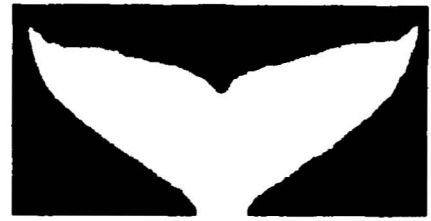


# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**January 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

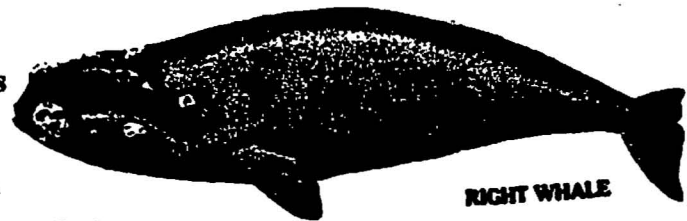
**Date: Thursday, January 25, 2007**

**Time: 7:30 p.m. Please join us at 7 for refreshments**

**Speaker: Kim Shelden,**

**National Marine Mammal Laboratory, Seattle, WA**

**Title: Recent Studies of the Rare North Pacific Right Whale**



Kim Shelden has been a Marine Biologist with the National Marine Mammal Laboratory (part of the National Marine Fisheries Service, a division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the U.S. Department of Commerce) for 17 years. She received a BS degree in Marine Studies at Rutgers University and her Master's in Marine Policy-Conservation Biology, University of Washington. As an undergrad she also took courses through the School for Field Studies studying bottlenose dolphins and an internship with the Whale Museum in Friday Harbor, Washington, where she studied killer whales. She also has studied gray whales, including gray whale census from Big Sur cliffs. She will present a program of her recent research, which included others from the National Marine Mammal Laboratory, using acoustics to detect right whales.

Satellite tracking and acoustic detection has led to the discovery of an unprecedented concentration of rare North Pacific right whales. The North Pacific right whale, *Eubalaena japonica*, is one of the most endangered species of whale in the world. Since illegal takes by Soviet whalers in the 1960s, sightings of right whales have been extremely rare in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska. In 2004, directional sonobuoys were used to acoustically detect 2 right whales in the Bering Sea. Using satellite tags, directional sonobuoys, and by conducting a cetacean survey, scientists were able to estimate that 23 right whales were in the Bering Sea area. Seventeen individual whales were photographed. Genetic biopsy samples detected 10 males and 7 females. In contrast, the greatest number of individuals detected in any previous year was 6 in 2002. The detection of 7 females was significant; of 10 individuals previously identified from genetics, only 1 was a female. Observers also reported 3 possible cow-calf pairs. Only one cow-calf pair had been seen in all previous surveys. Although this population is clearly critically endangered and its future is uncertain, the discovery of additional females and the observation of cow-calf pairs give some hope that this population may still have the capacity to recover.

Join us, through advantages of new technology and comprehensive methods, for an exciting look into scientific discovery.

Sources: Program, ACS 10<sup>th</sup> Intl. Conference, Nov. 10-12, 2006; [www.learner.org](http://www.learner.org)  
All drawings in this issue are from publications of the American Cetacean Society.

## CALENDAR

**Jan. 20, 2007: Gray whale benefit cruise for ACS Monterey Bay.** This is a Saturday during the expected peak of the gray whale migration. In the past this has been a special and popular event. Host: **Monterey Whale Watching/Leon Oliver** on the Princess Monterey. \$25 per person. Board at 7:45 a.m. 2 hours.

Don't wait! This trip fills rapidly and you won't want to miss it. Call 419-1051 or 372-6919 for more information or to sign up for the trip, or send your check to ACSMB, PO Box HE, Pacific Grove, CA 93950.

See our web site at <http://www.starrsites.com/acsmc/tripwntr.htm> for trip and gray whale information.

**February 16-18:** WhaleQuest at Kapalua on Maui, to benefit whale research. See *Soundings*, Nov. 2007, and more on the web site [www.kapalua.com/activities...](http://www.kapalua.com/activities...) January 2007 issue of National Geographic magazine has an article about humpback whale research in Hawaii. Read about the different approaches in warm water research. ACSMB member Peggy Stap, researcher for Hawaii Whale Research, is mentioned more than once.

**February 22:** Regular meeting.

### **Grant Funds Opportunity - Marine Debris - Deadline Feb. 1**

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water announces the availability of grant funds up to \$4,000 for clean boating projects. These grants are designed to educate boaters about environmental issues and the importance of taking care of the waterways where we boat. The 2007 focus topic is marine debris. While all proposals will be considered, projects aimed at educating boaters about preventing and reducing marine debris will receive extra consideration. Marine debris is the accumulation of trash and other non-natural materials in our waterways. These objects can range from cigarette butts and plastic bottles to automobile tires and industrial waste. 80 percent of all marine debris starts out on land and is washed into the water by creeks and storm drains. "Not only is marine debris unpleasant to look at, but it can significantly harm marine life and boats. The easiest way to get rid of marine debris is to prevent it from reaching the water in the first place," said Susan Shingledecker, Environmental Program Manager for the BoatUS Foundation. To apply online or download an application form visit <http://www.boatus.com/foundation/cleanwater/grants/> ~

### **New Faces on ACS Monterey Bay Board**

*Welcome ! These new folks are part of the annual election of officers in January. What an interesting and productive future these people bring us! Meanwhile, we are sad to accept the resignation of Milos Radakovich as Historian. We need a volunteer who would like to maintain the chapter's historical materials for us.*

**Bob Mannix** (Program Chair with Alan Baldridge) Educated as a lawyer, Bob became hooked on marine life as a docent at Pt. Lobos and a volunteer at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. He also leads nature kayaking tours for Adventures by the Sea. Bob is doing the contact and press release work for our programs and speakers.

**Gina Thomas** (Secretary) Gina has a BA in anthropology with a minor in psychology. Her main focus was primate behavior, however she has always loved dolphins and whales (humpbacks especially). She learned more about cetaceans and ocean conservation while working for Monterey Bay Whale Watch. She now works in a residential care facility for the elderly with mental illness, as mental health coordinator.

**René Rodriguez and Morgen Puckett** (Co-chairs for Education and Outreach) Rene is currently working at the Monterey County Free Libraries, Castroville Branch, as a Library Assistant. He is on leave from Monterey County Office of Education where he teaches pre-school for the Head Start program. Morgen works for MCOE as an Instructional Assistant, in the Special Education Dept. She teaches life skills (catching a bus, personal care...) to adults with disabilities. Morgen also works in a after-school program for children with disabilities and does respite care. Both are artists (Morgen is the daughter of Randy and Gail Puckett). Rene paints and is taking classes in oil painting. He does landscapes, whales and is expanding to painting people. Morgen enjoys making scrapbooks and photos. Both of them will be inventively involved in this chapter's new educational and outreach programs, as well as interfacing with other groups for a focus on whales and dolphins.~



## Gray Whale Census Underway

If you've ever had your favorite spot for watching gray whales from the top of a cliff along the **Big Sur** coast, you're accurate. It's verified by the many official "gray whale counts" that have been made during the past 40 years from the edge of a cliff above Granite Canyon in Big Sur by officials from the National Marine Mammal Laboratory in Seattle, and by staff of the Southwest Fisheries in southern CA.

This year the count began near December 1<sup>st</sup> and was led by **Cynthia d'Vincent** from Cal. State University Monterey Bay. She's directed the count from Granite Canyon, site of a research lab for CA Fish and Game, several times in the past. We remember her from humpback whale research and her book, *Voyaging with the Whales*. In January, direction will be by **David Rugh** and others from the National Marine Mammal Laboratory,

Certainly all of us wonder about the state of the gray whale population after their removal from the endangered species list and those up-and-down years for their food supply. This time it is a statistical matter. There will be checks on the count, using different people counting the same whales, and perhaps a different statistical resolution will be applied. David Rugh is "first author" on an abstract from *The 16<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals*, Society for Marine Mammalogy, 2005 (p.245): "Discrepancies in Sighting Data During Shore-based Counts of Gray Whales."



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*Anchorage Daily News* (AK), June 27, 2002, by staff writer Joel Gay. Excerpt

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Thick sea ice made for poor bowhead hunting off **Little Diomed** this spring, and the village didn't get a whale. In need of meat for the village of 150, a group of seven 18- to 20-foot aluminum skiffs headed out in search of a gray. Each boat typically carries four or five whalers. [The gray whale hunt by native americans was allowed under the "aboriginal/subsistence whaling" clause in the IWC moratorium on whaling. ed.]

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Sometime after 5 a.m., just as Ronald Ozenna was preparing to throw a second harpoon, "The whale went under, then it came back up," said Ahkinga, who was watching from about 75 feet away. "It looked like the tail picked up the front end (of the skiff) and turned 'em over."

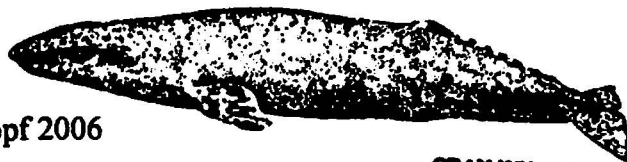
Others in the Ozenna boat told troopers they thought Melton hit his head on the boat's bow rail as it flipped. Ahkinga said he thought Ozenna might have been struck by a fluke

After watching in horror as his friends tumbled into the Bering Sea, "I just kept my eyes forward, drove up to 'em and helped pull 'em out of water," he said. After the accident, the hunters abandoned the whale. [One of the objections to aboriginal/subsistence whaling is potential error in primitive methods, thus cruelty, in the kill. ed]

Ozenna was unconscious when they hauled him into a skiff and was bleeding from the ears.... When he quit breathing, Ahkinga and others performed CPR. They continued until they reached the village about 10 minutes later and at the clinic, but Ozenna was pronounced dead shortly after 6 a.m., troopers said.

"In my lifetime," said the 35-year-old Ahkinga, "No one in the village had died hunting whales." ~

**Grayson**  
by Lynne Cox, Knopf 2006



GRAY WHALE

Lynne Cox is a cold water, long distance swimmer. At age 16, she broke both men's and women's speed records for swimming the English Channel. She was the first woman to swim the Cook Strait between North and South Islands, New Zealand, when she was 18. Her first long distance swim was from Catalina Island to the coast of California and she trained offshore of San Pedro for several years. Her remarkable record can be seen at [www.doversolo.com/LynneCox.htm](http://www.doversolo.com/LynneCox.htm). She wrote her autobiography, an amazing story of the training and experiences of her cold, long distance swims, in *Swimming to Antarctica; Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer* (Knopf 2004), and just this year she published a memoir of one swim off California: *Grayson*. At least twice she has written about swimming with cetaceans. In her autobiography, she tells how a large pod of dolphins joined her on her hazardous New Zealand swim. Grayson is her name for a baby gray whale that was separated from its mother and found Lynne instead.

It's a charming and suspenseful story. Lynne's descriptions of her feelings and perceptions are vivid. She was swimming her early morning workout, 60 strokes per minute, 200 yards off Seal Beach in Southern California, in a dark, 55 degree ocean "as smooth as black ice." She felt the water below her "shudder," then shaking harder and "buckling" below her. Her thoughts were less than placid as bubbles, fish, and unusual motion rose to her. There was turbulence and "the creature diving below me was creating a huge hole in the water." She was being pulled along in its slipstream. She turned and sprinted toward shore. Once the sun rose she spotted a baby gray whale swimming with her. "I could not take my eyes off him. He swam within ten yards of me. He was huge, maybe 18 feet long, the length of a small sailboat. And he had to be at least three, maybe four feet wide.....The baby whale swam under me and I could feel waves of water peeling off his body and rolling under my legs and feet." (pp. 41-2)

Lynne realized she could not swim to shore without the whale following her and beaching itself. So, Lynne decided to swim with the baby whale away from the pier and toward the open ocean. She was briefly next to a lifeguard boat and a fisherman; there were only Lynne, the whale and the sea.

Then follow captivating descriptions of being in the water with free-swimming sea life: dolphins, jellies, garibaldi, tuna, grunion, sting rays, bat ray, green sea turtles, mola mola, sea bass. She describes the shore as seen from the water, dawn over the beach, oil rigs 1 ½ miles offshore ( where she swam to look for the mother whale), sounds of wind in waves ("the symphony of the sea"), phosphorescence, the pull of riptides and currents, floating above the abyss. Always, her observations of the baby whale are highly detailed and sometimes interpretive. (It's too bad the book jacket designer was not as perceptive, for the drawing of the whale on the cover is NOT ANYTHING like a baby gray whale.) Only with her swimming skill and relaxed ease with life in deep, cold water could such an experience take place. We are grateful she also has writing skills so that we can imagine it, too.

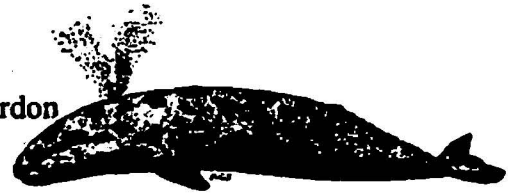
**"I could see the breaking back of the wave.... You have to swim fast to get outside the break.**

**"But the whale simply dropped his fluke, so he was vertical in the water, and used his tail like a giant brake, immediately stopping his forward momentum. He bailed out of the wave before it crashed and swam effortlessly toward me.**

**"And as he swam, he was immersed in the water. He was one with it and his swimming motions came from the core of his body. His head moved down into the water, the top of it tracing a U. His body followed his head until he reached the bottom of the U, then he slightly arched his back and did an enormous kick with his fluke. That kick thrust his body forward and he slid through the water cleanly with a circle of tiny waves surrounding his upper body. His dolphin kick was beautiful and efficient, and he was totally balanced in the water." (p. 53)**

A classic revised

**Gray Whales**  
By Alan Baldrige and David G. Gordon  
Monterey Bay Aquarium 2006



**“Over centuries—if not millennia—gray whales have shared a somewhat checkered history with the Monterey Bay, and in *Gray Whales*, the new edition of a classic book, authors Alan Baldrige and David G. Gordon give all the details, along with the latest research, fascinating facts and stunning photographs and illustrations,”** a quote from the Monterey Bay Aquarium web site ([www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org)). The gray whale section of the site opens with sounds of grunts and knocks from a recording of gray whale vocalizations. If you pursue the “Aquarium of the Air” podcasts there, you will hear even more interesting vocalizations: Alan himself talking about the book and the whales. As with everything Alan does, it’s all First Rate.

In the podcast, Alan says his first gray whale sighting was “fabulous.” It was the first spring for Alan and Sheila after their move from the “UK” and they were living in Portland. They often went to the Pacific coast and, on one day in April, 1963, when Alan was watching elk, suddenly whales came into view. Listen to the tone of his voice: after about forty years of watching gray whales and writing about them, he still sounds excited.

**When asked why he wanted to revise his book, he lists several reasons. He wants people to understand as much as they can about gray whales. He wants them to “question” and want to know more. He also wants people to marvel at the gray whale migration so accessible to us in Monterey, and to have a feeling of awe. He hopes to inspire us to make sure it’s “a spectacle that is going to persist.”**

While this editor was talking with Alan about his book, he remarked that it is “very handsome.... nicely designed.” He says it has a better index than the previous book, and he likes the fact box in the back for quick reference to basic information about gray whales.

What else is new? Well, he says there are fifteen or sixteen new photographs. Alan says he uses population estimates that are accurate based on the last count of gray whales. He was pleased to include “whale falls.” Do you remember those? A speaker from MBARI spoke to this chapter about remains of whales in deep deep water, and about the critters that benefit from dead whales that fall to the bottom.

My own pleasure with the book is perhaps because it is different from the several books on gray whales that have come out lately. As with the first edition, the book is a moving blend of natural history and history. There is more dimension; gray whales take on a many-layered character as a species. It’s not science or history alone: in only 64 pages we’re given the gray whale as a player in both oceanic and human matters. Maybe we in Monterey especially relate to that. **Maybe the author’s long relationship to his own research and to all those elements makes the difference.** The large format does let us revel in exceedingly beautiful photography, art prints, drawings and maps. The layout, with shadings and script fonts as separators instead of chapters, is both helpful and pretty.

We all know what to expect from Alan, and most of us have used the former book ‘til it’s in shreds. It’s no surprise this book is a treasure. Alan (with Sheila by his side and at the keyboard) spent many long, careful, exacting months of work on it, and it shows.



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## SIGHTINGS

compiled by Monterey Bay Whale Watch; for updates see [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com) and click on "Sightings."

The Sightings list tells the story of winter storms that have already marched through the Monterey Bay area. Two ACS members report taking a visiting niece on a whale watch cruise with Monterey Bay Whale Watch the day after Thanksgiving. The niece, considering some kind of environmental career, was eager to experience the cruise. Not far out in the bay there were 10-foot swells. There also were humpback whales that stayed around the boat awhile. Then over by Moss Landing they found a male killer whale chowing down on a slaughtered pinniped. The niece decided all this was 'way cool and it's a career with nature for her!

**Richard Ternullo**, captain of *Sea Wolf II* and scientific committee member for ACSMB, says the humpbacks did stay late: though probably not more than 100. A food supply of anchovies or sardines persevered. At least some whales seemed to be juveniles, he said, and it's not known if they might be wintering over. It's a long, potentially food-fertile coastline for them to search for food. Even with schools of small fish here, the CA sea lions have moved to a different area. Perhaps it took large stable concentrations of fish that brought humpbacks and sea lions together in September.

Risso's dolphins' numbers are holding steady, sometimes appearing in large pods. Local folks are wondering if continued presence of Humboldt squid are giving them a steady food supply.

Gray whale numbers haven't reach "saturation" point yet (the phenomenon of seeing whale spouts wherever you look out to sea) off Monterey, nor off southern CA where the ACS-Los Angeles count is taking place as usual. Alisa Schulman-Janiger reports more than 45 grays and already 1 calf seen, as of Dec. 29. Catch the exciting up-to-date numbers at <http://www.acs-la.org/daily.htm> as the census continues. Richard Ternullo reports an increase in numbers of grays going past Monterey. Obviously they're on their way!

Short and informative is the article about gray whales by Nancy Black on the MBWW web site. [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com) Give it a look before you go see the grays.

See you aboard our benefit whale watch cruise on Jan. 20. Details this issue, "Calendar" on p. 2.

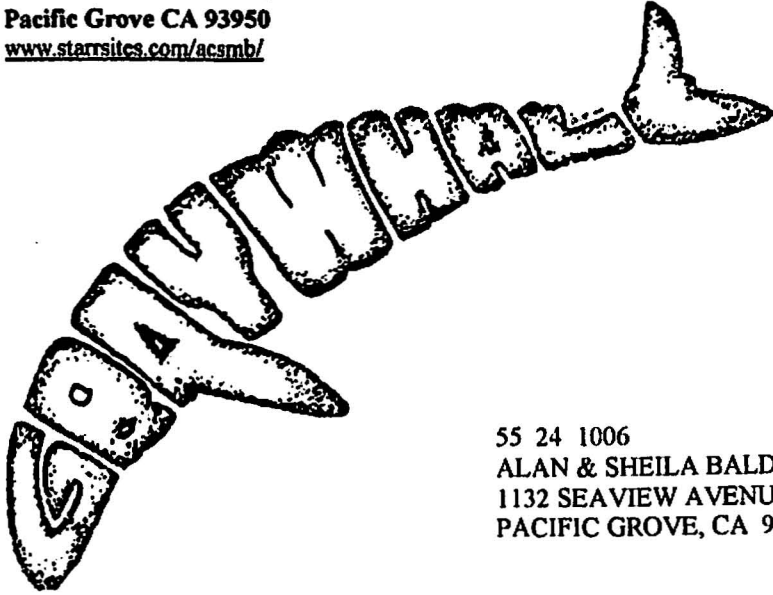
Date	#	Type of Animal(s)
12/21	1 63	Humpback Whale Risso's Dolphins
12/20	2 12	Gray Whales Bottlenose Dolphins
12/19	225	Risso's Dolphins
12/18	2	Killer Whales
12/17	2	Gray Whales
12/16	2 12	Gray Whales Dall's Porpoise
12/15		No trip (due to weather)
12/14		No trip (due to weather)
12/13	600 4 1	Risso's Dolphins Harbor Porpoise Blue Shark
12/12		No trip (due to weather)
12/11		No trip (due to weather)
12/10		No trip (due to weather)
12/9		No trip (due to weather)
12/8		No trip (due to weather)
12/7	12 50	Pacific White-sided Dolphins Risso's Dolphins
12/6	5	Killer Whales (transient type)
12/5	1 10	Humpback Whale Dall's Porpoise
12/4	1	Humpback Whale
12/3	2	Humpback Whales
12/2 p.m.	2 50 600 300	Humpback Whales Pacific White-sided Dolphins Risso's Dolphins Northern Right Whale Dolphins
12/2 a.m.	5 75	Humpback Whales Risso's Dolphins
12/1	3 12 15	Humpback Whales Killer Whales (transient type) Risso's Dolphins

This was the posting on MBWW web site as of 1-2-07, "press time" for *Soundings*. Go to the web site for an update on the gray whales and other whales & dolphins. [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com) and click on Sighting



American Cetacean Society  
Monterey Bay Chapter  
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**ACS Monterey Bay  
Board Members:**  
Jerry Loomis, president  
Loomis@mbay.net  
David Zaches, vice-pres.  
Katy Castagna, treasurer  
Sally Eastham, membership  
Gina Thomas, secretary  
Diane Glim, publicity  
Bob Mannix, Alan  
Baldrige, programs  
Morgen Puckett, Rene  
Rodriguez, education  
Evelyn Starr, webmaster  
Esta Lee Albright, editor  
EstaLee@whalesail.com

### AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New Membership/Subscription    Renewal Membership/Subscription    Gift  
Membership/Subscription

**Membership Levels and Annual Dues:**

- |  |   |                         |
|--|---|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime, \$750     | <input type="checkbox"/> Family, \$45                       | <b>ACS Chapter: #24</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron, \$500       | <input type="checkbox"/> Active, \$35                       |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing, \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Teacher/Senior, \$25       |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting, \$75    | <input type="checkbox"/> Subscription only*, \$15/12 issues |                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign, \$45       | (*not entitled to membership benefits)                      |                         |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Check    MasterCard    Visa   Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter. Send to Membership Secretary  
P O Box HE, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Enjoy local whales with  
companies that have supported our chapter activities.

MONTEREY WHALE WATCHING at 1 800 200 2203 and MONTEREY BAY WHALE WATCH at 831 375 4658.

# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**February 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
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AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY- MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at Hopkins Marine Station, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

**Date: Thursday, February 22, 2007**

**Time: 7:30 PM. PLEASE JOIN US**

**AT 7:00 FOR REFRESHMENTS**

**Speaker: Dr. Lara Ferry-Graham**

**Title: Eat Or Be Eaten: How Fish Make A Living  
In Their Cool, Wet Worlds**



**Marine food webs can be extraordinarily complex especially in places such as Monterey Bay where the marine life is so rich and diverse. Certainly fishes make up a significant part of many food webs including those of cetaceans. Whether a fish is prey or predator in any particular relationship depends in large part on their functional morphology-how they are built and how they work.**

**This presentation will focus on the "tools" that fishes in Monterey Bay and other marine habitats have for capturing prey. It will also provide insight into the incredible technology used to study how fishes work including high speed video and 3-D CAT scans. Finally it will include a summary of what has been learned from these sorts of studies about patterns in ecology and evolution.**

**Dr. Ferry-Graham is a member of the Research Faculty and Lecturer at San Jose State University/Moss Landing Marine Laboratories. She received her B.S. in Biological Sciences from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, M.S. in Marine Science from San Francisco State University/Moss Landing Marine Labs, and her Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of California, Irvine.**

**Please join us to learn more about how these denizens of the sea make their living.**

*Program information is by Bob Mannix.*

*Graphic is free clipart from the web site:*

[www.antiwarcommittee.org/images/clipart/organizing/fish.jpg](http://www.antiwarcommittee.org/images/clipart/organizing/fish.jpg)

## CALENDAR

*Feb. 22:* Regular meeting this month. See cover.

*Mar. 29:* Next regular meeting.

*January 13 - March 21:* "Return to the Sea of Cortez, Recreating John Steinbeck and Ed Ricketts' Famous Voyage." A stunning exhibition at the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History. For information, call (831)648-5716 or on the web at [www.pgmuseum.org](http://www.pgmuseum.org)

**Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History Lectures on Saturdays at 2 P.M.**

See above web site for details.

