

NEWSLETTER



San Jose Flipper Dippers

MARCH 2026

GENERAL MEETINGS HELD
3RD WEDNESDAY
OF EACH MONTH
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Surprise shark caught on camera for first time in Antarctica's near-freezing deep

Rod McGuirk, Associated Press

An ungainly barrel of a shark cruising languidly over a barren seabed far too deep for the sun's rays to illuminate was an unexpected sight. Many experts had thought sharks didn't exist in the frigid waters of Antarctica before this sleeper shark lumbered warily and briefly into the spotlight of a video camera, researcher Alan Jamieson said. The shark, filmed in January 2025, was a substantial specimen with an estimated length of between 3 and 4 meters (10 and 13 feet).

"We went down there not expecting to see sharks because there's a general rule of thumb that you don't get sharks in Antarctica," Jamieson said. "And it's not even a little one either. It's a hunk of a shark. These things are tanks," he added.

The camera operated by the Minderoo-UWA Deep-Sea Research Centre, which investigates life in the deepest parts of the world's oceans, was positioned off the South Shetland Islands near the Antarctic Peninsula. That is well inside the boundaries of the Antarctic Ocean, also known as the Southern Ocean, which is defined as below the 60-degree south latitude line.

The shark was 490 meters (1,608 feet) deep where the water temperature was a near-freezing 1.27 degrees Celsius (34.29 degrees Fahrenheit). A skate appears in frame motionless on the seabed and seemingly unperturbed by

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What are you standing around for? Suit up, Dippers!

From left: Florence, Cédric, Eva, Grace, Tom and John. Missing is Jeff. 🌟

February 21st S3 Dive Report

Eva Alexander

After Jackie Gardner's encouraging every Flipper Dipper to earn their gold stars at the January General Meet-

ing, I was keen on getting my 2nd star. So I approached Mr. Vice President **Sim Upadhyayula** that I would like to be the coordinator for the February 14th Valentine's Day S3 Dive. However the ocean was not cooperating on that day. With 8 feet swell in the forecast, we

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Hi All!

We've had some great dives over the past few months and in addition to our monthly S3 dives, we have a lot of fun upcoming activities including:

April: U/W Easter Egg dive, the Club is 62 years old, Fourth Sunday Cycle (FSC) bike rides are back.

May: S3 dive at Pt. Lobos, Camping at Henry Cowell State Park, Scuba Show in Long Beach.

These are just a few of this year's scheduled activities.

Want to see more? Go to the Club's website www.sjflipperdippers.com and look for the 2026 calendar. There's a pdf you can print out too.

Don't forget you can always coordinate a dive. Pick a date and location and we'll get the word out. And, just like **Eva Alexander**, you'll be working on your Star Achievements too!

The Dippers are always having fun times with a variety of activities so you can't say, "There's nothing to do."

Let's go diving! – Barbara

February General Meeting full of surprises

We had a great turnout at the February General Meeting with twenty members in attendance; 15 in-person and 5 via online. During the meeting it was pointed out that **Mike Chalup's** online name was "Mioke." What? Did Mike change his name? Mike did say he knew about the new name, but figured the details were much to completed for the members in attendance to understand. (To Be Continued).

And, yes, it's true! The **Golden Dippy** is alive and well and was presented to **Eva Alexander** due to an unfortunate, but preventable, mistake.

After a club dive in January, the divers dropped their tanks off at Aquarius Dive shop for refills. The group went to lunch and then returned to the shop to pick up their tanks. Divers do this all the time. Easy, right?

Well it turns out that Eva grabbed the wrong tank and was headed back to San Jose in **Howard Timoney's** truck, when another customer figured someone took his tank! One of the shop people remembered who had a similar tank and figured out who took it. Records were reviewed and a phone call was made, resulting in Howard turning around and heading back to the shop.

Eva tried to justify the mistake, "the tank had the same large sticker as mine, so I grabbed it." Ah, sure. That explains it. It's called a Visual Inspection Decal. Doesn't every tank have one? ★

Right: Sgt-at-Arms **Howard Chien** presents the Golden Dippy to **Eva Alexander**. She thinks this is funny!

Below: **Mioke Mike Chalup** attends the General Meeting online from Eugene, OR.



San Jose Flipper Dippers

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o Position Open o

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o Position Open o

MEMBERSHIP

Ken Agur

Welcome **Jeremiah Horn**, at left in photo with Ken, who was voted into the Club at the February General Meeting!

If you're looking for a dive buddy look no further. We offer all certified divers great dives, great fun and great friends! We'd love for you to join us!

