

Excerpted from an Op-Ed Submission
Newsday, Long Island
July 22, 2009

For the first time in decades there are dolphins in Long Island Sound this summer! A large pod of dolphins! Hundreds of people saw them in Huntington, New Rochelle, Hempstead and Larchmont harbors and offshore as far east as Branford, Connecticut. Seeing them again in the Sound brings us to a place of wonder – graceful dives and streamlined play. What kid hasn't dreamed of swimming with them or for a moment hasn't transformed themselves into a porpoise as they dive under water?

Dolphins returning are another sign of hope for the present condition and future of Long Island Sound. It bodes well for our future relationships with all of the finned, winged, and legged friends who share the Sound. Seeing dolphins excites us and reminds us that our collective investment in Long Island Sound and marine conservation is paying off. The dolphins are following a welcome trend lead by seals, which are returning in larger numbers each winter to the Sound. They are also following a food source, showing us that our conservation efforts to protect bunker fish may be working. Perhaps the marked increase in striped bass numbers has helped. What we know is that Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's fisheries data show that total numbers of fish in the Sound has been holding steady.

For those of us who remember an encounter with a dolphin on the Sound from decades gone by, take heart. Wander down to the shore. If you can, hop on a boat. Explore, enjoy. And if you are lucky enough, once again hear the ancient bellows of their breath.

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