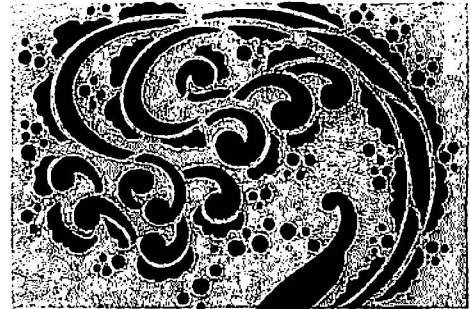
*Feb. 10:* Dr. Exequiel Ezcurra, "From the Tide Pools to the Stars."

*Feb. 24:* Dr. William Gilly, "Squid in the Gulf of California?"

*Mar. 10:* Dr. Richard Brusca, "Biodiversity and Conservation in the Gulf."

*Mar. 17:* Dr. Raphael Sagarin, "Changes in the Sea of Cortez."

*Mar. 24:* Dr. Wallace J. Nichols, "Sea Turtles."



\*\*\*\*\*

*Mar. 3:* "The Ocean Revealed: Observing Systems for Healthy Oceans" Free Symposium 8 am - 3 pm California State University, Monterey Bay, University Center. Sponsors: AMBAG, National Marine Sanctuary, CSUMB, Monterey Bay Aquarium, MBARI, Hopkins Marine Station and others. "Today scientists have the ability to monitor and observe our oceans on a continuous basis, collecting data every minute of the day to help answer critical questions about the state of our oceans. Hear from experts about ocean observatories and how the information these systems provide can benefit not only the health of our oceans, but human health as well." Register at the symposium 8 - 8:45 a.m. For more information, contact Liz Love at (831) 647-4255 or email [liz.love@noaa.gov](mailto:liz.love@noaa.gov)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Feb. 7 - 11:* 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Pacific Seabird Group, Asilomar, Pacific Grove, CA Lectures and field trips. <http://www.pacificseabirdgroup.org/> and click on Annual Meeting.

*Feb. 9-11:* "The Amazing Life of the Elephant Seal," Dr. David Aurioles, Instituto Politecnico Nacional in LaPaz, Mexico, presentations in Spanish and English. Camp Ocean Pines Marine Science Retreats and Weekend Lectures, co-sponsored by Moonstone Properties, Cambria, CA \$185 includes 2 nights lodging and 6 meals. Register at (805)927-0254 or online at [www.campoceanpines.org](http://www.campoceanpines.org)

Many thanks to Alan Baldrige and Tony Lorenz for listings for this month's calendar page.

Tony also wanted to call our attention to even more possibly interesting events close to home as he wrote in January:

"Also, have you heard about the Brown Booby that has been roosting on the Monterey breakwater since early January?"

\*\*\*\*\*

Any day now we will say good-bye to Milos Radakovich, a favorite local naturalist, author, artist and radio personality. He was among the first members of ACS Monterey Bay, a *Soundings* editor, a president, longtime ACSMB board member, a co-founder of Beachwatch for ACSMB and BayNet for the Sanctuary. The enjoyment of discovery and the leadership that he has given us for more than 30 years will now grace Celebrity cruise lines all over the world. Peninsula environments, marine mammals, birds, and people will miss his straight thinking and the very unique way he applies it. We all have our "vintage Milos" stories. However, he now can do what he loves best full time. Lucky passengers. Lucky ships. Lucky world. -ela



# Goodbye, Chinese river dolphin

//science.qj.net/Goodbye-Chinese-river-dolphin/

pg/49/aid/76268



Drawing by Richard Ellis, Dolphins and Porpoises

Posted Dec 14, 2006 at 10:27PM by Maricar V. Listed in: Animals and Wildlife Tags: baiji

**It's another sad day for the earth. Scientists have declared the (formerly) rare Chinese river dolphin baiji extinct.** The six-week search on the Yangtze River failed to find even a shadow of the blind white dolphin. Swiss naturalist August Pfluger concluded that even if the search team missed one or two dolphins, it's safe to conclude that the baiji is "functionally extinct". This means that even if there are baijis in the river, their chance of survival is nil.

Now, who should be blamed for the demise of the "goddess of the Yangtze"? All signs point to the ship traffic on the Yangtze. This is in addition to the evil effects of overfishing, dam-building, and environmental degradation. Back in the 1980s, there were about 400 baijis left on the Yangtze. It should've been a clear indication that the dolphins were in grave danger. But as commerce started flourishing, the dolphin population plummeted to 100 in the mid-1990s. In 2004, only one baiji was found. Since then, the fate of the dolphin has been sealed. It's sad enough to have lost a species that dates back 20 million years, but what's even worse is that the death of the baijis could signal the start of a "wave of extinction" involving other species. If the trend continues, we'd be shedding more tears for other dolphin species in the next 20 years.

\*\*\*

**Wikipedia**, the online encyclopedia posts the following basic information and much more at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_River\\_Dolphin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_River_Dolphin)

## **The Baiji**

Traditional Chinese: ; pinyin: **báijìtún**) (*Lipotes vexillifer*, *Lipotes* meaning "left behind", *vexillifer* "flag bearer") was a freshwater dolphin found only in the Yangtze River in China. Nicknamed "Goddess of the Yangtze" in China, the dolphin was also called Chinese River Dolphin, Yangtze River Dolphin, Beiji, Pai-chi (Wade-Giles), Whitefin Dolphin and Yangtze Dolphin. The Baiji population declined drastically in recent decades as China industrialized and made heavy use of the river for fishing, transportation, and hydroelectricity. Efforts were made to conserve the species, however a late 2006 expedition failed to find any Baiji in the river. Organizers declared the Baiji "functionally extinct", making it the first aquatic mammal species to become extinct since the 1950s.

**Causes of decline:** The World Conservation Union (IUCN) has noted the following as threats to the species: a period of hunting by humans during the Great Leap Forward, entanglement in fishing gear, the illegal practice of electric fishing, collisions with boats and ships, habitat loss, and pollution. During the Great Leap Forward, when traditional veneration of the Baiji was denounced, it was hunted for its flesh and skin, and quickly became scarce. As China developed economically, pressure on the river dolphin grew significantly. Industrial and residential waste flowed into the Yangtze. The riverbed was dredged and reinforced with concrete in many locations. Ship traffic multiplied, boats grew in size, and fishermen employed wider and more lethal nets. Noise pollution caused the nearly blind animal to collide with propellers. Stocks of the dolphin's prey declined drastically in recent decades as well, with some fish populations declining to one thousandth of their pre-industrial levels. In the 1970s and 1980s, an estimated half of Baiji deaths were attributed to entanglement in fishing gear. By the early 2000s, electric fishing was considered "the most important and immediate direct threat to the Baiji's survival." [10] Though outlawed, the destructive fishing technique is widely practiced throughout China. The building of the Three Gorges Dam further reduced the dolphin's habitat and facilitated an increase in ship traffic.

## Seal Finger

Years ago when some of us ACS members monitored beached seals and sea lions, we always were amazed at how readily people walked up to resting animals. Some even thought it would be helpful to feed them, if they could lay hands on anything that might catch a seal's fancy. By that time, some of us already had had marine biology training and had been convinced that we would not want to risk our fingers next to any pinniped mouth, because a bite would likely bring us "seal finger" and that was BAD NEWS ! For awhile recently the marine mammal listserv MARMAM became focused on the problem because of a request for information to help an afflicted person at the Farallon Islands off CA. Some advice was contributed and, as usual with MARMAM, then some conflicting advice. All interesting. If you never intend to put your fingers in seal's mouth, the following at least gives you good facts for warning people who do.

### Original Message -----

**Subject: [MARMAM] seal finger** **Date: Thu, January 25, 2007 18:20** **To: marmam@lists.uvic.ca**

Anyone who knows anything about the infection 'seal finger' recurring, and/or not responding to Tetracycline (1.5 g initially, then 500mg QID), please respond, we have a volunteer who is in danger of losing her fingers to an antibiotic-resistant infection acquired from elephant seals. Thank you, .....

Farallones Biologist , *PRBO Conservation Science*

### Some of the Answers: 1/30/2007 Subject: Seal Finger Case -----

Hi there and Hello to whom it may concern...My name is Pieter van der Wal, I was privileged enough to be the medic for 3 expeditions, to Marion Island, Gough Island and Antarctica respectively. Please bear in mind that these expeditions were a few years back and that I am no longer in the medical practice and am not current at this stage. There is very little information in your mail as to exactly how the infection looks, and how it was acquired (bite, cut?) As well as what the infection looks like. (pus, swollen, etc) But I have run into similar type infections in my time on the expeditions. And I would suggest the following as a start. **If the wound is severe:** Move over to an stronger penicillin based antibiotic (ampliclox ) or a combination of ampicillin and cloxacillin and gentamicin for a 1 week period maximum. Combine this in with very regular wound coverings with a salve mix consisting of a iodine base salve mixed liberally with honey. The honey acts as a osmosis catalyst and quite literally "sucks" the infection out. I would suggest you begin with washing the wound regularly in normal saline solution with a weak cleaning solution added to it. Then the wound dressing as described at least every 2 hours for the first 2-3 days. (dependant on the severity and reaction of the wound) Tapering the regularity of the dressing off over the next 7-10 days, also dependant on the severity and reaction of the wound **If the Wound is Extremely severe:** Then I suggest you start the patient off with mefoxin (if you have the drug, and the patient is not adverse to it) Then continuing with the prescribed antibiotics mentioned above and of course the wound dressings also as mentioned. You can get more information on the use of the treatment of severe Skin and soft-tissue infections at the web site below. And Always remember to check your patient for sensitivities to the drugs Before you administer them.

<http://jmm.sgmjournals.org/cgi/content/full/53/1/51> you can get more information on Mefoxin at:

[http://www.rxlist.com/cgi/generic2/cefoxitin\\_ids.htm](http://www.rxlist.com/cgi/generic2/cefoxitin_ids.htm) *And I cannot stress this enough, get some guidance (inclusive passing this info on for confirmation) from a land based Medical practitioner (MD), preferably someone with experience in drug resistant severe soft tissue infection.*

But trust me on the wound dressing, it has quite literally saved a few appendages in my past. I sincerely hope this helps and please feel free to update me on the condition of your charge. **And then U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** posted this on Feb. 2: In response to the current listserv comments on antibiotic choices for seal finger, I want to confirm the information submitted by -- that the infecting organism in seal finger is NOT generally responsive to penicillin or penicillin-derivatives as suggested by ----, and I highly recommend consultation with a physician with expertise with this specific infection. Secondary infection with other organisms such as Staphylococci may be responsive to penicillin derivatives, but this treatment is not adequate for the causative agent (mycoplasma) for seal finger. The current antibiotic of choice is still doxycycline 100mg bid X 4 to 6 weeks or tetracycline 500mg QID X4 to 6 weeks.

[Names/email addresses withheld but available from MARMAM listserv or a copy of messages from this ed.]

## **Ban the Seal Hunt    A Message from the International Fund for Animal Welfare**

Another cruel seal hunt is quickly approaching in Canada and hundreds of thousands of young seals will be slaughtered this spring. Is it really possible to stop this annual tragedy which continues year after year despite being economically and environmentally unjustified?

Bans on the sale of seal-derived products took huge steps forward in 2006 across Europe and around the world. In fact Belgium has just passed the first national ban on (all) seal derived products in the EU! And.....

The European Parliament issued a written declaration calling for a ban on the import, export and sale of harp and hooded seal products. The Italian Parliament temporarily suspended the import of sealskins and seal derived products. A legislative proposal to prohibit the commerce in seal products has also been announced. The German Parliament voted unanimously on a motion to ban the import of seal products. The motion calls on the government to work towards an EU-wide ban and to institute a temporary ban in Germany until a European ban is passed. Mexico banned the import and export of all marine mammals (including seals) and their derived products.

Please join me again on the ice this year. [See [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org), **protest seal kills and sign up for email alerts.**]

In order to push closer to an end of the seal hunt IFAW will continue to document the commercial seal hunt and its ongoing cruelty as well as push for the enactment of seal product bans across Europe. Although members of our monitoring team have received threats and been physically assaulted with boat hooks and clubs, we believe it is important for Canadians, and the world, to understand the reality of what is happening to these young seals.

This is not a campaign that will be won suddenly in one fell swoop. It will be achieved one small victory at a time until there is no more market for seal products and the Canadian government will be forced to end the hunt once and for all. Victories such as the European product bans in 2006 and the new triumphs we are certain to attain this spring with your help.

*Sincerely, Fred O'Regan President and CEO*

### **Background article also from IFAW (excerpts):**

(San Marino – 17 November 2006) – Today, the Council of Europe reflected the concerns of millions of European citizens that the Canadian commercial seal hunt is unacceptably cruel. IFAW (The International Fund for Animal Welfare – [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org)) applauds the council's decision to speak out against the cruelty of the hunt. The Members of the Council of Europe called on European governments to introduce a ban on all seal-derived products. They also asked for better regulation of the Canadian commercial seal hunt as the killing methods (i.e. the use of hakapiks and guns) were considered inhumane. The council adopted a series of amendments to the 2004 council recommendation which are in line with recent European legislative developments for prohibiting the trade in seal products. IFAW has been campaigning to end Canada's commercial seal hunt for more than thirty years, and experts with the organization are very pleased with the council's decision. "This decision sends a very strong message to European governments that Canada's cruel hunt will not be tolerated," said Dr. Joth Singh, IFAW's Director of Wildlife and Habitat Protection. "IFAW hopes that the council's recommendation will be heeded and that legislation banning the trade in seal products will be put in place at the EU level."

The Council of Europe is the continent's oldest political organization, founded in 1949. It groups together 46 countries, including 21 countries from Central and Eastern Europe, and is currently reviewing application from two more countries (Belarus and Montenegro).....

Canada's commercial seal hunt is the largest hunt for marine mammals today. Just last year, over 350,000 seals were killed, 97% of which were under 3 months of age. International opposition to the hunt is increasing with bans in place in the U.S., Mexico, Croatia and Italy, while bans in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands are in discussion.

Photo: [www.pc-wallpapers.co.uk](http://www.pc-wallpapers.co.uk) p5



## Is January the Most Exciting Month ?

We all have our preferences when it comes to whales. Mine happen to lean toward humpbacks and blue whales that may be here to feed in the late spring, summer or early fall. Watching these often means going 'way offshore, which makes me smile. Other folks try their best to be here with luck in May and June, when killer whales seem to lurk off the Peninsula waiting for gray whale mom-calf pairs to make a break across the mouth of the bay on their way north. Without a doubt, **to the general population in Central California, THE whales are the grays.** This may be because Monterey's whale watch industry started many years ago with short trips out to see gray whales .... no doubt the whales' close-to-shore migration still benefits whale watchers both on the water and the coastline.

This year, whale watch captains and crews think the **height of the migration** (the largest number of whales going past in one day) off Monterey may have been a few days later than the mid-month point we expect. Instead of January 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, as usual, larger numbers were seen about a week later. Look at the counts on the "Sightings" page in this issue. Boats went out – so it wasn't necessarily a matter of weather, even though there infrequently were "large seas" at the time: 10 -12 foot swells.

We all are thankful that, though tall, winter swells may be gradual and long, therefore comfortable to ride. On one day in January, we watchers aboard the *Pt. Sur Clipper* sat waiting for whales to surface and watching swells between us and *Princess Monterey*, almost a mile away : with every crest of a swell the *Princess* disappeared from our view except for her tallest antenna.

By the second week in February, a few gray whales may be seen headed **north**. Aboard the *Star of Monterey* near the mouth of Carmel Bay one year in February, we had seen a few spouts in the distance. So, we had stopped to see where the whales might be going – sure enough, one gray whale slowly swam along our starboard side, definitely making its way north, while two other grays continued their direct swim to the south.

The "Sighting list carries welcome news of dolphins. They may not have stayed throughout the month, but, if we're lucky to be out there when they are, it's a treat. Everyone loves to look down off the bow of a boat watch dolphins criss-crossing in the stream, or playing the rolling wake, or leaping out of the water beside the boat. It is fun, too, to see them leaping around another boat. **Common dolphins**, especially the huge groups we sometimes see, are especially playful around boats, while the **Pacific white-sided dolphins** are enthusiastic bow-riders and aerial display artists. The dolphin pictured on the next page is a Long-beaked common dolphin.

Every year a few **newborn calves** are spotted off the California coast. This year the first reported off Monterey was January 20. Whale watch boats make it a practice to give newborns and their moms a wide area to be alone. We aren't sure what happens to these babies. In most years, gray whale calves are reported by two census groups: off Piedras Blancas lighthouse near Cambria and off southern California by ACS-Los Angeles.

ACS Monterey Bay president Jerry Loomis says our chapter may have **another "most exciting month"** this year – July. He urges all of us to keep watching for an announcement of a **Very Interesting Mystery Guest** to be honored this year. !!!!!!!  
Regardless, happy watching! -- Editor p6

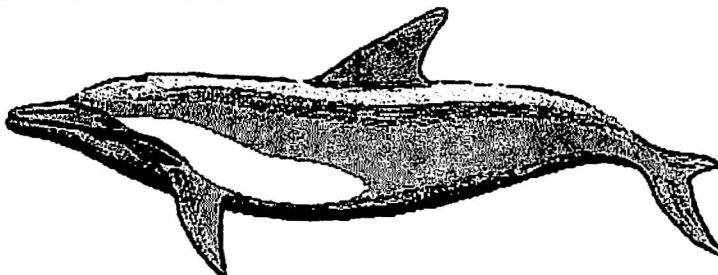
This month's Soundings is an experiment in sending it through email from editor to printer. Now that my computer has an expanded memory (would that applied to me, too!) we are trying to see if my format and Monterey Bay Copy Center's different format can recognize each other through PDF, then give it all to the copy machine. I really would like to hear from readers about any garbled text, randomly confused headings, lost parts of articles (each of which is to begin and end on the same page). WHO KNOWS what happens out there in the ether! Thank you. The Editor, estalee@whalesail.com



Date #	Type of Animal(s)
1/30 p.m. 21	Gray Whales
1/30 a.m. 13	Gray Whales
1/29 p.m. 14	Gray Whales
1/29 a.m. 17	Gray Whales
1500	Pacific White-sided Dolphins
2500	Northern Right Whale Dolphins
1/28 p.m. 7	Gray Whales
1/28 a.m. 8	Gray Whales
2	Humpback Whales
1/27 p.m. 12	Gray Whales
1800	Pacific White-sided Dolphins
20	Risso's Dolphins
2200	Northern Right Whale Dolphins
1/27 a.m. 22	Gray Whales
1800	Pacific White-sided Dolphins
2200	Northern Right Whale Dolphins
1/27 early a.m. 15	Gray Whales
1800	Pacific White-sided Dolphins
2200	Northern Right Whale Dolphins
1/26 p.m. 20	Gray Whales
1/26 a.m. 23	Gray Whales
1/25 18	Gray Whales
1/24 p.m. 28	Gray Whales
75	Risso's Dolphins
1/24 a.m. 32	Gray Whales
30	Risso's Dolphins
1/23 p.m. 52	Gray Whales
800	Risso's Dolphins
1/23 a.m. 38	Gray Whales
6	Bottlenose Dolphins
1/22 p.m. 95	Gray Whales
35	Bottlenose Dolphins
1/22 a.m. 28	Gray Whales
1/21 p.m. 15	Gray Whales
1/21 a.m. 14	Gray Whales
12	Bottlenose Dolphins
1/20 p.m. 15	Gray Whales
1/20 a.m. 8	Gray Whales
1/19 22	Gray Whales
1/18 42	Gray Whales
15	Pacific White-sided Dolphins
1/17 30	Gray Whales
1/16 38	Gray Whales
1	Humpback Whale
1/15 p.m. 17	Gray Whales
500	Long-beaked Common Dolphins
1/15 a.m. 24	Gray Whales
1/14 p.m. 16	Gray Whales
400	Long-beaked Common Dolphins

## SIGHTINGS for January 2007

Collected from boats around Monterey Bay and compiled by the staff of Monterey Bay Whale Watch. For updates see the web site [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)



1/14 continued	30	Risso's Dolphins
15		Dall's Porpoise
1/14 a.m. 28		Gray Whales
400		Long-beaked Common Dolphins
1/14 early a.m. 35		Gray Whales
1/13 p.m. 18		Gray Whales
25		Risso's Dolphins
1/13 a.m. 11		Gray Whales
1		Humpback Whale
1/13 early a.m. 9		Gray Whales
1/12 4		Gray Whales
1/11 7		Gray Whales
1/10 8		Gray Whales
1/9 6		Gray Whales
30		Risso's Dolphins
1/8 p.m. 5		Gray Whales
120		Risso's Dolphins
1/8 a.m. 20		Gray Whales
1/7 p.m. 8		Gray Whales
10		Pacific White-sided Dolphins
1/7 a.m. 9		Gray Whales
1/6 p.m. 7		Gray Whales
2500		Long-beaked Common Dolphins
1/6 a.m. 22		Gray Whales
1/5		No trip
1/4		No trip
1/3 p.m. 6		Gray Whales
1/3 a.m. 16		Gray Whales
200		Risso's Dolphins
1/2 p.m. 10		Gray Whales
1/2 a.m. 1		Gray Whale
150		Risso's Dolphins
1/1 5		Gray Whales

**American Cetacean Society  
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**Web site:**

[www.starrsites.com/acsmb/](http://www.starrsites.com/acsmb/)

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**AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

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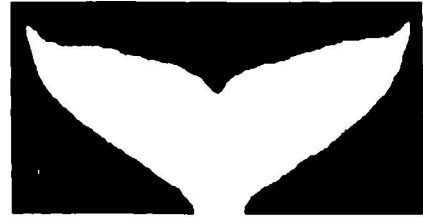
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# Soundings



American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter

March 2007

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS

AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY- MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER

Monthly meeting at Hopkins Marine Station, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building

(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

**Date: Thursday, March 29, 2007 Time: 7:30 PM, PLEASE JOIN US AT 7:00 FOR REFRESHMENTS**

**Speaker: Rachel Saunders, Community and Public Relations Coordinator, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.**

**Title: Natural Wonders of the Davidson Seamount**

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary ("MBNMS") is frequently in the news for many reasons. I is the largest marine sanctuary in the United States. This sanctuary is of course the "home" of the Monterey Canyon, a focus of study for many scientific disciplines including geology and marine biology.

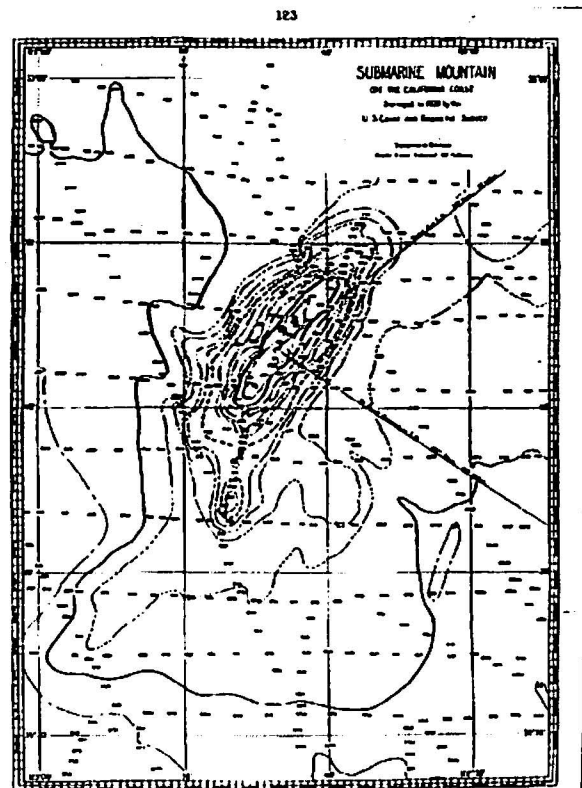
Recently the MBNMS has been in the news because a new management plan is in the works for the Sanctuary. One aspect of this new plan is to expand the boundaries so it will include, among other things, the Davidson Seamount. Recent research has exposed many intriguing scientific discoveries related to this underwater mountain located off California's Big Sur coastline and currently just outside the limits of the MBNMS.

Rachel Saunders is uniquely qualified to reveal the natural wonders of the Davidson Seamount. In addition to her current position with the Sanctuary she was a prime mover in the development of the MBNMS and several other organizations designed to raise public awareness and understanding of the MBNMS in particular and national marine sanctuaries in general.