Happy Birthday! These two Dippers are completing their annual trip around the Sun this month: **Howard Chien** and **Carri Edgar**. 🌟



We'll be having our in-person General Meeting this month. If you come please bring a refreshment to share! We'll have a live MS Teams connection for those who still prefer to meet virtually. 🌟

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the passing shark. The skate, a shark relative that looks like a stingray, was no surprise since scientists already knew their range extended that far south.

Jamieson, who is the founding director of the University of Western Australia-based research center, said he could find no record of another shark found in the Antarctic Ocean. Peter Kyne, a Charles Darwin University conservation biologist independent of the research center, agreed that a shark had never before been recorded so far south.

Climate change and warming oceans could potentially be driving sharks to the Southern Hemisphere's colder waters, but there was limited data on range changes near Antarctica because of the region's remoteness,

Kyne said. The slow-moving sleeper sharks could have long been in Antarctica without anyone noticing, he said. "This is great. The shark was in the right place, the camera was in the right place and they got this great footage," Kyne said. "It's quite significant."

The sleeper shark population in the Antarctic Ocean was likely sparse and difficult for humans to detect, Jamieson said. The photographed shark was maintaining a depth of around 500 meters (1,640 feet) along a seabed that sloped into much deeper water. The shark maintained that depth because that was the warmest layer of several water layers stacked upon each other to the surface, Jamieson said.

The Antarctic Ocean is heavily lay-

ered, or stratified, to a depth of around 1,000 meters (3,280 feet) because of conflicting properties including colder, denser water from below not readily mixing with fresh water running off melting ice from above. Jamieson expects other Antarctic sharks live at the same depth, feeding on the carcasses of whales, giant squids and other marine creatures that die and sink to the bottom.

There are few research cameras positioned at that specific depth in Antarctic waters. Those that are can only operate during the Southern Hemisphere summer months, from December through February. "The other 75% of the year, no one's looking at all. And so this is why, I think, we occasionally come across these surprises," Jamieson said. 🌟

What are the ocean conditions like?

Next time you are wondering what the ocean looks like, check out the many Live-Streaming Webcams that provide a real-time look at what's going on at a number of Monterey and Carmel beaches. The Club's Website (www.sjflipperdippers.com/relatedwebsites.html) has links to these cameras including:

- **The Breakwater** - This camera looks out over the Breakwater and the Coast Guard Pier. Good view of divers in the water and surf action when pointed there. It doesn't keep the same position as it scans the ocean and the boat harbor.
- **MacAbee Beach** - This camera looks out over MacAbee Beach and offers a great view of what the water conditions look like. You might even see divers in the water. If you're diving there, be sure to wave at the camera and the people in the restaurant.
- **Whalers Cove in Point Lobos** - Conditions are always changing and this provides a great view of the ocean in action. If you look closely you can see Carmel River Beach in the background.

- **Pebble Beach Golf Links** - Here you can see what the ocean and Monterey Bay look like including Stillwater Cove. Webcams include the 17th and 18th Greens. Some of the Webcams are occasionally turned off during major golf events. 🌟



Continued from Front Page
 postponed the S3 Dive to February 21st.

Conditions for February 21st were beautiful on the surface. It was a sunny day with little wind. After a few days of Arctic stormy weather throughout the week, the ocean has calmed down quite a bit. Seven divers were eager to get in the ocean at McAbee Beach - **Cédric Farion, Florence Frans, Tom Earl, Jeff Rowland, Grace Chi**, new prospective **John Wetherell**, and myself. **Les Addison** also showed up at McAbee to say "Hi," but was not planning on diving that day, but did take a photo of the group. It was great to see Les!

We shared our plan of trying to get to the McAbee Pinnacle and formed three groups of buddies. We got in at about 9:30 am. There was very little kelp on the surface, which I believed was due to the storm pushing all the kelp away days before. When we dipped our head in the water, we realized visibility was not good but we were hoping that it would not be too bad. But it

was. Upon descending, we had zero visibility. A few of us reported later that we hit the bottom before we realized we were there! Within a short few minutes, Tom, Jeff and I lost our respective buddy and came up to the surface. Tom then saw bubbles from not far away so he went back down to meet the other divers. Jeff and I waited for a bit and then Grace came up. The three of us proceeded to form a new group while Tom met up with the rest.

Visibility opened up to about 10-15 feet when we were at about 40 feet deep. We saw tons of fish at the Pinnacle (if you ask me, there were grey fish, black fish, medium size; if you ask Grace, she could probably tell you what they were), and a few crabs, all the usual suspects when we dive at McAbee. Tom reported later that his group also found the Pinnacle.

