

the staggering starfish

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

29621 232ND AVE SE, Black Diamond WA 98010

gsndambaa@hotmail.com



Club Meeting

The July club meeting will be in-person at the **Edmonds Public Library** and virtual, via Google Meet. Login information for Google Meet was included in the email that announced the publication of this newsletter. As usual, the meeting will commence at approximately **6:00 PM** on **Thursday, July 2**. The July meeting agenda includes planning the October Club Dive, an update on the Dive/Camp Weekend, further details for the club dive trip, and, if time allows, suggestions for spending some of the funds that the Club has accumulated over the past 36 years. The final item will be choosing an eatery for the post-meeting dinner. If you are not on the email distribution list and somehow came across this amazing newsletter and would still like to be added, send Spanky an email at gsndambaa@hotmail.com.

July Club Dive at Les Davis

Our July club dive will be in the South Sound, at Les Davis in Tacoma. We will meet at **9:00 AM** on **Saturday, July 18** for a splash time of **10:00 AM**. This dive site has a nice easy entry, but there is a bit of a walk from the parking area to the stairs leading to the beach. The site has an artificial reef constructed of concrete slabs and pilings that support a lot of life. We should see lots of rockfish and we need to be on the lookout for large ling cod. We have also seen a variety of nudibranchs and interesting crabs on past dives here. If we are lucky, we may get to see a red Brotula or a Sailfin Sculpin. After the dive we will head to Duke's Seafood for lunch.

Directions to Les Davis:

If you prefer to use Google Maps, set your destination for the Les Davis Fishing Pier. Otherwise, take I-5 to Exit 133 and follow I-705 North, toward the City Center.

Stay on I-705 for 1.9 miles and take the Pacific Ave. ramp to your left, toward Schuster Parkway.

Follow Schuster Parkway for 1.5 miles until you see a ramp to the left for N. Ruston Way.

Go left onto N. Ruston Way. Follow N. Ruston Way for

2026 GSNDAMBAA-at-a-Glance

07/02/2026	6:00 PM	Club meeting, Edmonds Public Library & Google Meet
07/18/2026	9:00 AM	Club Dive at Les Davis
08/06/2026	6:00 PM	Club meeting, Edmonds Public Library & Google Meet
08/22/2026	9:30 AM	Club dive at Point Whitney
09/03/2026	6:00 PM	Club meeting, Edmonds Public Library(?) & Google Meet
09/18-09/20		Dive/Camp Weekend, North Vancouver
10/01/2026	6:00 PM	Club meeting, Edmonds Public Library(?) & Google Meet

about 1.4 miles to the entrance to the park to your right. The parking lot entrance is a short distance past the large red fire boat on your right. Park as close to the west end of the parking area (as far from the entrance) as you can.

Save-the-Date

Final details are not yet available, but tentative plans have been made to drive across the border for some boat and shore diving in North Vancouver, BC. We are tentatively planning to drive up on **Friday, September 18** and to return on **Sunday, September 20**. We did this trip a couple of years ago and had a wonderful time and had some great dives. We are working on details regarding where we will stay, etc., but we would like to get an idea of how many people are interested in joining us for the weekend and how many people will want to dive. If you are thinking of joining us, please send an email to Spanky at gsndambaa@hotmail.com indicating the number of people coming and/or diving by **July 15**.

Grunt Sculpins

Spanky thought it would be a good idea to share some facts about Grunt Sculpins, one of his favorite fish. Grunt sculpins in **Puget Sound** behave

much like they do elsewhere in their range, but the Sound's mix of rocky habitat, strong tidal flow, and dense barnacle cover really brings out their most distinctive traits. They are almost always found tight against structure—**barnacle clusters, cobbles, kelp holdfasts, and sponge gardens**—where they can wedge themselves in and wait for food to drift past. Grunt sculpins tend to feed most actively when currents deliver **copepods, amphipods, crab zoea, and fish larvae** right to their hiding spots. They rarely pursue prey in open water; instead, they make short, dart-like lunges from cover, relying on suction feeding at extremely close range.

Their general behavior is shaped by both camouflage and the need to conserve energy. Grunt sculpins are not strong swimmers, and the Sound's currents can easily overpower them, so they spend much of their time walking, hopping, or pivoting on their stiff pectoral fins rather than swimming. They show a strong preference for empty giant barnacle shells, which are abundant in many parts of the Sound; a sculpin will back into a shell and sit motionless with only its snout protruding, mimicking the barnacle's operculum. This behavior is so common locally that many divers learn to check barnacle shells to find them. When disturbed, they often produce their characteristic **grunting sound**, which carries surprisingly well underwater. Overall, in Puget Sound they behave like tiny, cryptic specialists—masters of tight spaces, tidal timing, and the art of staying hidden in plain sight.

Cool-?-of the Month Section

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

Recently published research has found that remoras have a previously unknown way of hitching a ride on a giant manta while simultaneously hiding from predators. They apparently have a preference for warm, dark places. Read it here: [Riding Where the Sun Don't Shine](#).

Our second cool article shows the winning photos from the 2026 World Oceans Day photo competition. These are some truly amazing photos, some of which were taken at sites that Spanky has visited. Find it [here](#).

Cool-Photos-of-the-Month:

This month's cool photos were selected from the archives of former ESSDB Larry. The last two pictures were taken at the Alki Junkyard, the site of our June club dive. We have a Grunt Sculpin, Red Octopus, and a Monterey Dorid.



Got a C?OTM? Send it to Spanky.

Visit Spanky at www.gsndambaa.org

Email Spanky at

gsndambaa@hotmail.com

Please send items for the August issue by Sunday, July 26.