Please join us to learn more about this amazing underwater formation which is also an important part of the new management plan for the MBNMS.

*Bob Mannix provided this information about the program.*

Chart: The Coast and Geodetic Survey Ship *Blake* discovered the first seamount in 1931. The C&GS ship *Guide* discovered this seamount in 1933. In 1936 it was officially designated Davidson Seamount in honor of George Davidson of the C&GS. (NOAA Photo Library).



ACS MB President Jerry Loomis was honored on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> and he royally deserves the recognition /2 – not only for his long term leadership of this chapter, but his years coordinating volunteers at Point Lobos. The award, from United Way Monterey County, “recognizes volunteers from many different sectors who make a difference in our community – and help make it the great place it is for all of us to be,” wrote Katy Castagna. Only 30 of “the best” were honored that night. A former Membership Chair for ACS also was honored, Marilyn Georgevich. Our congratulations!

## CALENDAR

**March 29:** Regular ACS Monterey Bay meeting this month. See cover. You’ll enjoy this program.

**April 26:** Next regular ACS Monterey Bay meeting. Program chairman Bob Mannis has announced the speaker will be Dr. Wil Burns, who will speak on the International Whaling Commission. Be there.

**March 25: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday. “Research the Bay” Family Fun Day Program:** Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History. Events will include:

12:30 Kid’s Poetry from Karen Levy’s 4<sup>th</sup> grade class at Robert Down through Patrice Vecchione – read on “boat deck” in exhibit hall

1 Storytime

Mary Lee Sunseri singing whale songs

Fishing Booth (Girl Scouts, Sea Scouts)

11-2 Wandering Mariachi Man, Andre

Snick in Squid outfit

Face painting - animals

Two of the Moss Landing Marine Labs Seminar Series, see <http://www.mlml.calstate.edu/seminars/> for the full schedule. Seminar Room 3:30 pm

**March 23:** Speaker Annalisa Berta, UCSD, “New insights into the evolutionary biology of baleen whales.”

**April 20:** Speaker Jessica Redfern, NMFC. “The effect of spatial scale on cetacean habitat models.”

**ASAP:** As you read in the last issue of Soundings, we regretfully said good-bye to Milos Radakovich as he moved away. He was a president of this chapter, a newsletter editor, a naturalist with a unique style, an originator of Beachwatch and BayNet, and, in latter years, ACSMB Historian. So, now we need a new chapter historian. There already is an album of early clippings and the job basically is to be collecting all our publicity, newspaper clippings about our events and members, and anything else that seems appropriate. If you would like to be part of a Board of really nice people and get a bit involved with our chapter, this is a great way to start. Contact Jerry Loomis at [Loomis@mbay.net](mailto:Loomis@mbay.net) Or 831 419-1051.

### Monterey Bay Chapter of the American Cetacean Society ~ List of Board Members

Mailing address: P O Box H E, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

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**Going whale watching? Choose companies that have supported our chapter: Monterey Bay Whale Watch at 831-375-4658 Or Monterey Whale Watching at 1-800-200-2203**



3/ Ed. Note: There are scientists with a great spirit of adventure. John Heyning was one. I think he'd like this:

### **John E. Heyning, 50; Marine Biologist Known in Southland as 'Whale Man'**

(From the Los Angeles Times)

John E. Heyning, a marine biologist with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County who dramatically furthered research on marine mammals, especially the study of beaked whales, has died. He was 50.

Heyning died Feb. 17 at Little Company of Mary Hospital in Torrance after battling amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, for more than three years, the museum announced.

To colleagues, Heyning was curator of marine mammals and deputy director of the museum. He was the easygoing scientist who helped build the museum's collection of marine mammal specimens — it has more than 4,000 — into the second-largest in the world. Only the Smithsonian Institution in Washington has more.

Many Southern Californians knew him as the "Whale Man," a nickname earned from decades of carting away stranded whales and other cetaceans from area beaches. Using a truck custom-fitted with a whale-sized winch, Heyning could collect as many as 30 marine mammals a year. The unusual cargo often drew the attention of freeway drivers who would yell, "Is it real?" "Los Angeles is probably the only place in the world where people would see a dead whale on a truck and think it might be fake," Heyning told the Orange County Register in 1988. At a museum laboratory in Vernon known as the "whale warehouse," Heyning conducted revealing autopsies on the aquatic mammals.

"His research went across a very broad spectrum, although he was known for his work on beaked whales and their evolution," said Jim Dines, mammalogy collections manager at the Natural History Museum.

Heyning also became known for his studies of the anatomy of big whales, said James G. Mead, curator of marine mammals for the Smithsonian Institution. Since the 1980s, Heyning had researched beaked whales, which account for about a quarter of all whale species. Little is known about them because the open-ocean animals are seldom seen, Mead said. Working with Mead, Heyning showed how the beaked whale uses its tongue and specialized anatomy to suck its prey, usually squid, "out of the water like a giant vacuum cleaner," Discover magazine reported in 1995.

With the help of a live whale named J.J. found off the coast of Marina del Rey, Heyning and Mead also determined that gray whales use their tongues to regulate body heat. Before their 1997 study, blubber was considered the main way whales trap heat.

Heyning also was able to show that the common dolphin, long believed to be one species, was actually two, Dines said. By studying bodies and skeletons of the two species — the long-beaked and short-beaked dolphin — he found subtle physical differences. In 1994, Heyning and colleagues documented their finds using DNA.

John Edward Henning was born in San Jose and raised in Torrance. His librarian mother and electrical-engineer father divorced when he was 6. He received a bachelor's degree in zoology in 1980 from Cal State Long Beach. At UCLA, he earned a master's degree in biology in 1985 and a doctorate in biology a year later. The avid surfer and scuba diver met his wife, Corinne, at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's whale watch program. They married in 1993 and lived in Torrance. Heyning, who taught at UCLA and USC, joined the Natural History Museum as a volunteer in the late 1970s and stayed for the rest of his career.

"As important as he became as a scientist, he never stopped being the boy who came home for dinner with a frog in one pocket and a crawfish in the other," Paul G. Haaga Jr., president of the museum's board, said in a statement. "His love of all marine life was both infectious and inspiring." After Heyning became the museum's deputy director in 1999, the staff gave a nod to his wardrobe by turning Fridays into Hawaiian-shirt day. ~

## “Our” Humpbacks in Nicaragua

The sun rose as a red ball just to the right of the volcano, framed by the mangroves in the lagoon and a palm tree or two.

Sounds like the beginning of a bad novel? It’s not. Sounds like the setting for a scientific cruise? Unbelievably, it is. Cascadia Research Collective’s research days in February, 2007, on the Pacific off northwestern Nicaragua, were based at *Puesta del Sol* resort. It’s on a remote inlet lined with mangroves and facing *St. Cristobal*, one of Nicaragua’s long line of volcanoes. (See [www.puestadelsol.com](http://www.puestadelsol.com); then click on “news&info” re Cascadia.) The purpose: finding, identifying and observing the **humpback whales** that breed along the Central American coast in winter – some of them were sure to be humpbacks we see feeding off Monterey in spring, summer or fall. (See information at [www.cascadiaresearch.org](http://www.cascadiaresearch.org).)

The daily breakfast meeting was at 6 a.m. in the *palapa* (outdoors overlooking the marina). Sailboat mariners usually stopped by and there was much friendly talk about whales. At 7 a.m. most of the nine participants boarded the 24-foot fiberglass power boat, which had an open deck with bimini shade over the center console. (see photo next page) Leaving the marina and lagoon, the route usually followed the coast to the northwest, usually three to five miles offshore. Twice we went slightly to the south and once almost as far north as the *Golfo de Fonseca*, on the border with El Salvador and Honduras. Leader **John Calambokidis** joined whale-finding with teaching research methods. Even those with little experience in whale watching were of service. And, there was much scientific talk about whales. Evenings after dinner John lectured on marine mammals and research methods, plus his own discoveries and ideas. We would see the day’s ID photos and compare them with ID’s made off Nicaragua in previous years. Some new whales were found: there was much inspiring talk about whales.

The Pacific off Nicaragua looks a good deal like the Pacific off California. It reflects the deep blue of a cloudless sky, or the gray of the overcast. It may lie flat as a farm pond or it may rise up quickly into wind waves that slap the boat and drench its occupants. The biggest difference: Nicaragua’s Pacific in winter is about **82 degrees F**. Monterey is near 55.

John Calambokidis was as approachable and /4 interesting as we have experienced when he has spoken to ACS Monterey Bay in the past.

He had a gentle, quiet demeanor but his energy level went ‘way up on the research boat. His wife, **Gretchen Steiger**, an experienced biologist, shared both his manner and his professionalism. Cascadia started in 1979, and is based in Olympia, WA. In 1986, Cascadia scientists were working around the Farallon Islands off San Francisco, studying humpback and blue whales. Cascadia soon came to maintain the ID photo catalogs for both species in the Pacific. They still do.

Currently, Cascadia is helping to coordinate the project for humpbacks in the Pacific, the **SPLASH** project (Studies of Populations, Levels of Abundance and Status of Humpbacks) which parallels the **YONAH** project a few years ago in the Atlantic. Both projects include work and data from several countries, contributed by many scientists. However, not only is SPLASH covering a much bigger ocean, the humpbacks have been found in various geographic areas and the migration routes are by no means completely known. John’s map, including some of “our” humpbacks of the SE Pacific, locates them off California, southern Mexico, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and even Panama. **Kristin Rasmussen**, a Cascadia scientist, spoke to our ACS chapter about her observations that southern hemisphere humpbacks sometimes are seen off Panama.

“**Capture**” and “**recapture**” of humpback whales refer to the photos of markings under the tail flukes: first an ID photo and later matching other photos to it. John believes many animals tend to go to the same areas year after year. From time to time there are travelers. John showed one map that charted a few whales seen off Mexico that also were seen off Hawaii. At least one Hawaii whale ventured over to western Pacific waters.

This year did not feature as many whales as last year, but one mom/calf pair was seen and they looked to be in good condition. John found them by spotting their spouts from a distance and they were around the boat a few minutes. Other sightings were of “**singing males**,” and they were found when John listened through the hydrophones. (See next month’s *Soundings* for finding “singers” through hydrophones.) With each sighting there was intensive data recording, then much gleeful talk about whales.

Besides the challenge of research, the mood of place and people, the time to reflect, to quietly immerse ourselves in beauty, all came into the spirit of the experience, as well as much awed talk about whales.

## 5/ Nicaragua and Whaling

A country about the size of New York state, with over 5 million people, and a ranking as second highest poverty level in the world, Nicaragua is a prime example of the countries being targeted by Japan for aid – in exchange for its pro-whaling votes at the IWC. Typically, their IWC fees are paid and top officials are treated to luxurious vacations by Japan, many sources report. It is entirely possible the people don't even know they are considered by us to be a threat to whales, or even that their country's support has been "signed but not ratified" to Japan's whaling interests.

Nicaragua has no whaling fleet, no whaling tradition, and certainly no market for whale blubber. For 13 years before it joined the commission, Nicaragua landed an average of \$41 million annually in Japanese aid, including \$70 million after hurricane Mitch destroyed a good part of Managua. In 2004, Nicaragua's whaling commission rep was denying being bribed. He said Nicaragua would act at the commission in accordance with its belief in the "sustainable use" of marine resources, citing the efforts at conserving fish and lobsters. He also noted that Nicaragua has voted against Japan for at least one whaling restriction, a proposal demanding more humane killing methods. (Antarctic & Southern Ocean Coalition, [www.asoc.org/media/12.01.04japan..](http://www.asoc.org/media/12.01.04japan..))

There are educational efforts by conservation groups aimed at the general public in whaling nations. Guatemala's change to anti-whaling last month may be an example of such work. A group from Argentina held a workshop about the whaling issue in San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua, this winter. This fishing harbor and resort area is growing fast from tourist trade. It is a choice stop for both cruise ships and surfers.



## A Conversation with Robert J. Membreno

The web site for *Puesta del Sol* has a short biography of its builder and owner. Sr Membreno returned from the U.S. to his home country and built one of its few marinas for travelers-by-water. In doing so, he taught building skills to people already living near the location, on a very remote peninsula still reached on land via hours on rough roads. The resort now employs over 100 Nicaraguans in all positions. "They will be running this place in the future," Sr Membreno said.

He joined the Cascadia group at breakfast on our last day at the resort. When asked about Nicaragua's position on whaling, he said he thought that would be changed. He and others from the area attended the workshop in San Juan del Sur last winter. They took photos and data from Cascadia's research. "We brought down the house," he said.

One of Japan's statements against whales is that they eat more fish than humans do and will destroy fisheries. Humpbacks, of course, are in Nicaraguan waters to breed, not to feed.

A mariner living on his sailboat in the marina (who gives English lessons) and Sr Membreno asked for a program about whales and Cascadia's research for people of the area, especially children. It is true the fishermen have seen humpbacks and surely have heard the probably mysterious sounds of their singing wafting over the sea's surface.

Rather than tell citizens of another country what to do about their lives, whales were described. One of our group, Maria Ornelas, a volunteer docent for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, spoke in Spanish about the whales, their beauty and their habits. She translated for John Calambokidis as he explained what he as learned, showed photos and played recordings of whale song. People started arriving at 5 for the 7:00 program .... more than 300 of them, including more than 200 children.

*Puesta del Sol* could attract nature lovers. In addition to catch-and-release game fishing, there are the mangroves in the inlet and a mile-long beach. The resort plays a role in guarding sea turtles' eggs and hatchlings on the beach. In a small park the calls of birds at dawn were almost ear-splitting and none sounded familiar to us. At sea one day, we saw an aerial display by half a dozen manta rays in a line, leaping 6 feet straight up, flapping wide wings. ~

Edited by James A. Estes, Douglas P. DeMaster, Daniel F. Doak, Terrie M. Williams, and Robert L. Brownell, Jr.

### **Whales, Whaling, and Ocean Ecosystems**

418 pages, 8-1/2 x 11 inches, 7 b/w photographs, 108 line illustrations, 37 maps, 37 tables

Published January 2007 Available worldwide \$54.95

This unprecedented volume presents a sweeping picture of what we know about the natural history, biology, and ecology of whales in the broad context of the dynamics of ocean ecosystems. Innovative and comprehensive, the volume encompasses multiple points of view to consider the total ecological impact of industrial whaling on the world's oceans. Combining empirical research, ecological theory and modeling, and historical data, its chapters present perspectives from ecology, population biology, physiology, genetics, evolutionary history, ocean biogeography, economics, culture, and law, among other disciplines. Throughout, contributors investigate how whaling fundamentally disrupted ocean ecosystems, examine the various roles whales play in food webs, and discuss the continuing ecological chain reactions to the depletion of these large animals. In addition to reviewing what is known of the current and historic whale populations, *Whales, Whaling, and Ocean Ecosystems* considers how this knowledge will bear on scientific approaches to conservation and whaling in the future and provocatively asks whether it is possible to restore ocean ecosystems to their pre-whaling condition.

(See Univ. of CA Press at <http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/10197.html>)

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#### **Would Your Old Research Equipment Like a New Home?**

What do you do with your old but faithful research equipment, either when the work is done or you get something newer? Gone digital, upgraded your GPS, radio, data recorder, or laptop?

This post is to request that you consider the potential for that equipment to end up in the hands of a scientist who needs but cannot afford such equipment, perhaps a research project in a developing country. The very broad range of equipment to be considered would include almost anything that works faithfully and can be shipped at reasonable expense.

Recently Cetacean Society International sent a 2002 GPS unit to Columbia's Fundacion Omacha, to help researchers study Amazon River dolphins. A Nikon FM2 with appropriate lenses may be enroute to Trinidad shortly, to assist a dolphin population study, if we can talk an unrealistic young woman out of an extremely expensive digital outfit she saw recommended on MARMAM by someone who must have a fat contract.

In some cases the equipment's fair market value may become a tax deduction from CSI for the US donor, if ownership and value can be established.

If you are interested please contact CSI with a realistic and detailed description of your stuff, but send nothing. There are many caveats with this concept, and we don't have any more room in our closets either. Ideally, CSI will try to validate the request, attempt to link the request with a donor, establish that the stuff will work at the destination, and perhaps facilitate the shipping.

Again, send nothing but an email to start the process.

Thank you,  
Bill  
Rossiter@CSIWhalesAlive  
(Posted on Marmam listserv)

William W. Rossiter, President, Cetacean Society International  
PO Box 953, Gerogetown, CT 06829 ph 203-770-8615, fx 860-561-0187  
[www.csiwhalesalive.org](http://www.csiwhalesalive.org)



## Sightings

For an update on sightings, see the web site for Monterey Bay Whale Watch, [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)

## Date # Type of Animal(s)

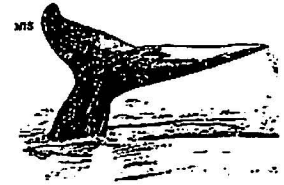
- 2/16 p.m. 8 Gray Whales
- 2/16 a.m. 10 Gray Whale, 15 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/15 p.m. 2 Gray Whales, 6 Killer Whales (transient type)
- 2/15 a.m. 2 Gray Whales
- 2/14 p.m. 4 Gray Whales
- 2/14 a.m. 5 Gray Whales, 25 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/13 1 Gray Whale, 40 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/12 p.m. 2 Gray Whales
- 2/12 a.m. 6 Gray Whales, 350 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/11 p.m. 6 Gray Whales, 60 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/11 a.m. 2 Gray Whales, 350 Risso's Dolphins, 6 Dall's Porpoise
- 2/11 early a.m. 3 Gray Whales, 15 Long-beaked Common Dolphins, 30 Risso's Dolphins, 25 Dall's Porpoise
- 2/10 2 Gray Whales, 200 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 150 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/9 3 Gray Whales
- 2/8 5 Gray Whales
- 2/6 p.m. 28 Gray Whales
- 2/6 a.m. 13 Gray Whales
- 2/5 p.m. 23 Gray Whales
- 2/5 a.m. 22 Gray Whales
- 2/4 p.m. 12 Gray Whales
- 2/4 a.m. 16 Gray Whales
- 2/4 early a.m. 9 Gray Whales, 30 Risso's Dolphins
- 2/3 p.m. 11 Gray Whales

2/3 a.m. 7 Gray Whales

2/2 p.m. 14 Gray Whale

2/2 a.m. 7 Gray Whales

2/1 3 Gray Whales



**5 Dozen Killer Whales**

**Believed to be Hunting Salmon Off S.F. Coast**

by Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer  
Tuesday, January 30, 2007 (SFGate.com)

A large group of endangered killer whales has been spotted off the coast of San Francisco, a long way from their usual feeding grounds along the Washington coast.

The magnificent black and white predators were first seen off Half Moon Bay, where they were apparently searching for salmon, which are declining in numbers in the Pacific Northwest.

Photos were taken Jan. 24 of from nine to 15 orcas swimming in the open water between the Farallon Islands and San Francisco. Although killer whales have been seen off the coast before, researchers believe some five dozen or more individuals are now regularly leaving their historic habitat in the Puget Sound area for the abundant waters near the Golden Gate.

"It's exciting for us because they traveled so far to get to California, which means they can travel farther than people thought to find food," said Nancy Black, a marine biologist and whale expert for Monterey Bay Whale Watch. "Before, it was just transient (orcas) that have been seen in Bay Area. This is something unusual."

Ken Balcomb, senior scientist and founder of the Center for Whale Research, which has tracked the pod in Washington for 30 years, said the whales, including a mother and calf, were positively identified through the photos as members of a family group called "K-pod." Based on observations made a little over a week earlier off Half Moon Bay, Balcomb believes that members of "L-pod" are also in the vicinity. If they are, it would mean that as many as 63 whales could be spread out over 30 miles around the Farallones. ~

**American Cetacean Society**  
**Monterey Bay Chapter**  
**P.O. Box HE**  
**Pacific Grove CA 93950**  
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Book note  
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Sightings  
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**Membership Levels and Annual Dues:**

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign, \$45       | (*not entitled to membership benefits)                      |                         |

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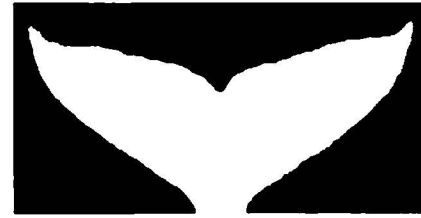
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# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**April 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

**Date: Thursday, April 26, 2007 Time: 7:30 PM**

**Please join us at 7:00 for refreshments**

**Speaker: Dr. William C.G. Burngard**

**Title: Laggard or Leviathan? The Future of the International Whaling Commission.**



From feeding to breeding whales often travel through different aquatic jurisdictions. With such international travelers the need for international oversight or regulation is apparent. Thus, we have the International Whaling Commission ("IWC").

Now, many whale related issues are heating up around the world and the need for an effective IWC is as important as ever. Our presentation this evening will provide the insider's perspective about what the future holds for the IWC.

Dr. Burns is Senior Fellow, Center for Global Law & Policy, Santa Clara University School of Law. In addition to his dissertation: "The Agreement on Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black and Mediterranean Seas" he has a broad background in International Matters including Environmental Law, Ocean and Coastal Law, Marine Environmental Law, Sustainable Development, and the emerging challenge of climate change.

Dr. Burns also has a Monterey connection. He served as an Associate Professor from 2000 to 2004 at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and taught classes on Climate Change and Marine Regimes and the Protection of Wildlife.

Dr. Burns' perspective also has been shaped through his many professional experiences including those as Editor-in Chief, Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy, a position he has held since 1997, and as Co-Chair of the International Environmental Law Group of the American Society of International Law, a position he has held since 2003.

Please join us for this interesting and timely presentation about the future of the IWC especially during these challenging times for several whale species around the world.

*Program information was provided by Bob Mannix.*

## C A L E N D A R

**Earth Day is April 22, watch newspaper and tv listings of events April 21-22. Make it Ocean Day, too !**

“Earth Day is a moment in time for us to consider our way of life, our aspirations, our philanthropy – an opportunity to do something. If we’re going to make a difference in the world, we need to make changes in our lives – whether it’s taking public transportation or making our homes more energy efficient.” Carter S. Roberts, President, World Wildlife Fund, *Focus*, March/April 2007

### **Countywide Cleanup Day April 21**

In honor of Earth Day, the Illegal Dumping and Litter Abatement Task Force of Monterey County and the Monterey County Environmental Health Division is sponsoring a countywide cleanup on Saturday, April 21. From 8:00 a.m. to noon, Elkhorn Slough Foundation Stewardship Director Kim Hayes will lead a group of volunteers to clean up an area of the Elkhorn Slough watershed. All ages welcome. For more information, contact Kim Hayes at (831)728-5939. *Elkhorn Slough Foundation email*

### **ACS Monterey Bay**

Meetings: This month, April 26; next month, May 31 for our regular last-Thursday monthly meetings.

### **New Board Members**

Board member “at large” is **Randy Puckett**. He has done so much for and with our chapter that it’s rather a surprise he is just now coming back on the board. Well, he really always has been here for us. He was our first president. He and his wife Gail were the first editors of the newsletter. He was one of the artists in the 1980s art celebration, *Artists Give Thanks to the Animals*, that benefitted ACS, Friends of the Sea Otter, and Audubon Society. Since then, he has donated many portions of sales of his sculpture to our treasury, and he donated a gray whale sculpture for raffle to raise money for the school at San Ignacio Lagoon, Mexico, an ACSMB project. Randy has a lot to say, pertinent and often humorous, about environmentalism and the sea’s creatures.

Not really new, but perhaps not yet mentioned here, is **Tony Lorenz**, special events chairman along with Jerry Loomis, president. Tony has been active in our chapter for several years, including producing the newsletter for awhile in the 1990s. He still sends this editor alerts, news, and whale locations, in between his time with wife Robin, son Mateo, and his job at Highlands Inn. Tony also works as a whale watch naturalist. Look on whale watch trips for a tall man taking photos of blue whales.