After the 1st dive, Grace and I thought that people might not want to do the 2nd dive due to poor visibility, but unexpectedly, our new prospect

member John told us that he was up for the 2nd dive. So we went - the five of us this time - Cedric, Tom, Grace, John, and I.

Visibility for the 2nd dive was just as bad but we were pleasantly surprised by a friendly visitor. An adorable and little mischievous harbor seal that Cedric named "*Finspector*", kept us company for a good one-way trip to the Pinnacle. *Finspector* inspected all of our fins diligently with his teeth, tugged at us playfully, signaling to us that he wanted to play! He even gave Tom and his scuba tank a big hug. I guess Tom was his favorite amongst us. The rest of the 2nd dive was uneventful and we all came back safe and sound.

John enjoyed his first diving experience with the Club, saying "Fantastic! I can't wait until the next dive." I considered my first coordinated dive trip a success, one step closer to earning my 2nd Gold Star. 🌟

Photos by **Cédric Farion**



John, Tom, Eva, Grace, Florence, Cédric and Jeff



Eva gets ready to keep her drysuit dry.



Grace looks out for the group.



Finspector puts the bite on Eva's blue fin!



Finspector gives Cédric the 'Stink Eye.'

Carl Tuttle couldn't make the dive but spotted the group swimming on the surface via the live webcam overlooking MacAbee Beach and took a screen shot.



Shark Dive! What to do if you come face-to-face with a big one?

On a trip to Hawaii **Carl Tuttle** joined his niece who had just completed her ocean water check-out in Folsom Lake, in Sacramento. Visibility was pitch black but she passed! They were only able to get in one 2-tank boat dive off Kona. Unfortunately the ocean developed some large swells and their scheduled 2-tank afternoon/night manta ray dive was canceled. Snorkeling was also a no-go as the conditions were not safe

So, you ask, what techniques should a diver use when approached by a rather large shark? These photos were sent to a few people for their input.

One responded with a number of questions:



Q. AI? Photoshop?

A. No.

Q. Are you moving to Hawaii?

A. No.

Q. Universal Studios in Hawaii?

A. No. Real U/W photos by the dive master!

Q. What kind of shark is that? It's huge!

Teeth look little, thank goodness.

A. Very rare Rubber-Nose Kona Reef Shark! ☆



Don't Leave Your Dive Boat Unattended

Undercurrent

This was the harsh lesson learned in January by two Western Australian divers who surfaced about three miles off Mindarie, a suburb of Perth, only to find their boat wasn't where they'd anchored it. It was gone. Ryan Chapman and his buddy assumed it had sunk. After an hour and a half, floating helplessly, they managed to flag down a passing fishing boat, which actually took them back to their boat, drifting more than a mile away. They climbed in, returned to the dive site, and went diving. Chapman later said he now realized how important it was to leave someone with the boat when they went diving. Duh. ☆

Ascend Slowly from Every Dive

Undercurrent

An inquest in the UK in January into the death of a 68-year-old experienced British diver who made a rapid ascent from the wreck of the P29, a former East German minesweeper, in Malta in October 2024, found that

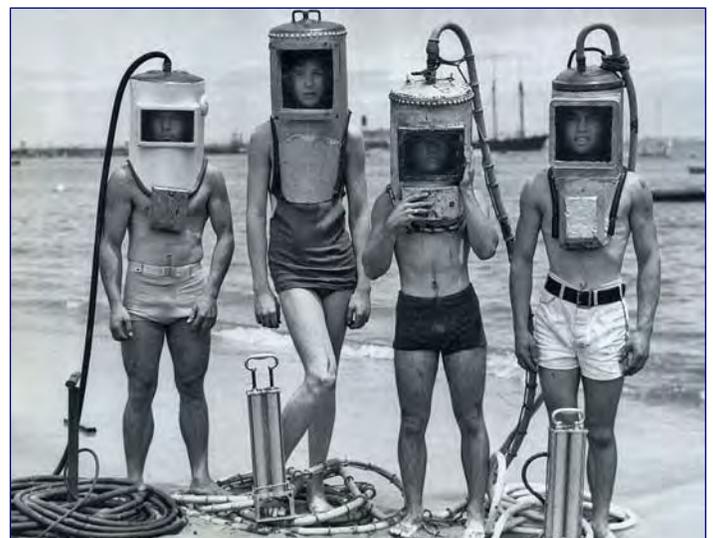
Darrel Pascoe suffered a pulmonary barotrauma (lung over-expansion injury). He was only three minutes into the dive, and the cause of his uncontrolled ascent has not been determined. The inquest heard that Pascoe had not dived for 18 months before his vacation, and had not provided a medical certificate from a medical practitioner confirming fitness to dive, as is a statutory requirement in Malta. ☆

Is Dive Gear Getting Expensive?

