

the staggering starfish

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

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Happy New Year!!!

2024 marks the 35th year for our dive club. Coincidentally, 35 years is also the high end of the life span for sea stars (see this [link](#)). In spite of his advanced age, Spanky is excited to wish everyone a **Happy New Year** and he hopes that the coming year will be a good one for all. Spanky is looking forward to seeing everyone at our 2024 dives and meetings.

January Club Meeting

The Club will mark the new year with our first meeting of 2024 on **Thursday, January 4 at 6:00 PM**. Our meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. An email invitation will be sent to regular attendees. If you would like to join us, please send an email request to Spanky at gsndambaa@hotmail.com no later than noon on the day of the meeting. Our meeting agenda includes a review of skills to be practiced at our January club dive and planning for the March and April club dives.

January Club Dive: Mukilteo

For our first dive of 2024 we will travel to the hamlet of Mukilteo for a dive at the T-Dock. We plan to meet at **10:00 AM** on **Saturday, January 20** and we will splash no later than **11:00 AM**. This dive site is familiar to most Seattle area divers and is popular with dive instructors who use the site for open water training. We plan on visiting the Dome, where it is common to find wolf eels and maybe a GPO. We will also be practicing some skills which many of us have probably not done for a while. We will practice releasing an SMB (please bring your SMB for this), a CESA, and out-of-air drill. After the dive we will head over to the Diamond Knot for some lunch and a brew.

Directions to Mukilteo T-Dock:

For those coming from south of Mukilteo, head north on I5 to Exit 182 (Highway 525). Turn left at the end of the exit ramp on Hwy 525 (also called Mukilteo Speedway) and continue for about 8 miles. When you get to the waterfront, turn right onto Front St. (in front of Ivar's) and continue north on to the parking areas just north of the Silver Cloud Inn. There is a small parking lot to the left and more parking along Front Street and on the street to the right. There is

2024-GSNDAMBAA-at-a-Glance

01/04/2024	6:00 PM	Club virtual meeting
01/20/2024	10:00 AM	Club Dive at the Mukilteo T Dock
02/01/2024	6:00 PM	Club Meeting, probably via Zoom
02/03/2024	8:00 AM	Club Dive at Day Island Wall
03/07/2024	6:00 PM	Club meeting, probably via Zoom
04/04/2024	6:00 PM	Club meeting, probably via Zoom
05/02/2024	6:00 PM	Club meeting, probably via Zoom

also parking along Front St. You will need to pay for parking. If you are coming from the north, head south on I5 to Exit 189 (Hwy 526/Boeing Freeway). Turn right and follow the highway past the airport to 84th St. SW. Turn right and continue to Mukilteo Speedway, where you turn right and head down the hill and follow the directions above. You can also set Google Maps to take you to the Silver Cloud Inn in Mukilteo.

December Bonus Club Dive Report

It was a beautiful winter day for diving Redondo! Water in the shallows was crystal clear as we swam out to the end of the Marine Science Center. We dropped and started the dive plan, which was to get down to about 60 feet and head north, skipping the deep stuff to extend the dive. Visibility was excellent. Along the cruise we saw some great stuff. There was a ton of shrimp! Much more than what is normally seen at this site. And the shrimp were not so skittish - it was possible to touch their antennae! ESSDB Dan found a nice Red Octopus next to the toilet. As it worked its way around the toilet it chased a crab out of its hole beneath the toilet. There was a gunnel that showed an unusual interest in one of the divers and a jellyfish chasing another diver. We also saw a starfish eating a large crab, a Plainfin Midshipman and a crab fighting over a hole, a green gunnel posing for pictures, and a few pairs of gunnels hanging out in steel pipes.

Holiday Party Report

Spanky thinks that everyone who attended the Club's 2023 Holiday Party would agree that a fun time was had by all. Spanky would especially like to thank ESSDBs DeeAnn and Steve for hosting the party. We had several old club members (some of whom are now former divers) at the party. It was good to see some of the old faces so we could reconnect.

Everyone was very surprised by Spanky's dinner menu - no one thought that we would have lasagna. The Pirate Gift Exchange went well - Spanky's recommendations for not bringing white elephant gifts was carefully followed by all who participated. Special thanks also to ESSDBs Christy and Bart for carefully and politely collecting annual club dues and for bringing everything to the party.

Cool-?-of the Month Section

Cool-Web-Articles-of-the-Month:

Our cool web article for this month describes the mechanics of an octopus punch. It seems that octopuses use their pugilistic talents whenever a pesky fish invades their personal space. As a bonus you will get to see a video of some octopuses in action. Read it by clicking on [octopus punch](#).

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

The first cool web video for 2024 is a fairly long one, so pop some popcorn and settle down to watch a video about Oarfish. These rarely seen fish can reach lengths exceeding 30 feet. They may be the animal that started rumors among sailing ships about sea serpents in the open ocean. Some researchers in France have created a video about the creatures (52 minutes long) that you can watch by clicking on [Oarfish](#).

Our second set of cool videos is about some of the smallest creatures in the marine world. You can watch several short videos about small plankton (the largest plankton include jellyfish and the mola mola). You will probably learn more than you want to know about these fascinating animals that destroy our visibility every summer, but just think of everything you can share at your next party. Watch them by clicking [here](#).

Cool-Photos-of-The-Month:

The first photos for the 35th volume of our newsletter include a Red Octopus, a Penpoint Gunnel, and a Longhorn Decorator Crab. The first two photos were taken by ESSDB Dan at the bonus club dive at Redondo. The last one was taken by ESSDB Larry at a recent non-club dive at Point Whitney.



Got a C?OTM? Send it to Spanky .

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The deadline for items to be included in the February 2024 Issue is Friday, January 19.