Speaking of whale watches, take a look at the web sites for the two companies that have supported this chapter:

Monterey Bay Whale Watch [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com) 831 375-4258

Monterey Whale Watching [www.montereywhalewatching.com](http://www.montereywhalewatching.com) 800 979-3370

### **Monterey Bay Chapter of the American Cetacean Society ~ List of Board Members**

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President: Jerry Loomis Contact Jerry at [Loomis@mbay.net](mailto:Loomis@mbay.net)

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Program co-chairs: Alan Baldridge & Bob Mannix

Newsletter mailing: Barbara Oliver

*Soundings* editor: Esta Lee Albright [EstaLee@whalesail.com](mailto:EstaLee@whalesail.com)

Web site: [www.starrstites.com/acsmb/](http://www.starrstites.com/acsmb/)

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Membership secretary: Sally Eastham

Publicity: Diane Glim

Conservation chair: Carol Maehr

Special Events: Tony Lorenz

Webmaster: Evelyn Starr

Member at large: Randy Puckett



## ORCAS TOURING

Excerpts from email Monthly Orca Report of The Whale Museum, March 2007

[www.whalemuseum.org](http://www.whalemuseum.org)

Drawing by John Green



For the third year in a row K Pod and L Pod members have been positively identified in the waters off the California Coast. This month a report came in to Orca Network from a whale watcher near Ft Bragg, California. On March 18<sup>th</sup> 20 to 40 orcas were spotted less than a mile offshore. Faith (L-57) was one of the whales that the Center for Whale Research identified from the photos submitted.

Several days later another report came in to Orca Network from California researcher Nancy Black, in Monterey, California, who had spotted about 60 orcas off the coast of Monterey between March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Again photos were sent to the Center for Whale Research and positive identifications from those photos showed that Canuck (L-7), Alexis (L-12), Flash (L-73), Skana (L-79), Moonlight (L-83), Saanich (L-74), Crewser (L-92), Calypso (L-94), Lummi (K-7), Skagit (K-13) and Cappuccino (K-21) were there. The report also stated that the orcas were seen feeding on salmon. Even though Ft. Bragg is several hundred miles south of the San Juan Islands, it is always a great relief to hear of their whereabouts!

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** There is a new calf born into L Pod! This report arrived Tuesday morning, March 27<sup>th</sup>, via Orca Network, that the Center for Whale Research has identified a new calf from photos submitted by Nancy Black. This calf has been given the alphanumeric designation of L-109, yet will not receive a name until he/she survives a full winter. It is believed that this calf belongs to Opehlia's family group. Photos showed L-109 by the side of Nugget (L-55) and another photo showed L-109 by the side of Kasatka (L-82). Kasatka is 17 years old. She is Nugget's oldest offspring. She has not yet been seen with a calf of her own. Nugget also has another offspring, Kasatka's sister named Lapis (L-103), who was born in 2003. It is common for a new calf to be seen with different family members who will be assisting with the care of the new one.

Dave Ellifrit, of the Center for Whale Research, when speaking at the Naturalists' Gear-Up session on March 30<sup>th</sup> suggested that L-109 may have been born since the first of this year. As to the determination of who the mother is? That will require more sightings of L-109 with adults in order to determine who the mother may be.

Excerpts from [Seattlepi.com](http://Seattlepi.com), March 26, 2007

[http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/309109\\_babyorca27.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/309109_babyorca27.html)

Experts said the baby is the offspring of one of two orcas, which happen to be a mother and daughter. If it's the daughter's baby, it would be her first, giving it only a 50-50 chance of making it through its first year. If it's the mother's baby, it would be her third, which means its chances of survival are better. That's because orcas are contaminated with industrial chemicals, particularly PCBs, which concentrate in fatty tissue and milk. The mothers pass most of those pollutants on to their first and second offspring.

"The mothers sort of clean themselves out," Balcomb said.

The new baby was born between late October and the early part of this year. If it survives to return to the Northwest this summer, "that's a very good start," said Kelley Balcomb-Bartok, a research associate with the center and Ken's son. "Then it will have the summer to relax in the nice San Juan Islands and feed on fish."

Researchers won't know the gender of the orca until it rolls over and exposes its belly and genitals -- and it can be years before they get a glimpse. Even after they do, scientists have made wrong calls in the past. "We had a male that gave birth," Balcomb-Bartok said. Their records subsequently were corrected.

The local orca population has ebbed and flowed recently. This past fall, their numbers dropped to 85 after three adult whales and two calves born in 2006 died. Two of those were a mother and baby. The National Marine Fisheries Service has set its goal for local orca recovery at a stable population of 120 animals.

## 2 Vivid Writings For A Good Cause

### *Echoes in the Blue*, by C. George Muller

Amazon.com says:

*The mother whale shuddered as another harpoon slammed into her back, and a fresh burst of agony tore through her body. Already she could feel the tension on the harpoon cables as she was slowly dragged towards the ship. She knew she was dying.*

An Eco-thriller from a New Zealand wildlife biologist and award-winning novelist. Ignoring a 20-year moratorium on commercial whaling, Japan sends its whaling fleet deep into the Antarctic to kill whales under the guise of 'scientific research'. Thrust into this volatile situation is Richard Major, an unlikely hero accompanying a whale research expedition. (4 stars)

The Author Writes on MarMam (3/7/07):

Dear Colleagues, As you are no doubt aware, whaling continues despite the 1986 Moratorium and the 1993 Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.

Past serial depletion of whales stocks worldwide demonstrates that hunting long-lived, slow-growing mammals is fundamentally unsustainable – particularly when there are profits to be made! Past illegal whaling and massive under-reporting of catches clearly show whalers were more interested in short-term profits than long-term conservation! Current practices (whaling nations ignoring IWC rulings and using loopholes to circumvent rulings) show nothing has changed!

Whaling is expanding! Japan has announced plans to kill up to 1,500 whales annually from 2007, including species classified as vulnerable and endangered on the IUCN redlist!

C. George Muller is a marine biologist and prize-winning novelist who has decided to speak out against whaling, combining these facets in a revealing new book.

*Echoes in the Blue* is centered on the real-life conflict surrounding Japan's controversial pelagic whaling and dolphin drive kills, with the facts presented in an exciting and fast-paced "eco-thriller" novel in a bid to raise wider public awareness and support for the anti-whaling cause.

\* A portion of the proceeds from every book sold will be donated towards 'Save the Whale' causes.

#### **Praise for *Echoes in the Blue*:**

*"...Very well researched including some extremely insightful observations about the nature of international politicking in the ongoing fight to protect whales."*

Scientific Advisor to New Zealand IWC Commissioner

See more on the author's web site: [www.cgeorgemuller.com](http://www.cgeorgemuller.com)

4/

### **The Death Star Returns to the Land of the Rising Sun: No More Whales Will Die This Season.**

[www.seashepherd.org](http://www.seashepherd.org)

Finally, the burnt out hulk of the whale killing floating factory called the Nisshin Maru is limping out of the Antarctic treaty zone, the stench of rotten whale meat lingering in its wake. The whale killing fleet is now slowly heading north to Japan. There will be no stopping in New Zealand for repairs. A stop there will result in legal issues that could tie the ship up for years and the whale meat onboard would be confiscated.

The whaling fleet has a long way to go to reach Tokyo and the crew will be mourning the loss of one crew member and remembering the opposition by Sea Shepherd that left their decks reeking of rotten blubber and awash with the blood of the whales caused by Sea Shepherd crew sealing the bloody deck flensing outlet drains. It is a ship that reeks of death, burnt flesh, gore and blood, and it looks and smells like the Death Star that it is. The image of the Nisshin Maru retreating from Antarctic Whale Sanctuary is joyous news for all people who love whales. This ship is the single greatest whale killing machine of all time and the only thing more pleasing to us would be to see its total destruction. Fortunately this did not happen, because the sinking of the ship would have been an ecological disaster.

Whaling is now officially ended for the 2006/2007 season and the unofficial final whale body count appears to be less than 500 whales of their 960 targeted Piked whales. It is not known how many of the targeted Fin whales were killed.

The Nisshin Maru is severely damaged. The main engine was started but electrical systems are barely functioning. The whale processing equipment is ruined. The winches used to haul up the whales are inoperable. The cargo of whale meat onboard has been partially if not completely spoiled by loss of refrigeration and intense heat. In addition the whale meat has been contaminated by chemicals used to fight the blaze and spilt during the fire.

The disaster has highlighted the fact that the Nisshin Maru is an environmental disaster waiting to happen. This year, Antarctica's wildlife was spared the tragedy of an oil and chemical spill that would have occurred if the 8,000 ton ship had sunk with hundreds of thousands of gallons of oil and an unknown amount of chemicals like ammonia and chlorine. This is the second serious fire on the Nisshin Maru in 10 years. The vessels are not ice-class. Japan has put their pride before any concern for the protection of Antarctic ecosystems and wildlife. Their lust to kill whales has become obsessive and is blinding their common sense.

(Article contributed in an email from Carol Maehr, our conservation chairperson. Any ACS member can receive conservation alerts via email from Carol. Contact her at [c.maehr@worldnet.att.net](mailto:c.maehr@worldnet.att.net) )

## Conservation Action

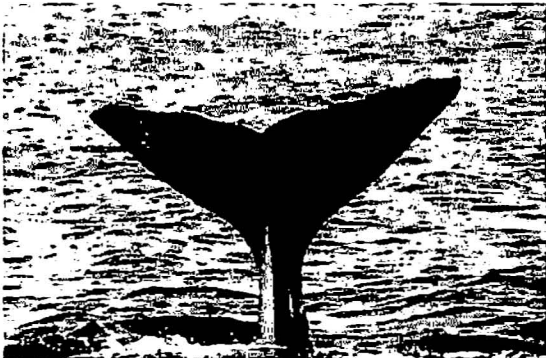
Fisheries and Oceans Canada is seeking public input on the draft Recovery Strategy for **Transient Killer Whales**. The recovery strategy describes the recovery goals and objectives as well as the methods that will be used to monitor recovery for transient killer whales in Pacific Canadian Waters. The recovery strategy, and options for submitting your feedback, can be found online at: ([http://www-comm.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pages/consultations/TransientKillerWhales/default\\_e.htm](http://www-comm.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pages/consultations/TransientKillerWhales/default_e.htm)). Comments may be submitted up to April 30, 2007. For more information on this species, or aquatic species at risk, please visit [http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especies/home\\_e.asp](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especies/home_e.asp). (This item from MARMAM)

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the availability of a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (DPEIS) on the activities of the **Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (MMHSRP)**. The MMHSRP encompasses: - the National Marine Mammal Stranding Network, - the Marine Mammal Disentanglement Program, and other issues.

A copy of the DPEIS and associated information is available on our website, at: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/eis.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/eis.htm) Comments may be submitted up to April 30, 2007. Email: [mmhsrpeis.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:mmhsrpeis.comments@noaa.gov) attn:mmhsrp eis (This item from Marmam listserv)

Please watch the video of **dolphin killings** at the site below, and if it makes you feel sad, angry, frustrated, helpless or all of the above, then please send it to everyone you know. The more people that know about this travesty, the more influence we can have on the Japanese government to prevent these mass killings from continuing. Please be warned that the video is graphic and disturbing, you don't even have to watch it all but please sign the petition.

Please help! (This item is email from Peggy Stap)  
The video - [www.glumbert.com/media/dolphin](http://www.glumbert.com/media/dolphin) The petition - <http://www.petitiononline.com/golfinho/>



Sperm Whale tail flukes. Photo by Gill Sinclair. Used with permission. [www.whalewatchers.net](http://www.whalewatchers.net)

## TOPP: Tagging of Pacific Pelagics

A fascinating project available on the web can be found at [http://las.pfeg.noaa.gov/TOPP\\_recent/index.html](http://las.pfeg.noaa.gov/TOPP_recent/index.html)

### Maps and Data

The story may begin out on the open sea, or upon a stretch of wild shoreline during tag deployment, but the tales that emerge from the results are what make a TOPP scientist's pulse quicken; the resolution of old mysteries even as new ones may arise. The first whispers of these unfolding narratives are in the data displayed on maps like ones you can see on the web site. Once we understand how to read what the maps are telling us, we find ourselves engaged by the big questions: where are the animals going? What are they doing? And why?

### Animal Tracks: The Journeys

Animal tracks are plotted and refreshed each day with data from animals equipped with satellite transmitting tags (e.g. SPOT tags), that have transmitted within the last 60 days. The information on the map is therefore "near real time," which allows scientists – and you – to follow the journeys of the individual animals day by day.

### Variable Views

As in any complex ecosystem, several factors influence animal interactions and movements; temperature, depth, food availability and salinity are just some of the environmental parameters that scientists. TOPP's data visualization system plots the animal movements against 3 sets of parameters – fixed (depth measurements of the ocean floor) or dynamic (temperatures and productivity). The screen you will see when you click on "view live data," will offer alternate backgrounds against which you can view the animal tracks.

(Animals tracked and data given on current screens include:

Mako shark, Salmon shark, CA sea lion, Elephant seal, Blue whale, Fin whale, Leatherback sea turtle, Laysan albatross, Black-footed albatross fledglings, Loggerhead turtle.)

We've yet to completely understand the very complex picture of the Pacific ecosystems, but some relationships that have been theorized are documented by the tracking images. Others are completely new and unexpected behaviors emerging in the dynamic TOPP maps.

( Source: TOPP web site: Maps and Data. )

( This article suggested by Tony Lorenz. )

## Finding the Singer By His Song: Humpbacks in Nicaragua, Feb. 2007

By Esta Lee Albright

One good reason a field scientist's wardrobe often consists of tee shirts and unpressed pants may be because that is great for packing around equipment in a suitcase. In February, cetologist John Calambokidis crossed the border between Costa Rica and Nicaragua, on a bus, transporting a wild assortment of acoustical instruments and a laptop computer. We volunteer research assistants were to use them well during our week offshore of northwestern Nicaragua to find humpback whales.

John C. has devised a directional hydrophone that comes apart for packing in his suitcase, then extends over 6 feet while being carried on a boat. A simple hydrophone dropped into the water on a wire would let us hear a humpback male singing somewhere out there over a wide range of possible directions. Then, using the directional hydrophone and ear phones, John could determine the direction we should travel to find the whale. Stopping often to use the hydrophone, we could hear the call grow louder. Finally, we could be close enough to hear singing with our own ears. Surface sound, however, is hard to locate. With any luck the whale would surface; with more luck the whale would sound with tail flukes straight up above the surface for a photo. One day's lunch break on the boat was accompanied by the eerily beautiful phrases of humpback song through the air all around us. Moreover, we finished eating before we had to grab our cameras.

Our 24-foot research vessel had a center console. The captain, Estaban-of-the-sharp-eyes, a good whale spotter, had that station. Research volunteers were assigned positions along the sides of the boat: two watching 180 degrees to the front, two watching sides, two watching backwards, and two standing up on the rail and holding on to the frame of the bimini (shade). Every 30 minutes everything came to a stop for updating the log. The "basic effort log" included time, position (our land base was 12 degrees 37.57 minutes latitude, and 87 degrees, 20.47 minutes longitude, for instance), depth and temperature of the water, the Beaufort scale for surface conditions, visibility, cloud cover and precipitation. The wide-range hydrophone would be deployed and, if a song was heard, the directional hydrophone. For each encounter with a whale, the "sightings log"



*John C. uses the directional hydrophone*

data would include: any reaction of the whale to the boat, time, position, depth and temperature, sighting number for the day, total whales of this sighting, presence of calves, species code, and number/species of any other marine mammals and birds associated with the whales. Two sheets of logs were kept in a waterproof folder for each day.

As we would draw near a whale we wouldn't know what to expect. On a calm sea, we might hear the song when the whale is 100 meters away and as much as 10 meters below the surface. The singing whale may be positioned at or near the surface, traveling, or rising or diving, still singing. If the whale was floating head down in the water column while singing, we might have seen a slight upwelling effect at the surface.

One stop for listening yielded two songs and the directional hydrophones told us two singers were in opposite directions from the boat. Sighting the spouts of one of the whales, we soon realized it was moving in the direction of the other. When the two were within 20 meters of each other, there was a bit of milling and they went again in opposite directions. Songs are from males only, and we don't know exactly how or why they 'sing.' These two guys may have been just checking it out with each other.

Back ashore in the evenings, we would have dinner outside and watch sunsets send pink to the volcanoes in our view over the lagoon. John C's lecture after dinner one evening explained research methods and objectives. In 2007, the Nicaragua work was focused on survey and identification (ID). Other years had included measuring the animals, collecting skin samples and fecal matter. John's logs and methods have been adopted by scientists in other areas for comparison, including in Monterey Bay. From photo ID work, scientists may determine abundance estimates, residence times, stock structure from interchange of data with others, age structure, reproduction and mortality rates, birth intervals and calf mortality.

6/ Some humpbacks we see off California also have been

(Cont. on next page ◀ )



## SIGHTINGS

<b>Date #</b>	<b>Type of Animal(s)</b>
3/25 p.m.	19 Gray Whales
3/25 a.m.	15 Gray Whales
3/25 early a.m.	60 Killer Whales (residents K and L pods)
3/24 p.m.	60 Killer Whales (residents K and L pods)
3/24 a.m.	17 Gray Whales 60 Killer Whales (residents K and L pods) 8 Dall's Porpoise
3/24 early a.m.	6 Gray Whales
3/23 p.m.	2 Humpback Whales
3/23 a.m.	2 Humpback Whales
3/22 p.m.	6 Gray Whales 20 Risso's Dolphins
3/22 a.m.	8 Gray Whales 5 Killer Whales (transient type) 35 Risso's Dolphins
3/21	8 Gray Whales 1 Humpback Whale
3/20	14 Gray Whales
3/19	12 Gray Whales 2 Humpback Whales
3/18	16 Gray Whales
3/17 p.m.	11 Gray Whales 50 Pacific White-sided Dolphins
3/17 a.m.	15 Gray Whales 75 Risso's Dolphins
3/17 early a.m.	8 Gray Whales
3/16	4 Gray Whales 300 Risso's Dolphins
3/15 p.m.	7 Gray Whales
3/15 a.m.	11 Gray Whales
3/14 p.m.	14 Gray Whales 100 Pacific White-sided Dolphins 5 Long-beaked Common Dolphins
3/14 a.m.	10 Gray Whales 10 Pacific White-sided Dolphins 300 Risso's Dolphins
3/13	4 Gray Whales 30 Risso's Dolphins
3/12 p.m.	22 Gray Whales
3/12 a.m.	24 Gray Whales
3/11 p.m.	16 Gray Whales
3/11 a.m.	26 Gray Whales 25 Risso's Dolphins
3/10 p.m.	11 Gray Whales
3/10 a.m.	12 Gray Whales
3/10 early a.m.	7 Gray Whales
3/9	10 Gray Whales
3/7	12 Gray Whales
3/6 p.m.	16 Gray Whales 5 Killer Whales (transient type)
3/6 a.m.	15 Gray Whales
3/5	8 Gray Whales
3/4 p.m.	15 Gray Whales
3/4 a.m.	16 Gray Whales
3/3 p.m.	9 Gray Whales
3/3 a.m.	14 Gray Whales 5 Unidentified Beaked Whales 200 Risso's Dolphins 20 Northern Right Whale Dolphins 8 Bottlenose Dolphins
3/3 early a.m.	7 Gray Whales 8 Bottlenose Dolphins
3/2	6 Gray Whales 10 Dall's Porpoise
3/1	10 Gray Whales

**Sightings are compiled by Monterey Bay Whale Watch. For Updates see [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)**

*(Humpbacks, from previous page)*

seen off the southern Mexico mainland, and off Costa Rica and Nicaragua. One whale-fluke ID photo this year was identified right away by John C. as a whale also seen off California. My photo of its ID marks isn't very good, but I'll be watching for that whale off Monterey !



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**Monterey Bay Chapter**  
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime, \$750     | <input type="checkbox"/> Family, \$45                       | <b>ACS Chapter: #24</b> |
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P.O. Box H E, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**May 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Canner)

Date: Thursday May 31, 2007

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Please join us at 7:00 for refreshments

**Speaker: Nancy Black, Marine Biologist**



**KILLER WHALE**  
(*Orcinus orca*)

**Title: Killer Whales: their behavior and ecology in California waters**

Nancy Black, a scientist who has studied Killer Whales (Orcas) in Monterey Bay and SE Alaska for twenty years, will bring her breadth of knowledge and understanding of these fascinating animals to her talk. Along with associates Richard Ternullo and Alisa Schulman-Janiger, she has gathered information on seasonality of occurrence, abundance, pod structure, contaminant levels, and prey preferences of the three eco-types of Killer Whales known to occur. These are transients, offshores and southern residents (from Puget Sound). Nancy and her colleagues maintain the identification catalog of transient Killer Whales and contribute to collaborative projects for whale research throughout the Pacific. At the most recent Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals, she presented information on the predation behavior of transient Killer Whales on gray whales in Monterey Bay. Nancy has spent many hours in the company of Orcas in boats of various sizes and is extremely familiar with these animals.

Nancy has been associated with this chapter of ACS in several ways. As a student, she received ACS grants for research on Pacific white-sided dolphins. The "Sightings" page in *Soundings*, frequent information on marine life, and photographs often used in the newsletter, are contributions from her web page ([www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)).

She received her master's degree from the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories and now owns and operates Monterey Bay Whale Watch. Over the years her company has introduced thousands of people to the marine environment and its mammal inhabitants. She also has contributed and has been featured in films by the National Geographic, BBC, and other international networks.

Please join us for what will be a most interesting evening.

This program information is from Alan and Sheila Baldrige. The drawing is by Robin Makowski for ACS.

## ACS Monterey Board 2007

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Esta Lee Albright, editor, *Soundings* [EstaLee@whalesail.com](mailto:EstaLee@whalesail.com)

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### Calendar

May 31: Regular meeting this month

June 28 : Next regular meeting

Watch for news of our annual barbecue !

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### Global Warming and Starving Sea Life: Some Days the News Just Isn't Very Good !

From Science Direct, [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com) Marine Pollution Bulletin 54 (2007) 249-252

Harbour porpoises in British waters are under threat from starvation because global warming is affecting their food supplies, according to a recent study carried out at Aberdeen University and the Scottish Agricultural College, in Inverness. Around 230,000 harbour porpoises ... live in the North Sea, where their numbers have already dropped due to pollution and entanglement in fishing nets. The researchers found that the stomachs of stranded porpoises contained fewer sand eels and other food compared with porpoises recovered between 1992 and 2001. Other research showed that while 5 per cent of them died due to starvation in the late 1990s, 33 per cent starved to death in the springs of 2002 and 2003. This new research now shows an additional problem in that there is a shortage of their staple food source, sand eels, which are decreasing in the North Sea. The sand eels are thought to be on the decrease because they are leaving for cooler waters as the sea temperatures rise. If the porpoises cannot get enough energy from good, then they rely on their blubber, but this means their insulation drops and they are more likely to die from hypothermia. Scientists' earlier expectations that the porpoises would switch easily to other food sources if sand eel numbers fell has proved unfounded. Source: Aberdeen University.

**AND, on 4/3/07, Glen Martin wrote in the San Francisco Chronicle: West Coast Sea Birds are dying,** apparently from a lack of food – and some researchers think the phenomenon may be linked to global climate change. This is the third year that scientists have found unusually large numbers of marine birds – mainly common murrelets, but also rhinoceros auklets and tufted puffins – washed up on beaches in CA, OR, and WA. In 2005, the first year of the phenomenon, large numbers of Cassin's auklets also died. Hannah Nevins, the coordinator for Moss Landing Marine Laboratories beach survey program, said 253 dead murrelets were recovered on 11 Monterey beaches during the first week of March. Source: Pelican Network

**The BBC reports the Gray whales are thin** and evidently lacking in food. More on this later.

Source: Earthwatch

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### Congress Moves on Energy and Pollution at Sea: Some Days the News Improves with the Right E-mail

From National Resources Defense Council's Legislative Watch, 4/9/07 e-mail

In the rush of activity leading up to Congress' spring recess, the House approved a bill to reduce pollution from sea vessels and passed a budget resolution that would expand funding for conservation and renewable energy. Meanwhile, Senate committees approved bills that would outfit thousands of government buildings with energy-saving technology and reauthorize programs for flood control and shoreline protection.