Undercurrent

So it seems, if the recent robbery of Force-E Scuba in Boynton Beach (FL) by two knuckleheads is anything to go by. Justin Malik Simmons, 29, and Anne Elizabeth Izatt, 25, face charges after a store assistant was injured by their getaway car. Simmons had grabbed four BCs

worth up to \$10,000 but dropped three when tackled by a staff member. The getaway car turned out to be registered to Izatt's father. After scuba equipment was used in a restaurant robbery in Disney Springs in September, maybe untraceable stolen scuba gear is achieving a unique desirability among Florida's criminal fraternity. Keep an eye on yours. ☆



Killer Whales - Northern Naturalist

Emma Luck

Marine scientist and naturalist based in Alaska.

Illustrations by Emma Luck.

A fully grown male killer whale is one of the most instantly recognizable animals in the ocean. It is difficult to mistake the towering dorsal fin, up to 6 feet (1.8 m) in some cases, for anything else. Killer whales exhibit one of the most prominent cases of sexual dimorphism in the whale world. That is, males and females look very different from one another, both in size and shape.

But males don't start their life as lumbering giants. Like females, they begin as tiny, wrinkled, neonates ("tiny" is doing a lot of heavy lifting here—they're actually around 8 feet long (2.4 m) and 400 pounds (181 kg) at birth). Over time, they pack on length and mass, eventually becoming a "sprouter," the orca equivalent of a teenager going through a growth spurt.

Eventually, around 20 years old, they become a fully fledged adult, dining-table-sized flippers and all.

A killer whale undergoes many changes in its first year of life.

They emerge after an 18-month gestation period, pencil-thin and completely toothless. Their tiny bodies are wrinkled with fetal folds from spending more than a year curled up in the uterus. Newborn calves are also identifiable due to their distinct peachy hue.

The cause of this coloration is not well understood. Some have suggested the color results from a thin blubber

Resident Killer Whales of the North Pacific

Only females shown

Southern Residents

Population Size: ~73

Range from southeast Alaska to northern California



Northern Residents

Population Size: ~340

Range from southeast Alaska to Washington



Alaska Residents

Population Size*: ~1,920

Range from southeast Alaska to the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands



Western Pacific Residents

Population Size**: ?????

Range from Eastern Russia to Northern Japan



Resident killer whales (*Orcinus orca ater*) are a unique, fish-eating subspecies of killer whale found exclusively in the North Pacific Ocean.

*Genetic research indicates the currently recognized Alaska resident killer whale stock may be comprised of more than one population or subpopulations.
**There are limited published estimates of the number of resident killer whales in Russia and Japan, but photo-identification efforts suggest as many as 2,000 in the waters off of Russia.



Approximate Resident Killer Whale Range

Killer Whale Development in Its First Year

Killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) calves are born with a distinctive peach-colored hue, though the underlying cause of this coloration remains unclear.

The color gradually fades over the first year of life, first to a pale yellow and then eventually to the standard creamy white seen in juveniles and adults.

Newborn



Thin, wrinkled appearance

Fetal folds

Lack of teeth

3 to 6 months



Body has filled out

Skin may appear patchy

Teeth erupting from gums

1 year



Saddle patch more defined

Body more proportional

Teeth have erupted

layer, while others hypothesize jaundice may be the culprit. To make matters more complicated, some calves are born without this distinctive orange tint at all. For instance, the individuals known as T046B1B "Tl'uk" and CA216C1 "Frosty," famous "white" killer whales from the west coast of North America, did not show any orange coloration at all, not even as newborns.

As a calf ages, its color fades from bright orange to a more muted yellow, and eventually, to the classic creamy white seen in adults. It will pack on weight in its first year and that spindly, wrinkled newborn body gives way to a round and plump juvenile.

Due to their abundance and coastal distribution, resident killer whales (*Orcinus orca ater*) are the most well-studied form of killer whale in the world. This unique subspecies is found only in the North Pacific Ocean and feeds almost exclusively on fish. Within U.S. waters, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) currently recognizes three resident killer whale stocks: the southern residents, northern residents, and Alaska residents. Japan and Russia are also home to a separate group of resident killer whales.

