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# REEF GUARDIANS NEWSLETTER

*“Reef preservation through Research and Education.”*



## Research

### Santa Barbara County Leaking Oil Wells

There was a mystery to be solved when oil started showing up on beaches from Carpinteria to the city of Santa Barbara. RGH co-founder Harry Rabin found a trail of oil along the shores of Hammonds beach close to his home in 2017. Using Reef Guardians resources such as drones, ROV's and their research vessel, he soon discovered and pinpointed multiple sources. The most prolific wellhead, known as Northstar 815, was identified from a 100-year-old Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources document.

For decades, oil has been leaking into the off-shore waters. As it turns out, the wells in Santa Barbara County were some of the first off-shore rigs in the world. Summerland Beach is an old offshore oil drilling site that was once home to over 400 wells. Finding the exact locations of these leaks and making the determination that these were indeed old wellheads vs. natural seeps took years of research, both above and below the ocean.

From a good set of eyes for observations, to shovels, to the latest sophisticated technology in drones, ROV's, multibeam sonar, Lidar and improvised metal detection were all deployed to solve the mystery of where all the oil plumes were coming from. The task was taken on by *Heal the Ocean*, with Rabin and Reef Guardians Hawaii resources leading the mission and working alongside State Senator Hannah Beth Jackson, California State Lands Commission, UCSB and *Interact* to solve the problem and come up with a viable solution.

Northstar, along with another prolific leaking wellhead, Treadwell were both successfully capped on Nov 29, 2020 after 3 weeks work! The story here is a victory for the environment, finally putting an end to the flow of multiple barrels per day into our ocean.



*(Above) Northstar 815 wellhead at Summerland daily flow of oil into the ocean and onto the beaches. Oil plumes would drift in all directions from Carp state beach to East Beach.*

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*“Saving our Oceans  
one Reef at a Time”*

## EDUCATION

### Reef Guardians Hawaii Hosts First-Ever After-School Program

To a delighted audience this November, children ages 4 through 8 performing in the first-ever Reef Guardians Ke Kula Kai After-School Program became many things: dolphins, sea turtles, various fish and musicians. And one thing’s certain, they all became “sea stars”!

The children met with the Reef Guardians Hawaii team twice a week for three weeks to explore the world of fish, marine animals (and mermaids) while developing their environmental awareness and artistic skills. The program culminated in a puppet show performance of *The Mermaid’s Purse*, at the beautiful venue of the Church of the Pacific in Princeville.

The After-School Program participants brought the magical show to life by hand-crafting the performance’s marine life puppets and performing the song “Aloha I Ke Kai, Love the Ocean you and I” by Uncle Wayne (a Maui musician who specializes in songs about the ocean for kids).

Ms. Barbara Svetina accompanied the singers on the piano, also providing the play’s sound effects, along with young participant Mealla Cooney on the “mermaid’s” harp.

Written by Reef Guardian’s Director Robin Mazor, *The Mermaid’s Purse* is an imaginative eco-story stimulating awareness and caring for real sea creatures impacted by challenges in their environment.

At the heart of Reef Guardian’s mission is the belief that Education is key to protecting our reefs. Ocean conservation can begin with our children. Reef Guardians is currently creating an engaging online curriculum for elementary school aged participants, and with the continuing help of our community, we can be proactive as guardians of the ocean’s health for generations to come.




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## Reef Guardians

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