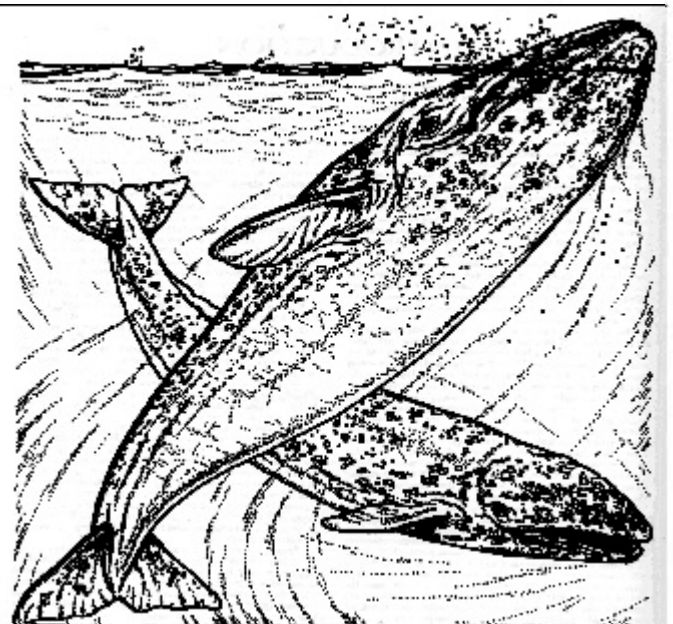
## Gray Whale Calves' Diving Ability: Surface Intervals and Dive Durations

by Bridget Watts

Note: Bridget Watts, a whale biologist who spoke to our chapter awhile ago, has done research on gray whales' diving patterns. As we watch mom/calf pairs off Monterey, we might notice they often seem to swim just below the surface and show quick, almost transparent spouts. Is this because the calf is incapable of deep, long dives? Does their 'small' size mean they have less breath-holding and oxygen storage advantage? Bridget's research may surprise you and, certainly, tells us something about the calf on migration past Monterey. The sentences that first grabbed my attention in her abstract are shown below in **bold**, courtesy of me. This abstract also appeared in *Abstracts*, The 16<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals, San Diego, CA, 12/12-16/05, Society for Marine Mammalogy - ed.

### ABSTRACT

The ability to perform effective dives is an essential skill for all cetaceans. The ontogeny of this behavior has not been adequately described for many species, and is particularly lacking for baleen whales. I analyzed breath-hold data from focal observations of gray whale cow-calf pairs collected during different years at five locations: San Ignacio Lagoon, Baja California Sur, Mexico (1980, 1981, 1993, n=22 calves), Piedras Blancas, California, USA (2005, n=20), Oregon coast, USA (1978, 1979, n=9), West Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, (2003, n=2), and NE Sakhalin Island, Russia (2002, n≈7). Breath-hold patterns had a bimodal distribution and were subsampled from each focal observation. Several variables in these bimodal distributions (dive durations between surface intervals, inter-breath durations during a surface interval, number of breaths per surface interval, and duration of surface interval) were investigated among locations. With increased age and size of the calf, I expected greater duration dives with greater variability, greater inter-breath durations, and a lesser surface duration. Dive durations varied with location (Welch  $F'_{4,18} = 13.388$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), but variability (CV, coefficient of variation) was greatest with the least dive durations. Gray whale calves observed off California and Oregon had the greatest dive durations, calves off Mexico had the least dive durations, and calves off Canada and Russia grouped together in the middle of the range. Calves off Oregon had the least inter-breath durations (Welch  $F'_{4,10} = 22.982$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), with a general increase in duration with age/latitude for the other four locations. The number of breaths per surface interval (NB) varied among locations (Welch  $F'_{4,12} = 6.307$ ,  $P = 0.007$ ), but only between calves off California (least NB) and calves off Canada (greatest NB). The duration of the surface interval (SI) varied among locations (Welch  $F'_{4,11} = 24.566$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ) and calves off Mexico overlapped all locations except Canada. **Calves off California and Oregon grouped together with the least SI and calves off Canada and Russia had the greatest SI. These patterns indicated an increase in breath-hold ability after the first few months of life (Mexico), and imply that calves were able to accomplish great duration dives early in their development. They appear to be pushing their physiological limits during the migration, and then decrease their dive durations in the northern feeding areas. If calves were observed more intensely during the several months post-weaning, greater dive durations may be observed in association with the stress of nutritional independence.**



Gray whales drawing by John Green.

## ACS Monterey Bay Members Interact with Children at the School Near San Ignacio Lagoon

by Carol Maehr

Note: It is a definite talent to be able to write so that the reader feels part of the story and so that we almost can hear the writer talking in our ears. Carol can do that (see below). Yet, she insists she does not enjoy writing! Let that be an inspiration to us all about what is really possible ! Less joyful is the report I received from a friend who recently returned from a cruise to Magdalena Bay, just south of San Ignacio. She reported full-scale harassment of whales by boats of all kinds, chasing, too-close encounters of prolonged duration. This experience emphasizes the importance of the protection given the whales in San Ignacio by the local people. They say, when they observe an obviously nervous whale in San Ignacio lagoon, "Must be a whale coming from Magdalena Bay." -ed.

March 12 through 16, 2007, ACS Monterey members, Jerry Loomis and Carol Maehr, Hope and Sandy Hale (and 20 others) were in San Ignacio Lagoon, Baja, Mexico, on a Baja Expeditions camping trip to spend 3 glorious days communing with Gray Whale moms and calves. This was not the first time for Carol or Jerry. Jerry has led 9 trips to the lagoon and this was Carol's fifth time. Three years ago it came to our attention that the local grade school, for the children of the fishing families, could use some help. Many inquiries were made as to what would be most needed. The first year it was basic school supplies. The answer last year was money to help build an outdoor basketball court. So last year that is what they got.

This year we again asked. We wanted to know which teacher had the greatest need. We were told that the kindergarten with 12 students needed help. We made that our focus. Money was also what they needed most. SO, ACS Monterey contributed \$300 and other trip participants chipped in to make a grand total of \$400. This year was special, however, as the school was giving a dance performance and Baja Expeditions guests were invited. About half of us gave up our last afternoon of whale watching and went to the performance. Alex, the camp manager took us in the bus. It was about a 20 minute drive from our camp, all on bumpy dirt roads through the desert.

The school is a series of individual buildings, colorfully painted. I imagine they were built one at a time as the need arose. They have an out house which they hope to replace some day with a real flush toilet. Most of the buildings are surrounded by dirt, but the performance took place between two buildings that had a cement patio between them. Before the performance Jerry, with the help of Meritza Ravelo, interpreting, presented the lump sum to Maestra Guadalupe Ortega, for her Jardin de Ninos (kindergarten). She was overwhelmed and very appreciative and happy. Then the performance began and Ranulfo announced over a loud speaker (pretty upscale, huh?) what each dance would be and gave us its historical significance. The children were beautiful, well scrubbed and in colorful costumes, lovingly and creatively crafted. Their dances were good and everyone had a fine time.

Afterwards Maestra Ortega took us to the kindergarten room (actually a tiny free standing building) and we saw some of the crafts that were in progress. They were making paper butterflies which could flap their wings when held out. We asked what she needed besides the money and she said puzzles that the children could do would be most helpful. Upon our return to Monterey,



Also from Carol, as our Conservation Chair: **National Resources Defense Council** announced 4/2/07: The Mexican government has just announced that 109,000 acres of federal lands surrounding the lagoon will be donated to conservation. The government made its dramatic announcement in the midst of a full-day telethon on TV Azteca, one of Mexico's biggest TV networks. The telethon conveyed our cause to 30 million viewers and raised \$350,000 – money that will help our conservation alliance buy up even more development rights around the whales' lagoon. That's important, because San Ignacio Lagoon is still vulnerable to plans for oil and gas drilling... to proposed massive high-rise hotels, and to schemes for resort marinas and ocean-bound ships. That's why it's critical that we press ahead to permanently protect all one million acres of land that surround the lagoon. ~

ACS Monterey board voted to spend \$300 on such items. Carol Maehr and Morgen Puckett shopped. We are most grateful to Thinker Toys of Del Monte Center for giving us 25% off on all the items we purchased there, plus 50% off (next page)

on a few, and an outright gift of 8 cars to use on the wooden train tracks we had selected. The toys were packaged into three manageable boxes and Sally Eastham delivered them to the Baja Expeditions office in San Diego (luckily she was going to visit her daughter there). Baja Expeditions is now in charge of getting them to the camp in San Ignacio lagoon. Then Ranulfo will deliver them to the school.

(Reported 4/13: The boxes were delivered already!)

Our ACS Monterey chapter's relationship with the fishing village of San Ignacio Lagoon and its primary school is ongoing and flourishing. We will keep you posted as other interactions occur.



☞ This is Ranulfo Mayoral, who narrated the program that the school children put on for us.

You may remember Ranulfo. He is the father of Adelina, the girl in the story **Adelina's Whales**. It was his father, Pachico, *who was the* first person to tell of a "friendly" visit from a whale. Ranulfo is one of the boatmen for Baja Expeditions, an artist and a fisherman when he is not taking visitors to be with the whales.

He is very involved with the local school at San Ignacio Lagoon and helps them whenever he can .

*From Adelina's Whales:* The whales have been coming to this lagoon for hundreds of years, and Adelina is proud that her grandfather, Pachico, was the first person to tell of a "friendly" visit with one. She loves to hear him tell the story of that whale and that day. She listens as he talks about being frightened, since he didn't know then that the whale was friendly. He thought he was in big trouble.

Adelina looks first at the tight, leathery skin of her grandfather, browned from his many years of fishing in the bright tropical sun. From his face she glances down to the small plastic model of a gray whale that he keeps close by. As he begins to tell the story of his first friendly whale encounter, there is a twinkle in his eye and a large smile on his face. Adelina and her father, Runolfo, smile too, listening again to the story that they have heard so many times.....

For the story and much more, see the book *Adelina's Whales* by Richard Sobol, Dutton Children's Books, 2003.



Bailes! (traditional dances) beautiful costumes.



## The Great Turtle Race [www.greatturtlerace.com](http://www.greatturtlerace.com)

Day 1: And they're off the beach!!! Windy sets a blistering four-mile-per-hour pace. Close on Windy's flippers, it's Stephanie in second. You can't see it on the race track, but Champiro's satellite tag tells me that she takes a deep dive to 300 feet! What's she going after? A tasty jellyfish? Wait! Windy dives deep, too, to 275 feet! There's something fishy going on down there. Holding up the rear are Drexelina and Sundae.

The above is not the Kentucky Derby, it's from the web site for West Marine, a boating business familiar to us in Monterey. They are sponsoring the turtle they named Windy as she migrates from Costa Rica to the Galapagos. Their own web site links to an official and very informative coverage that includes:

- Daily tracking on a map using computer graphics
- "Leatherbacks on the Brink," turtles narrate a series of slide shows about their lives and problems
- Ways to help leatherbacks worldwide
- Curriculum activities for classrooms

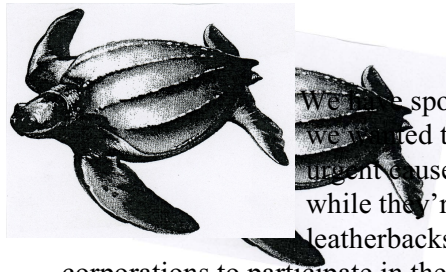
The photos and computer work are remarkable. The race itself opened Apr. 16 and ended Apr. 30, but the site will be available for at least six months.

Race organizers are listed as TOPP (tagging of Pacific Predators), Conservation International, The Leatherback Trust and MINAE Costa Rica

Information from Dr. Jim Spotila, turtle researcher, professor at Drexel University and president of the Leatherback Trust, follows:

We're doing this "race" to raise awareness and invite donations to protect leatherback turtles on Playa Grande's beaches and along the turtles' migration paths in the ocean. These amazing animals have been around 100 million years, but may have only 10 years left. I think the world needs to wake up to the issue and urgently help. As we say in the race theme, "They are going faster than you think." Populations in the world are crashing due to four human threats: egg poaching, loss of nesting beaches, accidental catch by commercial fishermen, and plastic -- leatherbacks eat jellyfish, which look like plastic bags. All seven major sea turtle species are endangered due to similar pressures.

The tags weigh less than a student backpack holding one biology book. The turtle doesn't notice its "satellite backpack", and the harness that holds the satellite doesn't bother the turtle or interfere with its movement. After about a year and a half, the harness and the tag drop off the turtle.



We're sponsors for the race because we wanted to engage people in an urgent cause and to have some fun while they're learning about leatherbacks. So we invited corporations to participate in the race and have a friendly competition. Each company paid \$25,000 to sponsor a turtle. Part of the money goes to buy the satellite tags, which cost \$10,000 each, and the remaining \$15,000 goes to a variety of projects to help the turtles, including preserving their nesting beaches. The race organization is 100% volunteer effort with more than 50 volunteers.

Actually the turtles didn't really start on April 16th. It takes several days to get the satellite tags on all the turtles. One reason is because sometimes several nights go by without a leatherback coming ashore late in the nesting season. Another reason is that we wanted to wait to put the satellite tags on the turtles when they were ready to migrate away from the nesting beach. Their nesting season begins in October, and they nest nine times, on average, throughout the nesting season that ends in February. So, we put the transmitters on the 11 turtles at the end of the nesting season. (By the way, only 59 turtles came to the beach this year as compared to 1,500 in 1988.)

"We racing leatherbacks don't leave the beach all at once. We take our time starting our migration. Plus, some turtles... I won't mention any names ... like to ignore the race start and noodle along the coast! Look at this race like the Tour de France. We might all start at different times, but our times are zeroed out automatically (with cool computer tricks) so that you can experience us all racing together. Think Tour de Turtle. Wherever we go and whatever we do, of course, we will transmit that information through our satellite tags, so it will become good scientific data. And you humans are all better for understanding it, because you'll have more information to protect us!"

### Research Related to the Race: Deep Diving

By Bryan Wallace, Duke Univ., "Leatherback turtles: Going Where Few Air-Breathers Dare." *Deep Sea News*, 4/16/07  
[//scienceblogs.com/deepseanews/2007/04/leatherback\\_turtles...](http://scienceblogs.com/deepseanews/2007/04/leatherback_turtles...)

Led by Stanford researcher George Shillinger, our group is analyzing leatherback dive profiles in relation to several oceanographic features to figure out just what drives leatherback diving. So far, all leatherbacks in our study have dived well beyond 300 meters on several occasions, and many have reached depths in excess of 1,000 meters. In fact, researchers have recorded leatherbacks diving to over 1,000 meters in different ocean basins (maximum reported dive was 1,230 m in the North Atlantic). /6

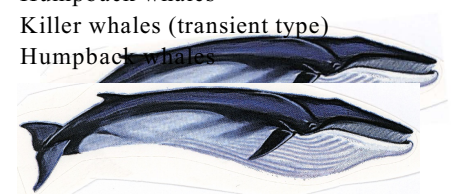
# SIGHTINGS

Compiled by Monterey Bay Whale Watch

For updates see [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)

Date	#	Type of Animal(s)
4/1 early a.m.	4	Gray whales
	400	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	20	Northern right whale dolphins
4/1 a.m.	2	Gray whales
	50	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	20	Risso's dolphins
	20	Northern right whale dolphins
4/2 a.m.	3	Gray whales
	350	Pacific white-sided dolphins
4/2 p.m.	3	Gray whales
4/3 a.m.	3	Gray whales
4/3 p.m.	2	Gray whales
4/4 a.m.	1	Humpback whale
	6	Dall's porpoise
4/4 p.m.	6	Gray whales
4/5 a.m.	10	Killer whales (transient type, predation on gray whale)
4/5 p.m.	10	Killer whales (transient type)
4/6 a.m.	15	Killer whales (transient type, feeding on gray whale from 4/5)
4/6 p.m.	33	Killer whales (transient type, feeding on gray whale from 4/5)
	6	Dall's porpoise
4/7 early a.m.	5	Harbor porpoise
4/7 a.m.	2	Humpback whales
4/7 p.m.	4	Humpback whales
4/8 early a.m.	15	Fin whales
	2	Humpback whales
4/8 a.m.	8	Gray whales
	2	Killer whales (transient type)
	2	Humpback whales
4/8 p.m.	2	Gray whales
	2	Humpback whales
4/9		Poor weather
	1	Harbor porpoise
4/10	7	Humpback whales
4/11 a.m.	6	Humpback whales
4/11 p.m.	5	Humpback whales
4/12		No trip; poor weather
4/13 a.m.	12	Humpback whales
	7	Harbor porpoise
4/13 p.m.	10	Humpback whales
	5	Harbor porpoise
4/14 early a.m.	6	Humpback whales
4/14 a.m.	8	Humpback whales
	12	Harbor porpoise
4/14 p.m.	7	Humpback whales
4/15		No trip, poor weather
4/16	2	Humpback whales
4/17		No trip, poor weather
4/18	10	Humpback whales
4/19 a.m.	21	Humpback whales
	20	Risso's dolphins

4/19 p.m.	17	Humpback whales
4/20 a.m.	23	Humpback whales
	250	Pacific white-sided dolphins
4/20 p.m.	9	Humpback whales
	5	Harbor porpoise
4/21 a.m.	9	Killer whales (transient type, predation on Gray whale)
	2	Humpback whales
4/21 p.m.	9	Killer whales (transient type, predation on Gray whale)
	8	Humpback whales
4/22 early a.m.	13	Killer whales (feeding on Gray whale from 4/21)
4/22a.m.	1	Humpback whale
	8	Dall's porpoise
4/22 p.m.	4	Humpback whales
4/23 a.m.	13	Killer whales (transient type, predation on Gray whale)
4/23 p.m.	13	Killer whales (feeding)
4/24	2	Humpback whales
	425	Risso's dolphins
	75	Northern right whale dolphins
4/25	2	Humpback whales
4/26	7	Killer whales (transient type, hunting elephant seal)
4/27 a.m.	9	Killer whales (transient type)
	2	Humpback whales
4/27 p.m.	14	Killer whales (transient type, feeding on gray whale)
	6	Humpback whales
4/28 a.m.	4	Humpback whales
4/28 p.m.	2	Humpback whales
4/29 a.m.	6	Humpback whales
4/29 p.m.	9	Killer whales (transient type)
	4	Humpback whales
4/30	24	Killer whales (transient type)
	4	Humpback whales



## Fin Whale Sighting "Unusual"

On April 8, early in the morning, whale watchers were favored with 15 Fin whales traveling north along the edge of the submarine canyon offshore. According to Richard Ternullo of Monterey Bay Whale Watch and ACSMB's scientific advisory committee, spring sightings of Fin whales are unusual. He said the group seemed to be adults. Another Fin whale is one of the animals carrying a satellite tag in the program TOPPS, mentioned in last month's *Soundings*. That whale has a path from Vancouver to Mexico, Richard noted. Often called "the greyhounds of the sea" because they move so fast, Fin whales seem to prey on krill and are sighted offshore but not very often from Monterey boats. Several years ago whale watchers in a charter group were able to see 12 Fin whales far west of Point Sur from Leon Oliver's *Magnum Force*, and that trip took all day!



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Monterey Bay Chapter  
P.O. Box HE  
Pacific Grove CA 93950**

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# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**June 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

**Date: Thursday, June 28, 2007**

**Time: 7:30 PM PLEASE JOIN US AT 7:00 FOR REFRESHMENTS**

**Speaker: Steve Shimek**

**Title: Sea Otters and Safe Seas: What can be done?**

Sea otters are important to us and our ecosystem in many ways. As apex predators they play an important function in their own food web, as a keystone species they have an impact outside of their food web by playing a key roll in maintaining the kelp forest habitat and as an indicator species they provide insight into the health of the near shore environment.

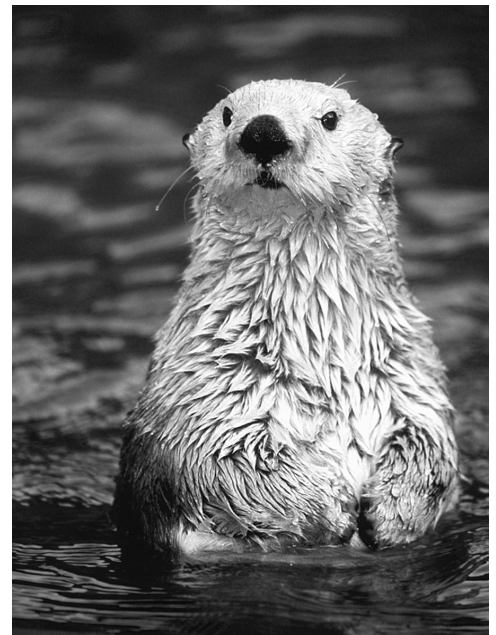
Sea otters are perhaps the most studied and best understood marine mammal. It is clear now that sea otters often suffer from suppressed immune systems and they are swimming in an ever thickening soup of disease. Our speaker will discuss current population trends along with actions that can be taken to encourage sea otter recovery and improved ocean health. This discussion will include the impact of toxic chemicals, sewage, domestic and feral cat feces, jet skis and fishing gear on the well being and recovery of the sea otter population.

Our speaker, Steve Shimek is executive director of both The Otter Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to the recovery of the California sea otter and near shore ocean health and the Monterey Coastkeeper, a water quality watchdog group. Steve also serves on the US Fish and Wildlife Service Sea Otter Recovery Implementation Team and is Co-Chair of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Conservation Working Group.

Saving sea otters is the right thing to do and benefits us all. Please join us and learn about real solutions and real actions that will support the continued recovery of this important marine mammal.

Program information is by Bob Mannix.

Photograph courtesy of Jeff Foott, provided to  
*Soundings* by Jamie Dagdignian, Dagdignian Designs



## C A L E N D A R

July - wait for it! We'll have news on July events soon. Traditionally, July is barbecue time for the chapter.

August 18: Benefit whale watch cruise for ACS Monterey Bay . This is one way we fund education, research and the newsletter, so sign up as soon as details are available.

### So, where are the blue whales?

Each year we look at evidence of the productivity of the Bay and we wonder if krill will be available in quantities to feed the largest animals on earth. Tony Lorenz joined the ACS whale watch on May 13, off southern California, and reports blue whales feeding there. During a good year, we may see blue whales arriving by the first part of July and remaining into November or so. Stay tuned.

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Note: just in case you've been away from all press, tv and web news, here are excerpts from one of the articles about the return of a humpback mom/calf pair to the Pacific after their sojourn in San Francisco Bay and the delta.

### Whales assumed to have returned to ocean

May 31, 2007

*Oakland Tribune, The (CA)* Author: Cassandra Braun, Rowena Coetsee and Judy Prieve, MEDIANEWS STAFF

SAN FRANCISCO — After more than two weeks of swimming up and down the Delta, a humpback whale and her calf appear to have returned quietly to the Pacific Ocean. Marine experts are optimistic that the long, worrisome sojourn of the two humpback whales, dubbed Delta and Dawn, is finally over. The two whales that swam their way 90 miles to Sacramento were last seen around 8:40 p.m. Tuesday near Tiburon, a five-mile home stretch from the Golden Gate Bridge. They have not been spotted since.

By mid-day Wednesday, rescuers had moved their command center to the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary at San Francisco's Presidio to be closer to the Golden Gate Bridge in case the whales resurfaced nearby. At the rate they had been traveling for the past two days, U.S Coast Guard officials had guessed that the whales would have reached the bridge around noon.

The whales' quiet leave-taking came on the tail of a surprising burst of breakneck swimming, following weeks of lollygagging in the Delta. Experts began to worry that the two were struggling to find their way down the tributary and out to sea. For days they appeared to retrace their course back and forth under the Rio Vista Bridge, prompting rescuers to try a multitude of things to coax them downstream to the Bay. It was at this point they became seriously concerned about the whales' health, particularly the condition of their skins. They administered antibiotics on Saturday, the first time that had been done with humpback whales in the wild. By Monday, they saw improvements in skin tone, possibly from the antibiotics, the salt water or both.

Experts also took samples of the whales' skin to try to learn which migration group they came from and more about their general health. They hope to eventually track the whales by their dorsal markings, as they did with Humphrey another humpback who swam into the Delta in 1985 and returned to Candlestick Point in 1990.

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*Continued: Karl Kenyon... From page 3, opposite.*

I remember the day Jud and I toured both Kenyon and Scheffer through the sea otter working areas of the Monterey Bay Aquarium in 2000. I watched three pioneer sea otter researchers – watching otters.

Jud says he asked Kenyon if he felt honored to have the Alaskan sea otter sub species named for him: *Enhydra lutris kenyoni*. The split into sub species was controversial when it began in 1990. Kenyon replied that he was furious about it because he didn't believe the Alaskan sea otter was a sub species.

