

# the staggering starfish

the official newsletter of the **GSNDAMBAA SCUBA Diving Club**

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## February Club Meeting

Our February meeting will be held virtually via Zoom at our regular time of **6:00 PM** on **Thursday, February 3**. An email Zoom invitation will be sent to the regular meeting attendees. If you would like to be sit in on this meeting, please email a request to Spanky at [gsndambaa@hotmail.com](mailto:gsndambaa@hotmail.com) no later than 12:00 noon on February 3. The agenda includes planning our April, May, and June club dives and discussing the potential for a 2023 club dive trip.

## February Club Dive, Titlow

For the second year in a row, we will be doing our February club dive at Titlow Beach. This is the site where Spanky saw his first GPO. He has promised to lead us to the shelf that is rumored to be home to GPOs and wolf eels (unless we would prefer to explore the plumose-covered pilings). Our **REVISED** meet time is nice and early, **8:15 AM**. We plan to enter the water no later than 9:15 AM. Please try to be ready to enter on time, as this is a current-sensitive site. If the weather looks good, bring along something to eat and we will find some picnic tables for a group lunch. Otherwise those who wish can reconvene at a local restaurant for a group lunch.

### Directions to Titlow Beach:

Take I-5 to Highway 16 in Tacoma

Take Highway 16 West

Exit at Jackson Street

Make a left at the light at the end of the exit

Make the first right after crossing over 16 (6<sup>th</sup> Ave).

Follow 6<sup>th</sup> Ave road down to the water.

Find a good place to park.

If you put the Beach Tavern (8612 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Tacoma) into Google maps you can use your phone to get there.

## January Club Dive Report

We selected a very pleasant January day for our club dive. We gathered along the shore at Driftwood Park and waited for the tsunami warning to expire before we started gearing up for the dive. Fortunately, there was no tsunami. We had a large turnout for this dive, including new club divers Leanne and Arthur. The water was nice and cold for this dive with viz somewhere around 15 feet. We found a nice

## 2022-GSNDAMBAA-at-a-Glance

02/03/2022 6:00 PM

Club Meeting, probably virtual via Zoom

02/12/2022 8:15 AM REVISED

Club Dive at Titlow Beach

03/03/2022 6:00 PM

Club Meeting, probably virtual via Zoom

03/12/2022 10:00 AM

Club Dive at Fox Island East Wall

04/07/2022 6:00 PM

Club Meeting, possibly at ESSDB Jim's House

05/05/2022 6:00 PM

Club Meeting, possibly at ESSDB Jim's House

06/02/2022 6:00 PM

Club Meeting, possibly at ESSDB Jim's House

07/07/2022 6:00 PM

Club Meeting, possibly at ESSDB Jim's House

tire reef with lots of nooks and crannies to explore. Although no one reported seeing one, a post on the Reef Facebook page a week later showed a beautiful Pacific Spiny Lumpsucker. We had a nice dive but will need to return to find the elusive Lumpsucker.

## Orca

Spanky noticed that orca have recently been in the news. Orca were observed removing much of the ropes that were entangled around the tail fin of a humpback whale. Observers from Whale Watch Western Australia saw the pod of orca approach the hobbled whale and expected them to attack the whale, which also has been observed. However, in this case the humpback parted ways with the orca entirely unscathed. The same cannot be said for the large pod of orca that were also observed attacking and killing a full size blue whale. Researchers from the Australia Cetacean Research Centre watched about 14 orca attack and kill the 70 m long blue whale. The orca were apparently led by females, with one of the females devouring the whale's tongue before it died. The researchers reported that approximately 50 orca fed on the dead whale. You can read about it [here](#).

In our part of the world we have 3 distinct groups of orca that live in overlapping areas. Locally we have the Southern Residents, which frequent Puget Sound and southern BC waters, but also range into the Pacific as far south as California. The Northern Residents frequent the areas around British Columbia and Alaska, but also range into the north Pacific. Both resident groups subsist primarily on salmon (they prefer chinook). We also have the Bigg's community (also called Transients) that are seen in Puget Sound and the waters of BC and Alaska. The Bigg's community of orca subsist primarily on marine mammals. The third community, designated as Offshore, subsist primarily on sharks. The orca can successfully share their ranges by subsisting on different prey.

## Cool-?-of the Month Section

### Cool-Web-Article-of-the-Month:

Spanky selected an article about the European Green Crab, which is an invasive species expanding into Washington State waters. An emergency order was just issued by Governor Inslee addressing this little crab. You can read the article by clicking on [Invasive Green Crab](#). More information on the crab, crab identification, and what to do if you find one is [here](#).

### Cool-Web-Videos-of-the-Month:

Our first cool web video shows a rare Blanket Octopus that was found near Australia. This octopus apparently lives in open waters, never living on the bottom. Males are about the size of a walnut and females can be up to 6 feet and up to 40,000 times the weight of the males. Watch it [here](#).

The second video shows an encounter between some orca and a large sting ray near Baja swimming in open water. The video shows why the ray would be better off nestled into the sandy bottom. Watch it by clicking on [ray](#).

### Cool-Photos-Of-The-Month:

Our cool photos for this month were again taken by ESSDB Larry at the January club dive. The first is a White Line Dirona (aka Frosted Nudibranch). The second is a breeding aggregation of Frilled Dogwinkles, and the third is a hermit crab conference (Spanky counts 8 crabs). It appears that they are not really hermits after all. It also is obvious where they get their shells.



Got a C?OTM? Send it to Spanky at [gsndambaa@hotmail.com](mailto:gsndambaa@hotmail.com).

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The deadline for items to be included in the March 2022 Issue is Friday, February 18.