

THE NATIONAL SPACE SOCIETY WELCOMES NASA ASTRONAUTS HOME FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

*Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore
Returned to Earth Tuesday*

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, FL, UNITED STATES, March 19, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- After 9 months aboard the International Space Station, NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore returned to Earth aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule. The pair launched to the ISS aboard Boeing's Starliner spacecraft on its inaugural crewed flight on June 5, but problems with the capsule's maneuvering thrusters caused NASA to return Starliner uncrewed months later, leaving the two astronauts aboard the ISS. The returning crew of four was rounded out by Nick Hague and Aleksandr Gorbunov, and landed just before 6 p.m. EDT on Tuesday off the coast of Florida. The [National Space Society](#) applauds their return.



The moment of splashdown. Credit: NASA

“

The NSS appreciates the caution and respect for safety which NASA has demonstrated throughout the testing of Starliner. Crew safety is priority number one...”

Dale Skran, NSS COO/SVP

“The NSS appreciates the caution and respect for safety which NASA has demonstrated throughout the testing of Starliner. Crew safety is priority number one, and using the Starliner crew to staff the ISS was a sensible plan,” said Dale Skran, NSS COO. “We look forward to future successful tests of Starliner to support redundant access to both the ISS and future commercial LEO space stations.”

Williams and Wilmore had expected an approximately 8-10 day stay at the orbiting outpost, but after an in-depth analysis of thruster anomalies aboard Starliner by both NASA and Boeing, the space agency decided to return Starliner without the crew in September. Thus began a 286-day stay aboard the space station. Despite not having packed for months in space, Williams and Wilmore quickly adapted to the change in scheduling and were soon in the rotation of duties

aboard the ISS, including the extensive maintenance schedule and various research projects. Notably, at no time were their lives imperiled—the ISS has ample reserves to cover just such an unexpected event. "We came up prepared to stay long, even though we planned to stay short," said Wilmore in a press event from the space station.

To the delight of social media, the Johnson Space Center media team posted video of a pod of dolphins swimming near the capsule after splashdown. "Crew-9 had some

surprise visitors after splashing down this afternoon," the post said, lauding the "the unplanned welcome crew!"



The returning crew at splashdown. Credit: NASA

The final launch date was in flux as NASA and SpaceX worked to resolve scheduling issues, including a delay in the newest (and final) Crew Dragon capsule. It was ultimately decided to instead use a previously flown Crew Dragon for the recent launch—a testament to the utility of reusing spacecraft.

ABOUT THE NSS

□The National Space Society is the preeminent non-partisan citizen's voice on space exploration, development, and settlement, reaching millions through its membership, numerous outreach channels, and media activities. The organization was founded in 1987 via a merger of the National Space Institute and the L5 Society. To learn more about the NSS and its mission to establish humanity as a spacefaring species, visit us on the web at nss.org.

Rod Pyle
National Space Society
+1 626-399-4440

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[X](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/795332757>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors

try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.