The newspaper obituary for Karl Walton Kenyon, Seattle Times, 4/8/2007, states he was born and raised in LaJolla and attended Pomona College and Cornell University. He served in World War II as a naval aviator aboard the USS Sangamon escort carrier. He is said to be largely responsible for the reintroduction of the sea otter to the Washington coast. His research projects included studying the Laysan Albatross on Midway Island and the Hawaiian Monk seal in the northwestern Hawaii islands. "Both his professional and private life were distinguished by his continual work on environmental causes and wildlife protection." It's hard to see giants pass away. Obviously his work will live on. Let's make sure his sea otters do, too. ~

*The Sea Otter in the Eastern Pacific Ocean*, by Karl Kenyon, Dover Publications, 1975, remains a milestone in the literature of marine mammals. The energetic scientist, with sharp, twinkling eyes, who wrote this book, died March 27<sup>th</sup> of this year in Hilo, Hawaii.

On the “first brief visit to Amchitka in the late fall of 1947, Dr. V.B. Scheffer and I found dead otters on the beaches,” and his research started. His study for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began in 1955, to determine the status of the sea otter and provide information for future decisions on management. Alaska became a state in 1959 and the statehood act provided that Alaska had jurisdiction over the exploitation of game and fur-bearing mammals, including the sea otter. A harvest of sea otter pelts was declared. “One thousand pelts were available for the first public auction (since protection in 1911) on 30 January 1968, at Seattle, WA.” This harvest helped make specimens available for biological research and, in his Introduction to the book, Kenyon states that many of the facts “thus obtained are presented in this report.”



It's true that many of the studies, elements of physiology, anatomy, habitat, foraging, reproduction and wild behavior, are benchmarks. Some were updated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Report 90 (14), Sep. 1990, *The Sea Otter (Enhydra lutris): Behavior, Ecology and Natural History*, by Marianne L. Reidman and James A. Estes. The bibliography of that report carries six references to Kenyon's publications. In 1996, *Endangered Species Update*, University of Michigan, published a special issue on “Conservation and Management of the Southern Sea Otter.” One third of the twenty-one articles listed Kenyon in their bibliographies.

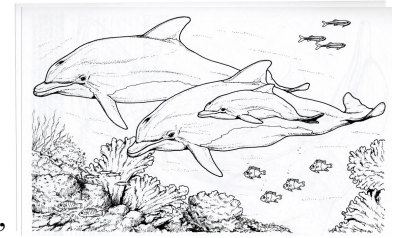
The Dover edition of his work was first published in 1975. It states that it is an unabridged and corrected republication of the work originally published in 1969 by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife at the U.S. Government Printing Office... as Number 68 in the North American Fauna series. List of references. Appendices. 123 illustrations, 64 tables. Both editions can be found in used book stores. When I once asked Karl Kenyon which edition he preferred, he immediately answered, “The reprint. We got to correct all our errors.”

This was in July of 1991, and he had just returned to the Seattle area after participating in a census of sea otters off Neah Bay, WA. His early research had tackled the prospect of translocation, too. In the 1949-53 period, Aleutian National Wildlife Refuge Manager R.D. Jones initiated a translocation but all captive otters soon died. “This experience demonstrated that until further knowledge of the animals' biological needs was gained, transplanting attempts would be futile,” said Kenyon. Bulletin number 68 helped that situation. According to Jud Vandevere, pioneer research biologist re the southern sea otter, the Alaskan sea otters later translocated to Oregon swam north to Washington. The population faltered but recovered. When I met him, Karl Kenyon was still going strong forty- seven years after his “brief visit” to Alaska. His dry sense of humor delivered a few comments about that!

That sense of humor was often evident. Jud Vandevere remembers Kenyon's comment during the question and answer section of Jud 's presentation at the 1970 **Annual Conference on Biological Sonar and Diving Mammals**, entitled “Reproduction in the Southern Sea Otter.” Kenyon commented to the assemblage that, if he had spent as much time observing sexual behavior in Alaskan otters as Jud had spent in southern sea otters, the differences that Jud had listed would have been far fewer.

At the time of the Dover book's publication, the southern sea otter surveys had counted 638 in 1957, to 618 in 1966. “These surveys indicate that the California sea otter population has not increased in recent years. Other observations suggest, however, that the population in the area surveyed [Point Conception to Monterey Bay] did not increase because sea otters wandered to other areas,” Kenyon wrote. He never stopped checking on this. Jud Vandevere remembers walking with him along the shoreline of Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park in Big Sur, where they spotted a foraging sea otter. Jud says Kenyon had a stop watch on his wrist and was timing the dives as they watched.

## ACS Monterey Bay Supports Research Projects for 2007



Those dollars you donate at the meetings, plus the fund-raising barbecues and whale watches you attend, all go a long way toward funding research projects about whales, dolphins and related critters. In addition, two long-term donations, made to honor Dr. Bethel and Alan Baldrige, fund two others. ACSMB is proud to announce the winning research proposals below. In the short excerpts from introductory paragraphs of the proposals, we have deleted references. Proposals are submitted with references, budgets, objectives, data and listing of methods. The ACSMB Board and Scientific Advisory Committee evaluate and rank proposals. For more information, contact the chapter president, Jerry Loomis, loomis@mbay.net.

Baldrige Award      \$1000      Tanya Graham, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, Moss Landing, CA

### ***Foraging ecology of leatherback sea turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) in Monterey Bay, California***

“Leatherback sea turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) travel to the productive waters off California from May through October each year to feed on seasonally abundant swarms of jellyfish. The predictable arrival of critically endangered leatherback sea turtles to central California, particularly Monterey Bay, provides a unique opportunity to study the foraging ecology of this species. The objectives of my study are to characterize the poorly understood foraging grounds of leatherback turtles by assessing the abundance, distribution and nutritional content of jellyfish prey in the Monterey Bay area. Aerial surveys will be used to assess abundance and distribution of leatherbacks and jellyfish at the surface. Hydroacoustics will be used to assess distribution of jellyfish at depth, and elemental analysis will be used to determine nutritional content of jellyfish collected in net tows. I expect sightings of leatherback turtles in Monterey Bay will be positively correlated with jellyfish distribution. I predict the distribution of jellyfish to be concentrated around a hydrographic gradient, and skewed toward the northern portion of the bay.... This study will assist scientists in understanding the link between productive foraging off central California and successful nesting in the south Pacific, which will guide conservation and management decisions for critically endangered leatherback sea turtles.”

Bethel Award      \$1000      Faviola Janette Guerrero de la Rosa,

Inst. Politecnico National, La Paz

### ***Diet variation in sperm whale of the Gulf of California using C and N stable isotopes.***

“The sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) is considered a top predator in the mesopelagic ocean and his principal preys are mesopelagic and bathypelagic cephalopods. In the eastern South Pacific and Gulf of California, the most important sperm whale prey is *Dosidicus gigas*, a large muscular squid commonly named “jumbo squid” and commercially harvested. These findings differ from other areas where sperm whales are considered opportunist predators. The signature of carbon (C) and nitrogen (N) stable isotopes in sperm whale skin and squid muscle confirmed that large size jumbo squid were the principal preys of sperm whales sampled mainly in the San Pedro Martir area, thus it is not known if there is a temporal or spatial variation in the sperm whale diet from the GC. The main objective of this project is to determine sperm whales’ dietary variations according to different areas, seasons, and social organization using stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen. This will provide more information about the diet and predator-prey relationship between sperm whales and the jumbo squid to improve the understanding of the ecological role of the sperm whale in the GC. In the process we will use sloughed and biopsy skin samples from the tissue collection of the CICIMAR-IPN research center (2000-2007), each skin sample corresponding to a known photo-identified individual according to the CICIMAR sperm whale catalogue. Additionally we will determine if different lipid extraction protocols for stable isotope analysis affect the isotopic value in skin samples.”



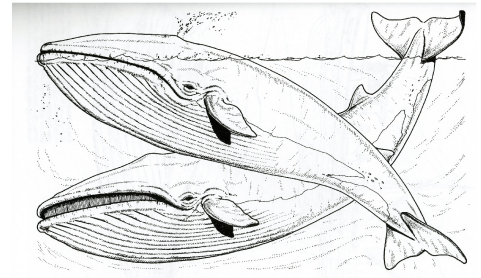
ACSMB Chapter Award

\$1000

Christian Javier Salvadeo, Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias  
Marinas, La Paz

***Space-temporal distribution and diversity of odontocetes and their environment, at the southwestern side of the Gulf of California, Mexico (2003-2006)***

“The distribution and diversity of organisms has been one of the fundamental aims of ecology related research. This stems from the fact that these studies permit understanding the relations between organisms and environment, including other organisms.... high diversity and abundance of organisms inside the Gulf is determined by its high primary productivity (which supports the trophic nets in the marine environment), the environmental heterogeneity (resultant of the latitudinal differences of temperature and morphology) and several oceanographic processes. The odontocetes .... use predictable habitats to feed, so their distribution and movements are directed by oceanographic characteristics (physical and biological) that allow the growth and



*Bottlenose dolphin and Blue whale drawings by John Green, Dover Press*

and persistence of planktonic organisms (patterns of productivity and abundance of prey). In this aspect, the study and characterization of the areas where these animals are distributed, and the understanding of the physical mechanisms that influence the formation and persistence of these aggregations, is essential for the definition ....of areas with special interest in the managing of protected species, as well as for planning and execution of programs and managing politics. In addition, the studies .... are useful from the ecological point of view, because the odontocetes are top predators and their presence reflects the condition of the primary production of the system, which may give us an idea of the health of the ecosystem. The present work is part of the project “Determination of the present status of the large whale populations in the Gulf of California, and integration of a program for management and regional protection. The aim of the present work is to analyze the distribution and diversity in space and time of the odontocetes in La Paz Bay, Loreta and the adjacent oceanic zone.”

Award

\$1000

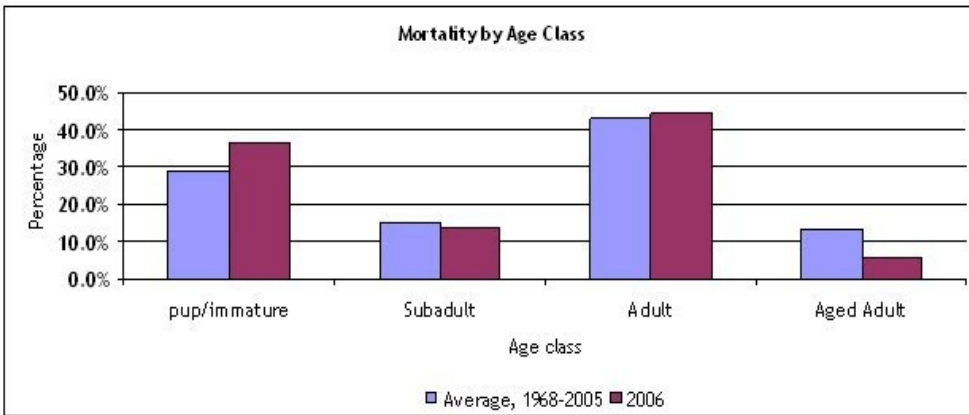
Christian Daniel Ortega Ortiz, Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias  
Marinas, La Paz

***Population structure of the blue whales (*Balaenoptera musculus musculus*) from Gulf of California***

“The Gulf of California, a known nursing area of the Northeast Pacific blue whale, represents an ideal area for assessing the current status of the population. A unique database of 460 blue whale sighting histories, based on photo-identification and tissue sampling, exists. About half of the individuals have been sexed and haplotyped (DNAmt) and 57 individuals were photo-identified when born and now are of a known age. However, no information exists on the size or age structure of the population, due to lack of a method to measure whales at sea. To fill this gap, we have developed a photogrammetric method to measure the length of individual blue whales.... Preliminary results suggest that our technique provides accurate size, but it is necessary to obtain a large data set of measured whales from different congregation areas in the Gulf of California, together with information about each individual in order to describe the population structure. .... Part of the Northeastern Pacific blue whale population feeds and nurses during the winter and spring in the Gulf of California, possibly the only nursing area for the entire Northeastern Pacific stock. Because it includes all segments (calves, juveniles, adults of both sexes), it is ideal for the determination of the current status of the population.... Knowledge of their length will allow us to estimate the distribution of blue whales in different size-classes in this nursing area. Size-classes are the principal component of population structure and allow us to infer age and growth rate, essential parameters for ecological studies.”

**By Steve Shimek of The Otter Project : Sea Otter Census Data and Analysis**

“Beachcast California sea otters by age. More otters would live to be aged adults in a healthy population”



**Spring survey**

The sea otter population is surveyed twice a year. There is consensus that the spring survey is more accurate (usually better conditions and less surface kelp) than the fall survey. The survey does not include “replicate surveys” which might give a measure of statistical error. Most likely, not every otter is counted, so the survey may represent a minimum number. We don’t know what percentage of the population is surveyed, how the survey is

influenced by conditions, or if a different percentage is counted every year. The spring 2006 survey found 2692 sea otters, down 1.6-percent from the 2005 survey.

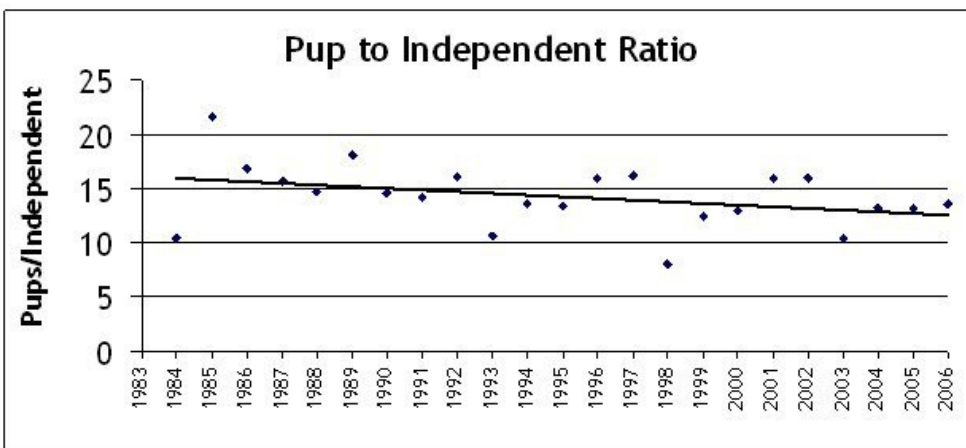


**Mortality by age class**

Every sea otter found dead on the beach has a tooth pulled and aged. Again, the sample size is large and statistically significant. While there is no consensus on how to look at this factor, The Otter Project averages all previous years and then compares the most current year against that average. Intuitively, we would hope otters live to old age – mortality in all early ages classes would go down, and mortality in “aged adults” would

correspondingly go up. In 2006 the number of pup and adult carcasses found was elevated.

There is some discussion whether we should look at “all” otters, or just females (demographically, the more important sex). A recent doctoral thesis indicated persistent high mortality of reproductive females. [Steve’s charts originally are in blue and maroon. The Average 2000-5 are bars to the left and 2006 numbers are the bars to the right in each pair, both charts.]



**Pup to independent ratio**

High prime-age adult mortality could lead to a reduction in the number of pups born each year. This may be happening.

Although we are uncertain about the population trend, we find the stranding and mortality by age class numbers most compelling and indicative of a problem.

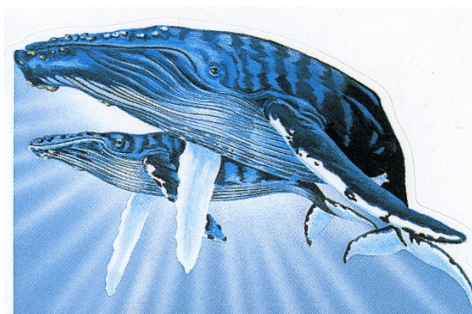
**Notes** The above data was compiled from agency and peer reviewed data. Data tables to support the graphs and

## SIGHTINGS

Compiled by staff of Monterey Bay Whale Watch. For updates, see [www.gowhales.com/sighting.htm](http://www.gowhales.com/sighting.htm)

date	# Type of animal(s)
5/1 am	14 Humpback whales
5/1 pm	8 Humpback whales
5/2	12 Humpback whales
5/3 pm	11 Humpback whales
	100 Pacific white-sided dolphins
	30 Northern right-whale dolphins
5/4	20 Humpback whales
5/5	4 Humpback whales
5/6 am	12 Killer whales (transient type, predation on gray whale)
	8 Humpback whales
5/6 pm	8 Killer whales (transient type, predation on gray whale)
5/7 am	8 Killer whales (transient type)
	6 Humpback whales
5/7 pm	8 Humpback whales
	200 Risso's dolphins
5/8 am	14 Humpback whales
	10 Dall's porpoise
5/8 pm	12 Humpback whales
5/9	7 Humpback whales
	8 Harbor porpoise
5/10	12 Humpback whales
	60 Pacific white-sided dolphins
5/11 am	8 Killer whales (transient type)
	4 Humpback whales
	30 Risso's dolphins
5/12 am	2 Humpback whales
5/12 pm	10 Killer whales (transient type)
5/13 am	9 Humpback whales
	2 Gray whales
5/13 pm	3 Humpback whales
5/14 am	11 Humpback whales
	8 Killer whales (transient type)
	600 Pacific white-sided dolphins
5/14 pm	8 Humpback whales
5/15	14 Humpback whales

5/16	6 Humpback whales
5/17 am	14 Humpback whales
	6 Dall's porpoise
5/17 pm	8 Humpback whales
5/18 am	32 Humpback whales
	3000 Pacific white-sided dolphins
5/18 pm	10 humpback whales
5/19	35 Humpback whales
	2200 Pacific white-sided dolphins
	45 Risso's dolphins
5/20	35 Humpback whales (60-80 in area)
	75 Risso's dolphins
	2 Killer whales reported
5/21 am	30 Humpback whales (lunge feeding)
	100 Pacific white-sided dolphins
5/21 pm	10 Humpback whales
5/22 am	40 Humpback whales
	450 Pacific white-sided dolphins
5/22 pm	15 Humpback whales
5/23 am	42 Humpback whales (lunge feeding)
	450 Pacific white-sided dolphins
5/23pm	12 Humpback whales
5/24am	23 Humpback whales
	350 Pacific white-sided dolphins
	6 Dall's porpoise
5/24 pm	15 Humpback whales (lunge feeding;friendly)
5/25 am	26 Humpback whales
5/25 pm	14 Humpback whales
5/26 am	15 Humpback whale (lunge feeding;friendly)
	200 Pacific white-sided dolphins)
5/26 pm	12 Humpback whales



## Definitions:

**lunge:** A term for thrusting of the forward part of an animal through the water surface, showing less than about 40% of the body (often the result of feeding at the surface). *Encyclo. f Marine Mammals*, Academic Press 2002

**lateral lunge feed:** Plowing through prey parallel to the surface with mouth agape, frequently performed rolled over on the right side *Voyaging with the Whales*, Cynthia d'Vincent, Oakwell Boulton 1989

Looking for information about the amazing sightings of humpbacks in the latter half of the month, we asked Richard Ternullo (*Sea Wolf II*) what the whales were eating; he replied they were feeding on fish. A huge supply of small fish evidently brought unusually large numbers to Monterey. As of June 1<sup>st</sup> they may have moved elsewhere. Check future listings on the web site.

Comments on humpback lunge feeding on krill, by Cynthia d'Vincent, seem also to apply to the thrilling foraging seen recently in Monterey Bay:

"Instead of raising their flukes into the air for a deep dive, they now skim the prey concentrated at the surface by rolling over onto their sides with their mouths agape. This behavior is called lateral lunge feeding, and is one of the most popular humpback strategies... The lateral orientation refers to the pitch of the whale's jaw in relation to the water's surface. Plowing through the water in this manner, a humpback can travel nearly 50 yards in a single lunge."

Humpbacks have been seen taking advantage of fish schooled against the surface (sometimes by dolphins or from bubble bursts made by the whale underwater) by rising vertically or at an angle, mouths wide open and throat pleats extended. It has to be seen to be believed.

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# Soundings



American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter

July 2007

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER

*Am I Blue?*

There will be no meeting  
nor gathering this month for  
ACS Monterey Bay.

Take some time  
to sit by the shore,  
watch the waves,  
spot some spouts,  
and send a check  
to join our whale watch  
on August 18<sup>th</sup>.

See page 3.  
See you there !

*Blue Whale*

*Balaenoptera musculus*

*Blue whale design by Robin Lee for ACS Cetaceanery*



## Calendar

*August 30:* The next regular meeting of ACS Monterey Bay

### *July and August: MBARI seminars*

MBARI seminars are usually held on Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m. in the Pacific Forum and are open to the public. The seminars cover a wide range of topics related to deep-ocean research and engineering. Our speakers include top scientists and engineers from all over the world, as well as from MBARI. MBARI is located at 7700 Sandholdt Road in Moss Landing, California. (This announcement is from the MBARI web site [www.mbari.org](http://www.mbari.org))

*July 11, 3 pm, Pacific Forum:* David Pawson, Ph.D., National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

### **A distant mirror: deep-sea research on the Albatross 100 years ago**

(For photos go to [http://www.mbari.org/seminars/2007/summer\\_07/Pawson\\_July.htm](http://www.mbari.org/seminars/2007/summer_07/Pawson_July.htm))

What was it really like on board early deep-sea research ships, when deep-sea exploration was just beginning, when every trawl haul consisted of animals new to science? Pioneering deep-sea research from sailing ships or steamships was often perilous, sometimes tedious, and surely endlessly exciting. Strangely, personal accounts of these great voyages are rare. Newly-acquired archival materials from great marine biologists Austin Hobart Clark, Walter K. Fisher and Alexander Agassiz provide personal insights into daily life aboard the US Fish Commission Steamer *Albatross*, her explorations in the Pacific Ocean, the trawls full of treasures that she obtained, and also storms, waterspouts, coal dust, meals, and shore leave. From the vantage point of today, we note that the technology has changed over the years and we're learning more, but the excitement hasn't diminished, new things are always being discovered, and we still have 95% of the deep-sea to explore!

*July 18:* Jan Witting, Ph.D., Sea Education Assoc. Topic to be announced.

*August 1:* Helena Solo-Gabriele, Ph.D., University of Miami Topic to be announced.

### **A Fourth of July Whimsy: Kelp Horns** by Esta Lee Albright

While watching a Fourth of July parade on Lopez Island, WA, I was amazed by another attendee who had a movie camera in one hand and a long twisted stipe of bull kelp in the other. He alternated photography with blowing the kelp stipe, producing long, deep calls. See my photo to the right. I was visiting ACS members, and we attempted making kelp horns but never successfully dried and shaped the slippery kelp. I've been researching kelp horns ever since.

**Krystyna Bobrowski** is a sound artist, composer and musician living in Oakland, California. In addition to French horn she plays acoustic and electronic instruments of her own design. Her collection of original instruments includes prepared amplified rocking chairs, bull kelp horns, Leaf Speakers, Gliss Glass and the Harmonic Slide. She [presents] Kelp Call, new works for multiple Kelp Horn quartets. Kelp, technically known as *Nereocystis luetkeana*, is a large, hollow, naturally conical-shaped seaweed found along the Northern California coast. After drying for several weeks, the kelp may be cut and played in a similar fashion to a brass instrument: bugle, trumpet, French horn, trombone or tuba. [www.bayimproviser.com](http://www.bayimproviser.com)



**The Whale Crier's** kelp horn was first heard in Hermanus, South Africa, in August 1992. Pieter Claasen, then an employee of the Old Harbour, was the first Whale Crier.

He retired as Whale Crier in 1998 and his position has been taken over by Wilson Salakusana. In the months of June through November, when Southern Right whales come to frolic, mate and calve in the warm waters of the bay, it is his mission to alert hundreds of shore-based whale watchers to the whereabouts of whales. He does this by blowing his kelp horn calls in code. The sandwich board he wears tells whale watchers how to interpret the code which will lead them to spots where the whales have been sighted. [See the photo at [http://www.hermanusaccommodation.co.za/whale\\_crier.htm](http://www.hermanusaccommodation.co.za/whale_crier.htm)]



**Monterey Bay  
Chapter of  
The American Cetacean Society  
is pleased to announce its  
Annual  
Blue  
Whale  
Watch**

**Saturday, August 18, 2007**

**9 am - 1 pm**

**aboard the 70' *Sea Wolf II***

**in Monterey**

Photo by Esta Lee Albright: Passengers on the *Sea Wolf II* enjoy Humpback whales on a calm, blue Monterey Bay.

