00 AM at Del Monte Beach and dive for Easter Eggs! Eggs will be dropped in depths of 25 to 40 feet.

Contestants will line up on the beach and when the whistle blows, the race is on! The divers that return with the best poker hands win great prizes. Wharf parking is available or park in the parking lot. Meet on the wharf next to the beach for a pre-hunt briefing. Bring 2 tanks and plan on making a 2nd dive under the wharf. Please RSVP in case the dive gets canceled.



## SATURDAY, APRIL 29 NO SCHEDULED DIVE



### UPCOMING IN MAY

- 03 Business Meeting
- 13 Second Saturday Scuba  
– Pt. Lobos
- 17 **General Meeting**
- 22 – 29 Memorial Day Weekend  
– Henry Cowell State Park



## Such a Deal!

### 14th Annual U/W Easter Egg Hunt - April 22nd A Fourth Saturday Scuba

*Do you feel lucky? ... Well, do you? Yep, deal me in!*

On April 22, Dippers will be hustling to find eggs distributed at random for this year's 14th Annual Underwater Easter Egg Hunt, at Del Monte Beach. Last year was a game-changer and this year will be a deal breaker – or winner. Coordinator **Jim Rezowalli** will again be dealing the underwater Poker Game. There will be 48 eggs dropped in the water off Del Monte Beach marked with numbers 3 thru 10, jack, queen, king, ace, and the 4 suits; hearts, diamonds, spades, clubs (four dozen eggs leaving out the #2 cards).

Divers searching for eggs can only have 5 eggs in possession at any time. You can replace eggs with another one in an attempt to come up with a higher poker hand. The divers with the best poker hands will come away with 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes. Not all the eggs were found last year but the divers did come up with some winning eggs (hands).

Jim promises great prizes will be in store – any chocolate bunnies? So be sure to sign up during the April General Meeting or by contacting Jim by email (best): jimandthebeach@gmail.com, or phone 408-293-7390! ★



**NOTE:** All certified divers are encouraged to attend San Jose Flipper Dippers' dives.

Non-Club members will be required to show proof of certification to the dive coordinator prior to entering the water with our group. Please sign up for dives at the General Meeting or call the coordinator. This is needed in case of cancellation or changes.



# San Jose Flipper Dippers

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## 2023 COMING EVENTS

Apr 01	Pt. Lobos Reservations for May 13
Apr 05	Business Meeting
Apr 08	Second Saturday SCUBA
Apr 08-15	Cozumel Dive Trip
Apr 19	🐡 General Meeting - SJFD 59 Years Old
Apr 22	U/W Easter Egg Hunt
May 03	Business Meeting
May 13	Second Saturday SCUBA Pt. Lobos
May 17	🐡 General Meeting
May 22-29	Memorial Day Weekend - Henry Cowell SP
June 01	Business Meeting
June 10	Second Saturday SCUBA - Boat Dive
June 21	🐡 General Meeting
June 25	Fourth Sunday Cycle (FSC)

Watch This Space - Much More To Come!  
See the Club's Website for the full Calendar

*Are you looking for  
someone to dive with?*

The San Jose Flipper Dippers Dive Club is a great way to meet divers who are always having fun times. **Come join us!** 🌟



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