

## 'Flipping for Joy' NASA Astronauts Welcomed Home by Pod of Dolphins After Splash Down Near Florida



Dolphins swimming around the Crew 9 Dragon mission – credit, NASA, via SWNS

NASA announced on X yesterday that an additional, and unexpected welcoming party arrived to greet returning astronauts Berry Wilmore and Sunita Williams.



Splashing down in the Gulf of Mexico, teams on boats arrived to help the astronauts out of the Crew 9 Dragon Capsule, when a pod of bottlenose dolphins arrived to see what the fuss was about.

Stranded because of a malfunction with the Boeing Starliner that brought them to the International Space Station, Williams and Wilmore [spent an unplanned 280 days](#) in space before finally being relieved by the new Crew 10 mission astronauts.

Their [SpaceX capsule](#) parachuted into the Gulf of Mexico in the early evening, just hours after departing [the International](#)

[Space Station](#). Splashdown occurred off the coast of Tallahassee in the Florida Panhandle, bringing their unplanned odyssey to an end.

Within an hour, the astronauts were out of their capsule, waving and smiling at the cameras while being hustled away in reclining stretchers for routine medical checks.

“On behalf of SpaceX, welcome home,” radioed SpaceX Mission Control in California.

It was a return that had Earthlings of all shapes and sizes celebrating.

At the onset of the operation to open the capsule there appeared just two dolphins.

But more arrived soon, and the NASA live commentator repeatedly mentioned them to her listeners. “Wow, we’ve got a cute little pod of dolphins not just one or two.”