Monterey Bay is considered one of the best locations in the world to observe the largest animal in the history of life on earth, the Great Blue Whale, during its summer and fall feeding season in Monterey Bay.

August also brings a great diversity of cetaceans and marine life to Monterey Bay. Observations possible on this trip include Humpback whales, Minke whales, Fin whales, Killer whales, two species of Common Dolphins, Risso's, Northern Right Whale, Pacific White-sided and Bottlenose dolphin species, Dall's and Harbor porpoise, four species of pinnipeds, Leatherback Sea turtles, numerous species of marine birds, Blue sharks, Mola Mola and various species of jellies.

Cost \$45, which includes automatic membership to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter.

Trip departs from Monterey Bay Whale Watch Center located at Fisherman's Wharf.

Naturalists and marine biologists include Captain Richard Ternullo, expert on Monterey Bay seabirds and cetaceans, and Nancy Black, California's pre-eminent expert on Killer Whales and Monterey Bay cetaceans.

For reservations and information, please contact Tony Lorenz (831) 648-8968 or (831) 901-7259 or Jerry Loomis (831) 419-1051.

Please mail checks to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter, PO Box HE, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

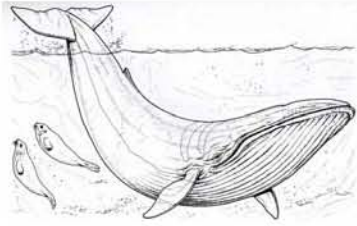
Information contributed by Alan Baldrige

Are you aware there is more information to be gained about our whale watch trips? Go to our chapter web site at [www.starrsites.com/acsmmb/](http://www.starrsites.com/acsmmb/) and select "Fundraiser Cruise August 18." You'll find photos from previous cruises and reports on the summer cruises for 2005, 2004, 2000, and 1999.

Be sure to linger on the report for the year 2000, led off by Tom Kieckhefer's stunning photo of a male Killer whale approaching the *Sea Wolf II*. Alan Baldrige was the record-keeper that year and he's a master at species lists. This is the most complete of the reports. Lists and tales of sightings include 5 cetaceans, 2 pinnipeds, a sea otter, 23 species of birds, 3 species of jellies, and blue sharks. "Notable species" are marked. Surely, the sea conditions, the weather and the sightings will be excellent this year, too. Be sure to help spot the whales and take notes !

—Esta Lee Albright

**International Whaling Commission**  
**May 28-31, Alaska, "Once more into the breach..."**



*Minke whale*

After reading reports from the 3 sources below, in their differing flavors, there seem to be 3 themes:

**1.** There was contention over scientific whaling. Japan presented some data

from their program. It was judged good by pro-whalers and poor by the anti-whalers.

**2.** There was contention over aboriginal whaling in various countries and a proposal by Japan for shore whaling in a few coastal areas in that country.

**3.** There was contention over the role being played by contention in the IWC.

Sources: [www.IWCoffice.org](http://www.IWCoffice.org); [//news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk); Jonathan Stern, NGO reporting to ACS National, email: [jonney@sfsu.edu](mailto:jonney@sfsu.edu)

[IWC] The catch limits for **aboriginal whaling** are usually set for five-year periods. Taking into account the advice of the Scientific Committee, the Commission renewed the following catch limits for a further 5 years.

(1)**Bowhead** whales of the Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas Stock (taken by native people of Alaska and Chukotka). A total of up to 280 bowhead whales can be landed in the period 2008-2012, with no more than 67 whales struck in any year (and up to 15 unused strikes may be carried over each year).

(2)**Eastern North Pacific gray whales**

A total catch of 620 whales is allowed or the years 2008-2012 with a maximum of 140 in any one year.

(3)**Humpback whales** taken by St. Vincent and The Grenadines. For the seasons 2008-2012 the number of humpback whales to be taken shall not exceed 20.

[BBC] Denmark's plan to include humpbacks in an expanded hunt by its Inuit communities in Greenland provided the one controversial element in the subsistence whaling debate. [IWC] Catch limits agreed for the years 2008-2012 for Greenland were: West Greenland **fin** whales: 19 struck per year; West Greenland common **minke** whales: 200 struck per year, with annual review by the Scientific Committee; East Greenland **bowhead** whales: 2 strikes per year with annual review by the Scientific Committee; East Greenland common **minke**



*Bowhead whale*

whales: 12 strikes per year.

The Commission then considered matters relating to socio-economic implications and **small-type whaling**. As in previous years, Japan gave a presentation on the hardship suffered by its four community-based whaling communities in Japan... as a result of the moratorium. It had developed a proposal to allow a catch for these communities..... no consensus .... the matter was left open.

[BBC] The Commission then turned its attention to the question of **special permit whaling**. The Scientific Committee had carried out a review of the 18 year JARPA programme at an intersessional workshop earlier this year. Japan began a programme known as JARPA II after the completion of JARPA. Under the lethal component of the programme in 2006/07, 505 Antarctic **minke** whales and 3 **fin** whales were caught. Japan also has a North Pacific programme under which a total of 195 common **minke**, 50 **Bryde's**, 100 **sei** and 6 **sperm** whales were caught in 2006. As part of its program, Iceland took 58 common **minke** whales.... The Commission passed a Resolution asking Japan to refrain from issuing a permit for JARPA II by 40 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 1 abstention; 27 countries decided not to participate in the vote as they believed that the submission of the proposal was not conducive to building bridges within the Commission.

[BBC] Japan and its backers argue that its coastal communities are just as entitled on historical and cultural grounds to a small annual catch as the indigenous peoples of Alaska, Chukotka in Russia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the native American Makah tribe of the western US. Anti-whaling countries view the proposal as a breach of the 21-year moratorium on commercial whaling.

[BBC] Proposals for a South Atlantic whale sanctuary have been defeated in the first vote at the IWC meeting this year. Proposed by Latin American countries, it would have seen whale protection extended northwards from the existing Southern Ocean Sanctuary. Delegations supported the proposal by a margin of 39 to 29, which fell short of the three-quarters majority needed.

Japan voted against, as did Norway, Denmark and many Caribbean and African countries. "We are very sad because we are trying to emphasize (the needs of) many coastal communities in Brazil, in Uruguay, Argentina, even South Africa, but they are not respected here with this decision," Argentina's whaling commissioner Eduardo Iglesias told BBC News.



*Humpback whale*



[BBC] The fiercest row concerns Japan's plan to add 50 **humpbacks** to its annual Antarctic hunt, which it conducts in the name of scientific research. Before the meeting started, Japan offered to consider abandoning the **humpback** element if the anti-whaling bloc could consider its request to allow limited commercial hunting by 4 coastal communities. The offer was dismissed instantly; but Japanese commissioners met informally with ministers from anti-whaling countries Australia, the UK and New Zealand in an attempt to find a way forward. After the session, New Zealand's conservation minister Chris Carter told BBC News that they had agreed to continue talking, with the future of the IWC one item on which it might be possible to find common ground. However, he said, the Japanese coastal whaling proposal would not be endorsed, while his government's opposition to the **humpback** hunt remained as implacable as ever. Japanese delegates declined to comment. The **humpbacks** are an emotive issue for Australia and New Zealand, where their acrobatic leaps and tumbles are a highlight for whale-watchers.

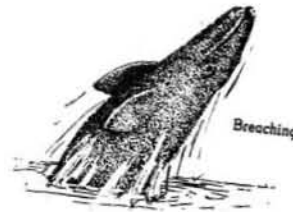
[Jonathan Stern] 30 May. There is a heaviness in the air that is palpable. This is due to the potential impasses envisioned by many attendees. The biggest anticipated impasse was the U.S. quota for **bowheads**. This came to the floor yesterday. It was the first of such similar votes. When this amendment was brought to the floor, many countries signaled their desire to comment. Fifth or sixth in the queue was Japan.... Joji Morishita spoke, and then in a geraldo-opens-al-capone's-safe moment, Japan stated they had no objection. Then, the rest of the countries, including those thought to oppose the quota, followed suit. Consensus. Built on sound science.

The Greenland proposal to increase their take of **fin** whales and **minke** whales, in addition to adding **humpbacks** and **bowheads** did not pass. No consensus. Bad science. St. Lucia's proposal to take 4 **humpbacks** passed on the consensus through the good science band wagon. I hope this consensus-from-science continues. Australia gave my favorite moment. Alluding to the fact that just saying you are doing science does not mean you are doing GOOD science. I applauded and shouted in my heart. 1 June. Japan's resolution for small-type coastal whaling did not go for a consensus vote ... They suggested



a new management plan for the coastal **minke** whales ... they wanted

a take for a time until things were figured out, and their post-interim hunt could continue. The New Zealand delegate pointed out they were setting up a program before it got accepted. Then, stopping it would be infinitely difficult. Then Morishita's boss, Nakamura, gave a prepared statement. Some of my highlights were: this is the last chance for the IWC; the IWC is dysfunctional with a double standard; change your attitude (to those opposed to their resolution); there is a price to pay. So they are going to review how they interact with the IWC and begin to investigate a new organization of managing ocean resources in a sustainable way ... I was tempted to yell out "southern blue fin, you \*%h@#e!!" So there it is ... battle lines being drawn .. Power to the people, right on!! There is no clear answer to what they have said. It was an unveiled threat: let us hunt from our coastal communities, or we quit the IWC. They said that the bowhead hunt is commercial since artifacts were sold from the whale carcasses. They called us hypocrites.



Gray whale

[IWC] Report of the Scientific Committee on the status of a number of large whale stocks. New information was received on Antarctic **minke** whales, North Pacific common **minke** whales, Southern Hemisphere **humpback** whales, Southern Hemisphere **blue** whales and a

number of other small stocks of **bowhead, right** and **gray** whales. There was positive evidence of increases in abundance for several of the stocks of **humpback, blue** and **right** whales in the Southern Hemisphere, although they remain at reduced levels compared to their pre-whaling numbers. Information remains lacking for other stocks. Special attention was paid to the status of the endangered western North Pacific **gray** whale, whose feeding grounds coincide with oil and gas operations of Sakhalin Island, Russian Federation. The population numbers only about 120 animals and although there is evidence that it has been increasing at perhaps 3% per year over the last decade, any additional deaths, for example in fishing gear as has recently occurred, put the survival of the population in doubt. The Commission agreed to work together to try to mitigate anthropogenic threats to this endangered population. Ship strikes and entanglement are also a treat to the endangered western North Atlantic **right** whale population which numbers around 300. The Commission agrees again that anthropogenic mortality should be reduced to zero as soon as possible. [In general whale population concerns include] Pollution, Whale watching and Ship strikes.

Excerpts selected by Esta Lee Albright. Illustrations by the ff: Humpback, bowhead, minke by John Green; gray and right whales by Robin Makowski for ACS. Quotation in title by Shakespeare, *King Henry V*.

## **Cetacean Miscellany**

### ***Aged Bowhead***

#### **19<sup>th</sup> Century Weapon Found in Whale**

(CBS) *BOSTON* A 50-ton bowhead whale caught off the Alaskan coast last month had a weapon fragment embedded in its neck that showed it survived a similar hunt - more than a century ago. Embedded deep under its blubber was a 3 1/2-inch arrow-shaped projectile that has given researchers insight into the whale's age, estimated between 115 and 130 years old.....

Calculating a whale's age can be difficult, and is usually gauged by amino acids in the eye lenses. It's rare to find one that has lived more than a century, but experts say the oldest were close to 200 years old. The bomb lance fragment, lodged in a bone between the whale's neck and shoulder blade, was likely manufactured in New Bedford, on the southeast coast of Massachusetts, a major whaling center at that time..

[../wcbstv.com/watercooler/local\\_story\\_164115343.html](http://wcbstv.com/watercooler/local_story_164115343.html)

It seems there are various ways of estimating ages of various species of whales: (1) sectioning a tooth from odontocetes and reading or counting the growth layer groups; (2) well-marked whales can be reidentified from photographs; (3) analysis of tissues of mysticetes collected during postmortem exams; (4) counting growth layers in mysticetes' ear plugs; (5) counting oscillations in the stable carbon isotopes in the baleen; (6) counting growth layers in the bullae (ear bones); and further.....

Determining age by measuring the degree of racemization of aspartic acid in the eye lens and teeth has been applied to several species of marine mammals including bowhead whales. For the work cited below, a total of 48 eye globes were collected and analyzed to estimate ages of bowhead whales using the aspartic acid racemization technique. In this technique, age is estimated based on intrinsic changes in the D and L enantiomeric isomeric forms of aspartic acid in the eye lens nucleus. Age estimates were successful for 42 animals. Based on these data, growth appears faster for females than males, and age at sexual maturity (age at length 12-13 m for males and 13-13.5 m for females) occurs at around 25 years of age. Growth slows markedly for both sexes at roughly 40-50 years of age. Four individuals (all males) exceed 100 years of age. Recoveries of traditional whale-hunting tools from five recently harvested whales also suggest life-span in excess of 100 years of age in some cases. [Information and excerpts above are from: "Age and growth estimates of bowhead whales *Balaena mysticetus*" via aspartic acid racemization." by John C. George, Jeffrey Bada, Judith Zeh, Laura Scott, Stephen E. Brown, Todd O'Hara and Robert Suydam. *Can. J. Zool.* 77: 571-580 (1999)]

We wish to thank Mason Weinrich of Whale Center of

New England for bringing this article to our attention.

### ***Belugas***

#### **Only 300 Left in Cook Inlet**

There are only 300 beluga whales left in Alaska's Cook Inlet -- a 77 percent decline from the 1,300 whales that thrived there in the early 1980's. Now that these whales are on the brink of extinction, the National Marine Fisheries Service is finally proposing to protect them as an endangered species. But industry groups -- backed by all three members of Alaska's congressional delegation -- are opposed to the whale's protection. Send your Citizen Comment urging the Bush Administration to give these whales a fighting chance by protecting them as endangered and designating their critical habitat.

Genetically unique, Cook Inlet beluga whales are found nowhere else -- and no similar beluga habitat exists in Alaska or elsewhere in the United States.

Kaja Brix, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA

[www.nrdconline.org/campaign/actionfund\\_beluga](http://www.nrdconline.org/campaign/actionfund_beluga)

### ***Sushi Company***

#### **Boycott Seafood from True World Foods**

As one of the last remaining large-scale distributors of whale meat in Japan, seafood company Kyokuyo Co., Ltd has been a major player in Japan's history of commercial whaling since the 1930's. The premier sushi quality seafood distributor in the US, True World Foods, Inc., announced a partnership with Kyokuyo in 2006 to sell sushi in the US under the brand name "Polar Seas." If you eat or buy seafood supplied by True World Foods you probably are unaware you could be supporting a pro-whaling company. [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org)

### ***Sonar***

#### **U.S. Navy Being Sued**

Five environmental groups have filed a federal lawsuit against the U.S. Navy for its use of high-intensity, active sonar in training exercises around the Hawaiian Islands, which they state "will harm whales and other marine mammals." The lawsuit also cites the National Marine Fisheries Service for inadequately assessing the Navy's plans to be sure its actions do not harm endangered marine life. [www.surfrider.org](http://www.surfrider.org)

### ***More Sonar***

#### **Take on the U.S. Navy Off CA, Too**

This summer, under the sea -- and out of the view of the American public -- the Navy will unleash a dangerous two-year onslaught of deadly sonar in sensitive whale habitat off Southern California's coast. The Navy's mid-frequency sonar, which will be blasted during 14 naval training (Continued, please see next page, col. 1)



## Sightings

compiled by staff of Monterey Bay Whale Watch. For updates see [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)

### Date # Type of Animal(s)

**6/1 am** 7 Humpback Whales, 120 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 250 Risso's Dolphins, 5 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/1 pm** 6 Humpback Whales, 8 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/2 am** 9 Humpback Whales, 250 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 30 Risso's Dolphins.

**6/2 pm** 5 Humpback Whales, 7 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/3 am** 9 Humpback Whales, 1 Minke Whale.

**6/3 pm** 7 Humpback Whales, 2 Gray Whales, 400 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 1000 Risso's Dolphins, 200 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

**6/4 am** 4 Humpback Whales, 6 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/4 pm** 4 Humpback Whales, 4 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/5** 6 Humpback Whales

**6/6** 6 No trip, poor weather

---

Cont. from page 6

exercises, is so intense that it drives whales to panic and causes their organs to hemorrhage. The Navy's next onslaught will take place in and around California's Channel Islands – home to dozens of species of whales and dolphins, including the endangered blue whale. Contact National Resources Defense Council to help with their court case to block it. [www.savebiogems](http://www.savebiogems) ~

**6/7 am** 17 Humpback Whales, 25 Pacific White-sided Dolphins.

**6/7 pm** 8 Humpback Whales (lunge feeding).

**6/8** 20 Humpback Whales, 30 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

**6/9 am** 17 Humpback Whales, 250 Pacific White-sided Dolphins,

50 Risso's Dolphins, 250 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

**6/9 pm** 12 Humpback Whales, 1 Northern Fur Seal.

**6/10** 10 Humpback Whales.

**6/11 am** 9 Humpback Whales.

**6/11 pm** 8 Humpback Whales.

**6/12 am** 6 Humpback Whales.

**6/12 pm** 7 Humpback Whales.

**6/13 am** 10 Humpback Whales.

**6/13 pm** 8 Humpback Whales.

**6/14 am** 18 Humpback Whales

**6/14 pm** 15 Humpback Whales.

**6/15 am** 32 Humpback Whales, 225 Risso's Dolphins.

**6/15 pm** 17 Humpback Whales.

**6/16** 17 Humpback Whales, 15 Risso's Dolphins, 7 Dall's Porpoise.

**6/17 am** 10 Humpback Whales.

**6/17 pm** 8 Humpback Whales.

**6/18** 12 Humpback Whales, 1 Fur Seal.

**6/19 am** 8 Humpback Whales.

**6/19 pm** 8 Humpback Whales.

**6/20 am** 6 Humpback Whales, 7 Killer Whales (transient type), 10 Risso's Dolphins, 5 Harbor

Porpoise.

**6/20 pm** 9 Humpback Whales, 30 Risso's Dolphins, 4 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/21 am** 4 Humpback Whales, 7 Killer Whales (transient type), 5 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/21 pm** 8 Humpback Whales, 6 Harbor Porpoise, 1 Elephant Seal.

**6/22 am** 14 Humpback Whales, 25 Risso's Dolphins.

**6/22 pm** 6 Humpback Whales.

**6/23** 2 Humpback Whales.

**6/24** 6 Humpback Whales.

**6/25 am** 3 Humpback Whales, 2 BLUE WHALES.

**6/25 pm** 3 Humpback Whales.

**6/26 am** 8 Humpback Whales, 300 Pacific White Sided Dolphins, 65 Risso's Dolphins, 350 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

**6/26 pm** 4 Humpback Whales, 8 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/27 am** 5 Humpback Whales, 10 Harbor Porpoise.

**6/27 pm** 5 Humpback Whales, 8 Harbor Porpoise.

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## GOOD WHALE WATCH DAYS

Humpback whales almost every day, sometimes lunge-feeding; Killer whales, topic of our May meeting with Nancy Black; 2 Blue whales right on time; an abundance of dolphins and a few pinnipeds in addition to our shoreline pals. Captain of the *Sea Wolf II*, Richard Ternullo, also brings to our attention: graceful offshore jellies, including *Crysaora*, and the sighting of a Leatherback turtle by the crew of the boat Sanctuary. ~

**American Cetacean Society**  
**Monterey Bay Chapter**  
www.starrsites.com/acsmb/

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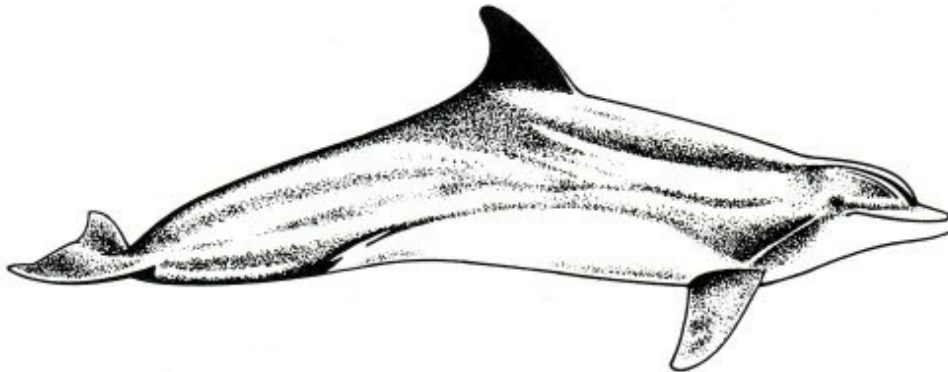
# *Soundings*



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**August 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

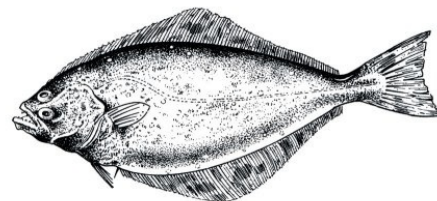


Below is the program information as of press time for the newsletter. Please go to the chapter web site for more about the program: [www.starrsites.com/acsmb/](http://www.starrsites.com/acsmb/)

**Date:** Thursday, August 30th  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m. Please join us at 7 for refreshments  
**Speaker:** California Fish and Game Representative (name soon available)  
**Title:** Specifics on the Marine Life Protection Act

The MLPA has been a bit confusing to many of us. Our speaker will help us understand specific boundaries and what they mean to marine life and to us. We also will understand better how it effects us locally.

Please come for a very timely program.



**Two near-shore animals: Bottlenose Dolphin and Halibut.**

Drawings by Bob Giuliani, Illustrations of Marine Animals, Dover, 1995

## CALENDAR



Whale watch passengers watch fast dolphins go right on by.

Aug. 30, then Sep. 27: The next ACSMB programs.

### *Soundings Special Issue for Special Event This Month*

Aug. 18: ACSMB Benefit Whale Watch. 9 am - 1 pm; board the 70' *Sea Wolf II* at 8:30 at Monterey Bay Whale Watch Center wharf at the end of Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf. Cost \$45, which includes automatic membership to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter. For reservations and information, please contact Tony Lorenz (831) 648-8968 or Jerry Loomis (831) 419-1051.

Please mail checks to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter, PO Box HE, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Ed. note: The summer whale watch to benefit ACS projects, education and research, is a true Monterey Bay adventure. Looking back over the past 7 years, the

unique sightings and the excitement of open-ocean exploration are quite evident. See this issue for notes about 'our' cetaceans and photos taken from the *Sea Wolf II* with Monterey Bay Whale Watch. Expenses for these long, 4-hour cruises are high. The whale watch companies who donate boat, crew, naturalists, gasoline and expenses deserve our enormous thanks and ongoing support. Before Monterey Bay Whale Watch were our hosts in the past several years, Monterey Whale Watching (then Monterey Sport Fishing) donated our trip. Regardless, time offshore holds adventure and surprises. Below is Alan Baldrige's report for 1999, which gives the flavor of our time on the sea. Don't miss the wonders of our 2007 trip this month !

**Aug. 21, 1999:** Fifty-two hopeful and excited members and friends departed from Monterey Sport Fishing's dock at 8 a.m. on board the *Magnum Force*, with Captain Leon Oliver....

Cruise highlights included: dense swarms of brown Sea Nettle, *Chrysaora fuscescens*, in the outer harbor and off the south end of Cannery Row; a huge, est. 300 lb., Ocean Sunfish or Mola Mola swimming lazily next to the "Force," possibly being "cleaned" of its parasites by Western Gulls; three formation-swimming Humpbacks 7.5 miles west of Cypress Point, Pebble Beach; two pairs of Blue Whales making feeding dives in 800 feet of water in the Carmel Submarine Canyon. The huge animals appeared to body surf towards the vessel in the big swells of outer Carmel Bay; 5 Dall's Porpoise creating their characteristic "rooster tail" in the same area.

Seabirds were abundant and included: 25 Black-footed Albatross around the boat taking our chum off the fantail; Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed and Buller's Shearwaters; Elegant tern; Common Murre; Rhinoceros Auklet; Pigeon Guillemot, and a fly-by hummingbird.

On board naturalists were Esta Lee Albright, Jerry Loomis, Jud Vandevere, and Katherine Whitaker....