Resident killer whales, regardless of their population, tend to share the same morphological traits. However, looking closely, you may notice some subtle differences between populations. Northern residents, for example, often have more falcate (curved) dorsal fins and rounder melons. Alaska residents tend to have eyepatches with a jagged forward edge, whereas southern residents typically have smoother, more uniformly shaped eyepatches. 🌟

DIVE & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

SIM UPADHYAYULA

www.SJFLIPPERDIPPERS.COM

MARCH 2026

SUNDAY MARCH 1 LABOR DAY RESERVATIONS

Labor Day Weekend Reservations for Van Damme (Aug 31 – Sep 7, 2026) can be made today for the annual summer camping event at Van Damme State Park.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4 BUSINESS MEETING: 7:30pm

The meeting will be held **virtually via Microsoft Teams**. Watch for an email with details. Bring your own food, drinks, and internet connection and we'll discuss ideas for upcoming dives and events.

SATURDAY MARCH 7 NO SCHEDULED DIVE

SATURDAY, MARCH 14 SECOND SATURDAY SCUBA (S3) DIVE: LOCATION TBD

Join the Flipper Dippers for this month's S3 dive coordinated by **Sim Upadhyayula**. Text: 669-286-9796

or email: toytacous@yahoo.com. Bring 2 tanks and plan on going for

GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

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

The **virtual meeting** held via Microsoft Teams. Watch your email for info.

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

Celebrate 61 Years of the San Jose Flipper Dippers!

Entertainment:

- Social Hour
- Sign-ups for Monthly Dives



lunch after the dive. Location will be determined (TBD) based on conditions. Be sure to contact Sim if you want to join in.

SATURDAY MARCH 21 NO SCHEDULED DIVE

SATURDAY, MARCH 28 NO SCHEDULED DIVE

How about YOU leading a dive? Contact **Sim Upadhyayula**. Text: 669-286-9796 or email: toytacous@yahoo.com so he can get the word out.



UPCOMING IN APRIL

- 1 Pt. Lobos Reservations for May 9, S3 Dive
- 1 Business Meeting
- 11 Second Saturday SCUBA U/W Easter Egg Hunt
- 15 General Meeting - SJFD 62 Years Old
- 26 Fourth Sunday Cycle (FSC)



Get your underwater navigation and hunting skills ready!

The Flipper Dippers will be holding their 17th Annual Underwater Easter Egg Hunt at Del Monte Beach, on **April 11**. Do you think you have the skill, and luck, to beat last year's winners? Look for more information in next month's newsletter including a chart where you'll see who the winners were over the past 16 years of this fun-filled event. ★



Pt. Lobos Dive Reservations on April 1st for May 9, S3 Dive - No Fool'n

We're going diving at Pt. Lobos! If you want to go, you'll need to get online to make a reservation on Wednesday April 1st. The system opens up at 8 AM in the morning – but check on Tuesday evening as sometimes they open early. We'll send out an email listing who has a reservation and who has space for a buddy.

So here's the drill:

- On **Wednesday, April 1st**, go to the Point Lobos Scuba Site: https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28353
- Click on the month of May and then scroll down to **May 9th**.
- Sign up as a buddy team.

You'll be asked for the agency that issued your c-card and its number. If you don't have your buddy's c-card number, or a buddy, just write in TBD. We can always find somebody who wants to go diving at Pt Lobos.

Be sure to do this early as the weekend park reservations fill up fast. The charge for diving is \$30 (+ Processing Fee). So work out your buddy teams, set a reminder on your calendar, wake up early on April 1st to make your reservation, and we'll see you in the water.

Carl Tuttle, (408-829-3660, email: tutcomms@sbcglobal.net) is coordinating so be sure to let him know if you made a reservation. We'll have a list of those with a reservation to create teams of 2 divers. Kayaks are optional and a reservation is not required but a \$10 fee will be requested at the park kiosk. ★

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

c/o 1108 Sunset Landing
Rio Vista, CA 94571-5148



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FIRST CLASS MAIL

2026 COMING EVENTS

Mar 1	Labor Day Weekend Reservations (Aug 31-Sept 6, 2026) Van Damme
Mar 4	Business Meeting
Mar 14	Second Saturday SCUBA
Mar 18	🐡 General Meeting
April 1	Pt. Lobos Reservations for May 9
April 1	Business Meeting
April 11	Second Saturday SCUBA U/W Easter Egg Hunt
April 15	🐡 General Meeting
April 26	Fourth Sunday Cycle (FSC)
May 06	Business Meeting
May 09	Second Saturday SCUBA (S3) Dive Pt. Lobos
May 18-25	Memorial Day Weekend - Henry Cowell
May 20	🐡 General Meeting
May 30-31	SCUBA Show - Long Beach, CA

*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!**



Watch This Space – Much More To Come!

See the Club's Website for the full Calendar



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