Our thanks also to Captain Oliver for putting us in the best viewing positions, to crew "A.J." for chumming, etc., and, finally, to owner Angelo Shake of Monterey Sport Fishing for making this cruise possible. [Other reports of ACSMB whale watches can be found at the chapter web site: [www.starrsites.com/acsmc/](http://www.starrsites.com/acsmc/) ]

Also, watch our web site for recent issues of *Soundings*. Photographs are especially great in C O L O R !!

## Whales and Dolphins Seen on Our Summer Whale Watches

Descriptions below are by Nancy Black of Monterey Bay Whale Watch and feature Monterey Bay observations. See more information, sightings, photos and feature articles at [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com). Photos by Esta Lee Albright were taken during whale watch cruises and represent possible viewing in August. Years in which the species were sighted during ACS summer cruises follow each description. Join us, the whales, dolphins, seals, sea lions, many many seabirds, and a sea otter or two ! See page 2 for reservation information.

**Risso's Dolphin** is a relatively large (13') pelagic dolphin found worldwide in warm temperate and tropical seas.



*Tall fins (Risso's) & no fins (Northern Right Whale) Dolphins*

In Monterey Bay, these dolphins can be found year-round with school sizes ranging from 10 to over 1000 individuals. Risso's Dolphins are often in the company of Pacific White-Sided Dolphins and Northern Right Whale Dolphins. Risso's Dolphins feed mainly on squid and are frequently encountered in the deeper parts of the Bay. (2006, 2004, 2002)

Like the Pacific White-Sided Dolphin, **Northern Right Whale Dolphins** are endemic to the North Pacific, with an overlapping range. These dolphins are unique, in that they have no dorsal fin or dorsal ridge of any kind. They are generally a pelagic, offshore species; however, due to the nearshore submarine canyon in Monterey Bay, this species is frequently encountered, most often in mixed species groups with other dolphins. (2006, 2004, 2002)

**Pacific White-Sided Dolphins**, endemic to the North Pacific, are one of the most abundant cetaceans along the central and northern California coastline, often found in herds numbering over several hundred individuals. Monterey Bay, especially the canyon edge which facilitates upwelling and concentrates prey, likely provides an abundant and predictable food source for these dolphins. They feed on small schooling fish and squid. Risso's Dolphins and Northern Right Whale Dolphins, also utilizing this abundant food source, are frequently found in mixed-species herds with Pacific White-Sided Dolphins. Photo-identification of individual White-Sided Dolphins exemplifies the importance of the area for this species. Especially helpful as "herd markers" are anomalously colored or "white" dolphins that are very distinctly marked and easily sighted within a large school of dolphins. Resightings of distinct individuals indicates that particular groups of dolphins frequent the Monterey area at least seasonally and return to the area in subsequent years rather than new groups of animals continually moving through. All behavioral states have been observed for these dolphins in the Bay, including travel, feed, rest, and socialize/play. White-Sided Dolphins are one of the most acrobatic and animated species of dolphin in the world, often engaging in multiple mid-air leaps, flips, and somersaults. These dolphins occur year-round in the Bay. (2006, 2004, 2002, 2001, 2000)



*Pacific White-sided Dolphins bowriding*



**The Dall's Porpoise** is endemic to the North Pacific in cool waters and is the most frequently sighted cetacean off central and northern California. Unlike most of the dolphin species, Dall's Porpoise are found in small groups of 3-20 individuals. In Monterey Bay, they are year-round inhabitants that are closely associated with the canyon edges. Along with the dolphin species, they are avid bowriders. (2006, 2004, 2000)

Another year-round resident of Monterey Bay, **Harbor Porpoise** are found in shallow sandy bottom regions of the Monterey Bay shelf. Harbor Porpoise are found in small groups and generally do not approach vessels. (Not reported on ACS summer trips but sighted in July '07)



*Common Dolphins Bow-riding*

**Common Dolphins** are found worldwide, generally in warm water areas. These dolphins have become increasingly more abundant in the Bay since the last El Niño or warm water period occurred in 1982-1983. Two different species occur in Monterey Bay: the Short Beaked and Long Beaked Common Dolphin. The Long Beaked is more common and most abundant from late summer through winter. Common Dolphins are found in large, cohesive groups of up to 5,000 or more individuals. (Not reported on ACS trips but sighted in July '07)



*Blue Whale's muscular tail stock & flukes*

**The Blue Whale** is the largest animal ever to live on earth, reaching lengths of 80 to 100'. Blues feed only on krill and are found in Monterey Bay from June through October during times of high krill abundance. Like the Humpbacks, Blue Whales often shift to various feeding locations off central California in search of krill concentrations. Blue Whales begin to migrate south during November. It is still a mystery as to where the Blue Whales gather to give birth and mate, but it is suspected this happens in offshore waters south of Mexico. Blue Whales produce very low frequency sounds that are probably used for long-range

communication, with some sounds possibly used to locate dense krill patches. These low moaning sounds can travel over hundreds or thousands of miles across ocean basins. Blue Whales are truly a majestic species, with a tall narrow blow of up to 30'. A bright blue coloration is easily observed before the whales surface. Because of their size, only part of their body is visible at a time and the dorsal fin is usually observed just before their dive. Blue Whales may lunge feed at the surface to engulf surface swarms of krill or they may fluke up and dive to several hundred feet for deep krill concentrations. A single Blue Whale consumes about 4 tons of krill or 40 million individual krill each day. In Monterey Bay, Blue Whales often occur near the edges of the



*Blue Whale blowholes (big as manhole covers) on a foggy day*

submarine canyon where krill tends to concentrate. The population of Blue Whales off California has been estimated to number about 2,200 individuals from work conducted by Cascadia Research Collective. Blue Whales are endangered with only about 10,000 existing in the world. The population off California appears to be the largest and healthiest population of Blues in the world. Each Blue Whale can be identified by photographing the side of the whale with its dorsal fin in view, as Blue Whales have very distinctive mottling patterns on their grayish blue body. We attempt to photo-identify all Blue Whales sighted on Monterey Bay Whale Watch trips and contribute the photos to Cascadia Research for analysis. (2005, 2002, 2001, 2000)

**Killer Whales** occur year-round and are occasionally seen (2-5 times per month) in the Monterey Bay area in pods that average 8 to 20 individuals. Two types of Killer Whales normally occur here, the "transients" and "offshores". "Transient" Killer Whales prey on marine mammals, travel long distances, and tend to have pointed dorsal fins with closed saddle patches.



*Female & male Killer Whales*

Within Monterey Bay, these whales attack Gray Whales, California Sea Lions, Harbor Seals, Elephant Seals, and Dall's Porpoise. "Offshore" Killer Whales are a recently discovered form that tend to travel in large groups of up to 100 individuals, and tend to have more rounded dorsal fins. These whales probably feed on fish and squid. (2004, 2002, 2001, 2000)

**Minke Whales** are the smallest of the baleen whales at about 30' in length. In the Monterey Bay region, it is possible to see Minke Whales year-round, but they are most frequently sighted during the summer and fall. These whales are usually found nearshore over rocky bottom regions where they prey on juvenile rockfishes. Minke Whales do not have a visible blow and usually exhibit erratic surfacing patterns. However, they are easily sighted by their relatively large dorsal fin and dark body. There appear to be some resident Minke Whales that feed in southern Monterey Bay and along the Big Sur coast. They usually are found as singles. (2000)

Beaked Whales inhabit deep offshore waters, are found in fairly small groups, dive for long periods, and therefore are rarely observed. **Baird's Beaked Whales** are found only in the North Pacific and are the largest of the Beaked Whales. Sightings of these animals usually occur in the fall in Monterey Bay. (2002)

The Humpback Whale is an endangered species, occurring in all the world's oceans. The central California population of Humpback Whales migrates from their winter calving and mating areas off Mexico to their summer and fall feeding areas off coastal California. Humpback Whales occur in Monterey Bay from late April to early December. During this period the whales are here to feed on anchovies, sardines, and krill.

Humpback Whales reach lengths of 50 to 55', are dark in color with distinctive nodules on their rostrum, and have pectoral flippers that are nearly a third of their body length. Current population estimates for Humpback Whales off California



*"Friendly" Humpback spyhops near boat* 5

conducted by Cascadia Research Collective indicate there are about 800 whales in this population. All whales have been photo-identified by natural markings and coloration on the underside of the tail fluke. From this photo-identification work, the migratory movements, calving intervals, association patterns, and population estimates can be determined for these whales. Humpback Whales are in Monterey Bay to feed and they often shift to various feeding locations depending on prey density. Humpbacks are often observed lunge feeding near the surface or deep diving for prey that is concentrated several hundred



*ID photo, Humpback flukes' underside*

feet deep. This whale is the most animated of all the baleen whales, and in the Bay they are often seen breaching, spyhopping, pectoral fin slapping, and tail lobbing. In recent years, many different Humpback Whales in this population often approach our boat for "friendly" encounters. When engaging in this "friendly" behavior, a whale will often circle our boat, rub up against it, spyhop within several feet of the boat, roll on its side and extend its pectoral flipper toward the boat, and often tilt its head with an eye open, appearing to look up at the boat and people on board. This phenomenon has been



*Mom/calf Humpbacks*

increasing each year, probably because this new generation of whales that have never known whaling are becoming curious about boats, and they often stay for several hours investigating our boat. This contact is totally initiated by the whales.

Monterey Bay is one of the best places to observe humpbacks on a day's whale watch because the submarine canyon approaches very close to shore here. The whales are frequently found along the edges of the canyon where prey tends to concentrate. At times, the whales come even closer to shore while feeding on anchovies and can also be found 8-20 miles from shore where concentrations of krill occur in relation to thermal fronts. We attempt to photo-identify all Humpback Whales sighted on Monterey Bay Whale Watch trips and contribute these photos to Cascadia Research. (2006, 2005, 2004, 2001)

Ed.note: also, Sightings records show a **Sperm Whale** seen on the 2001 whale watch. According to the ACS Fact Sheet on Sperm Whales, Sperm Whales are the largest odontocetes, toothed whales. It is best known as the leviathan Moby Dick in Herman Melville's novel. Males migrate to higher latitudes, while females and juveniles stay in more tropical waters. Sperm Whales have been sighted on offshore surveys and a single young whale (probably a wandering male) has been seen several times in and near Monterey Bay.(2001)



*The end !*



## SIGHTINGS

Watch for updates on August and past years' sightings at [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)  
Compiled by Monterey Bay Whale Watch.

**7/18** 3 Humpback Whales,  
200 Pacific White-sided Dolphins,  
1000 Risso's Dolphins, 200  
Northern Right Whale Dolphins, 30  
Harbor Porpoise

**7/17pm** 3 Humpback Whales

**7/17am** 1 Humpback Whale, 100  
Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 500  
Risso's Dolphins, 120 Northern  
Right Whale Dolphins

**7/16** 2 Humpback Whales

**7/15pm** 2 Humpback Whales

**7/15am** 2 Humpback Whales

**7/14** 5 Humpback Whales

**7/13** 6 Humpback Whales,  
7 Harbor Porpoise

**7/12pm** 6 Humpback Whales

**7/12am** 4 Humpback Whales, 2  
Long-beaked Common Dolphins,  
65 Risso's Dolphins, 11 Dall's  
Porpoise, 10 Harbor Porpoise

**7/11pm** 4 Humpback Whales

**7/11am** 6 Humpback Whales

**7/10pm** 5 Humpback Whales, 8  
Harbor Porpoise

**7/10am** 7 Humpback Whales, 50  
Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 200  
Risso's Dolphins

**7/9** 9 Humpback Whales

**7/8pm** 5 Humpback Whales

**7/8am** 5 Humpback Whales, 120  
Risso's Dolphins

**7/7pm** 13 Humpback Whales

**7/7am** 3 Humpback Whales

**7/6pm** 8 Killer Whales (transient  
type)

**7/6am** 10 Humpback Whales,  
11 Killer Whales (transient type),  
25 Risso's Dolphins, 5 Harbor  
Porpoise

**7/5pm** 1 Humpback Whale, 10  
Harbor Porpoise

**7/5pm** 2 Humpback Whales

**7/5am** 2 Humpback Whales

**7/4am** 3 Humpback Whales, 2  
Elephant Seals

**7/3pm** 7 Humpback Whales

**7/3am** 4 Humpback Whales,  
1 Minke Whale, 15 Pacific White-  
sided Dolphins, 8 Harbor Porpoise

**7/2pm** 40 Humpback Whales,  
1800 Pacific White-sided Dolphins,  
300 Risso's Dolphins, 450  
Northern Right Whale Dolphins

**7/2am** 45 Humpback Whales,  
2200 Pacific White-sided Dolphins,  
300 Risso's Dolphins, 500  
Northern Right Whale Dolphins

**7/1pm** 3 Humpback Whales

**7/1am** 8 Humpback Whales,  
9 Killer Whales (transient type)

## 'Oceanic Period' Has Arrived

Sometime in July, the 'Upwelling' Period subsides and warmer, clearer water moves toward the coast from offshore: 'the Oceanic Period.' This usually means less shoreline fog, our 'summertime,' and interesting critters moving in. According to Richard Ternullo, the water temperature at the Monterey Bay buoy (offshore) has been around 63 degrees F. That's warm!

The tuna and albacore fishery is beginning, with the fish already as close as 12 to 20 miles west. Tuna fishermen think nothing of going 40 miles to fish. Some summers it has been a good idea to travel out to the tuna fishing grounds to see birds and whales, so the closer movement of those grounds is encouraging.

Chrysaora (sea nettles) and Aurelia (purple-striped) jellies are abundant. Leatherback turtles may be coming to eat them: 6 or 7 turtles were seen off Pacific Grove recently. Others have been seen by tuna fishermen farther out.

Krill has been reported at Pt. Sur. So far, blue whales have been seen cruising through the area, headed we know not where. Richard reports occasional blue whale sightings as they pass through. He says Tony Lorenz saw six blue whales off Big Sur, heading north. Let's hope they use their very low, long-range communication and invite the blue whales down south to come closer.

**American Cetacean Society**  
**Monterey Bay Chapter**  
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# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**September 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

Date: Thursday, September 27, 2007

Time: 7:30 PM.

**PLEASE JOIN US AT 7:00 FOR REFRESHMENTS**

Speaker: George Shillinger,

Ph. D. Candidate, Hopkins Marine Station

Topic: Leatherback Sea Turtles: a race for survival.



*Leather back turtle at sea Photo by Richard Ternullo*

The leatherback sea turtle is a widely distributed species ranging throughout all oceanic habitats with the exception of Antarctica and the Arctic. It is critically endangered in the Pacific Ocean.

Our speaker's research efforts are focused on an enhanced understanding of their ecology, behavior and movements within the Eastern Tropical Pacific. The project uses satellite tags and remote sensing information to identify and assess critical sea turtle habitats, including remaining nesting areas, foraging grounds and migration routes. One objective of this project is to identify "hot spots": areas where turtles and humans are coming into conflict. Once identified, efforts can then be applied to identify the best management strategies for the "hot spots".

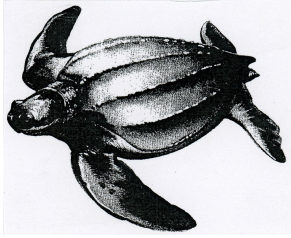
In addition to the "hard science" involved in this project, our speaker's research also involved a creative "marketing" component. To familiarize the general public, especially children, with the challenges facing the leatherbacks, our speaker devised the Great Turtle Race. Using a Web site, turtle enthusiasts around the world tracked a group of female leatherbacks, fitted with GPS devices, as they migrated from a Costa Rican beach, where they laid their eggs, to feeding grounds off the Galapagos Islands.

To help pay for some of the costs, each turtle in the race had a corporate sponsor. A "slow churned" leatherback named Sundae was sponsored by Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream and Stephanie Colburtle was sponsored by Stephen Colbert. The Great Turtle Race was a fun and inventive way to bring focus to a serious environmental challenge.

Please join us for a most interesting presentation on a species which spends time feeding in Monterey Bay and which, without our help, could very well disappear from our oceans.

Biographic information provided by Alan and Shelia Baldrige. Photo by Richard Ternullo.

## Some Characteristics of a Leatherback Turtle's Appearance



While looking for pictures of Leatherbacks on the web I came to an assumption that just might be true. Few ocean-watchers have the opportunity to see a leatherback turtle at sea. Whale watch boats off Monterey happen across one or only a few each year and are very lucky. They are shy and dive as soon as a boat approaches unless one is found dining with its head buried in a jelly. They are here to feed on jellies, so 'floats' of jellies coming ashore during the Oceanic Period attract them. Otherwise they are on their incredibly long migration from Micronesia, where the females lay eggs that hatch by without them. Most of the photos to be found are of turtles ashore, on nesting beaches or stranded and dead. Leatherbacks are at risk of becoming extinct, so perhaps most people will never see one afloat in the wild. Here are a few descriptive facts:

Size: Adult 4 - 8 feet long and 500 to 1500 lbs (250-700 kg) in weight. The largest Leatherback on record was a male stranded on the west coast of Wales in 1988. He was 916 kg.

Shell: The Leatherback is the only sea turtle that lacks a hard shell (carapace). The leatherback's carapace is slightly flexible and has a rubbery texture. It is composed of a mosaic of small bones covered by firm, rubbery skin (making it look leathery) with seven longitudinal ridges or keels. The carapace is gray or black with white or pale spots. The under-belly (plastron) is whitish to black and marked by 5 ridges. Only hatchlings possess scales on the carapace, which have white blotches. These rows of white scales give them the white striping that runs down the length of their backs – otherwise they look mostly black when you are glancing down at them. No sharp angle is formed between the carapace and the under -belly so a leatherback is somewhat barrel shaped. Many can grow to be bigger than one, too.

Skin: The skin is mostly black with varying degrees of pale spotting, including a notable pink spot on the dorsal surface of the head in adults. In the photo on the cover, there may be a film of yellow diatoms almost covering the "pink spot." Look for the photo in color on our web site next month.

Flippers: The front flippers of a Leatherback are longer than in any other marine turtle, even relative to its size. They can reach 270 cm in adults. There are no claws. Black with white margins and pale spotting in adults, the flippers of hatchlings are predominately black with white margins

Head: In addition to the unique pink spot on the top of the head in adults, the head is dark with lighter splotches. The upper jaw is gray and has a toothlike cusp on each side. The lower jaw is hooked anteriorly. At sea, the head's size and shape above the surface may lead us to think we are sighting a surface-breathing pinniped

Diet: Jellies are the main staple. Leatherbacks may also feed on sea urchins, squid, crustacians, tunicates, fish, blue-green algae and floating seaweed.

Monterey: ACS Monterey Bay awarded funds to a research project by Tanya Graham, Moss Landing Marine Labs, re foraging of Leatherbacks on jellies. See *Soundings*, June 2007. It has been noted that Monterey Bay is an important area to study Leatherbacks. A work boat from MLML has been modified to increase opportunities to catch the turtles for projects that measure, attach a harness for a satellite tag, and to draw blood for DNA studies. The work boat is the *Sheila B.*, named for beloved MLML librarian, Sheila Baldrige, retired. She has been president and a board member of ACSMB. (Sources for this article are listed on p. 6)

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(Program information from Cover, continued) Please join us for a most interesting presentation on a species which spends time feeding in Monterey Bay and which, without our help, could very well disappear from our oceans.

Biographic information provided by Alan and Sheila Baldrige. Photo by Richard Ternullo.

*Informative web site on the great turtle race and leatherback facts:* [www.greatturtlerace](http://www.greatturtlerace)

For people in California used to having what represents the largest concentration of blue whales anywhere in the world, the story about the sightings of BC might seem a little over hyped. It is just important for people to understand how rare sightings have been off BC. John– email from John Calambokidis, 8/26/07

## Cruise Discovers Concentration of Blue Whales Off British Columbia

Released by Cascadia Research, Olympia, WA, 15 August 2007 (Reprinted in *Soundings* with permission)

For additional information contact:

John Calambokidis, Cascadia Research (360)943-7325, calambokidis@cascadiaresearch.org

John Ford, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (250) 729-8375, fordjo@pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca

A whale survey just completed off the BC coast has identified the largest concentrations of endangered blue whales documented in these waters in more than 50 years. Blue whales are the largest animal that has ever lived. They were wiped out by commercial whaling that targeted these biggest of all whales in hunting that continued through 1966. While populations in some areas have shown recovery, blue whales have remained rare in BC waters, an area where over 1,000 were killed through 1965.

The survey, conducted aboard the Canadian Coast Guard Ship *John P. Tully* by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in collaboration with Cascadia Research (a Washington State non-profit research organization), found five blue whales (including a mother with a calf) on one day and three on the following day (some of the same five whales). The 10-day survey that just ended Monday, 13 August 2007, covered offshore waters off northern Vancouver Island, Queen Charlotte Sound, and west of the Queen Charlottes and documented more than 400 sightings of 11 species of whales, dolphins, and porpoises. Large numbers of fin whales, humpback whales, sperm whales, and killer whales were also found on the surveys.

“The sightings of blue whales were the biggest surprise of what was already a very successful trip” said John Ford, a DFO biologist who was Chief Scientist for the cruise. They were found in one area southwest of the Queen Charlotte Islands in deep water feeding on krill. This was close to some of the principal areas they were killed by whalers based in Rose Harbor in the early 1900s.

The world-wide blue whale population that once numbered over 300,000 is still thought to be under 10,000 even more than 40 years after the end of hunting for them. They are listed as Endangered under the Canadian Species-at-Risk Act. While blue whale sightings have become more common in recent decades in some areas including off California, there has only been very recent evidence of their return to British Columbia. Joint surveys conducted by DFO and Cascadia going to some of the former whaling grounds each summer since 2002, have found one or two sightings of blue whales in some years. Prior to that there had only been a few verified sightings since the end of whaling. The numbers sighted during the recently completed survey almost doubles the total documented sightings in the last 40 years in BC waters.

The blue whales off BC appear to be part of the population that uses the eastern North Pacific ranging from off Central America to Alaskan waters. Individual blue whales can be identified and tracked by natural markings on their sides. Cascadia Research has maintained a catalog of individuals identified in the eastern North Pacific and has matched some of the individuals seen in BC with those seen feeding off California. “It appears likely that the distribution of the prey of blue whales must be favorable off BC, bringing more of these giant

*Continued at top of next page*





## Blue whales, continued from previous page

mammals back to BC waters” said John Calambokidis, a Research Biologist with Cascadia Research who has been studying blue whales in the North Pacific since 1986 and documenting their movements and populations. Both DFO and Cascadia will be analyzing the data, identification photographs, and samples collected in this cruise in coming weeks and months. These will provide additional information on the specific individuals seen in the latest cruise. This will include comparison of identification photographs of blue whales to over 1,000 individuals identified elsewhere in the North Pacific. ~

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### An Offshore Early Warning System: Cassin’s Auklets

On days when the Outer bay is glassy calm, which happens sometimes during the Oceanic Period in August and September, whale watch boats may get miles offshore to the edge of the submarine canyon, hoping swarms of krill might be hiding in cracks and crevices of the canyon walls. There these nutrient rich red clouds are the beginning of a food web – and a food supply in themselves for great whales. Watching closely, however, the first indications we see may be small, round seabirds frantically skittering ahead of us just above the surface. These smallest of the auklets ( about 10.5 inches long and about 10 ounces in weight) are a pretty good reason to hope the largest of whales may also be near, for they both feed on krill.



Because the presence of krill determines the nesting success of Cassin’s auklets, records of their sightings and nesting give scientists records of krill production. The Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO), operating on the Farallon Islands west of San Francisco, has Cassin’s auklet counts since 1967. The islands are a major breeding area for 80% of CA’s Cassin’s. Totals may vary from 20,000 to 50,000 pairs, depending on the year and source. During years when krill production is delayed, perhaps by a change in winds and currents reducing upwelling, the birds may abandon their nests and fly away or just never stay at all. When upwelling conditions produce too few krill, auklet chicks die. When a breeding failure of either kind happens two or three years in a row, it can’t be blamed on a fluke year for winds and currents. Scientists are beginning to say it’s not a local phenomenon but “global scale changes in atmospheric circulation.” (Schwing) They are not prepared to say whether global warming caused those changes. The longterm PRBO records for Cassin’s auklets are some of the very few available.

Cassin’s auklets, in better years, may be spotted in small flocks in the open sea within perhaps 20 miles of shore, where the birds dive for krill. They are hard to see in rough conditions because they are so small. Looking like little miniature birds riding the swells, we hardly notice their white belly and undertail coverts, the gray back, throat, chest and flanks, and the even more surprising bright blue on the upper surface of both the legs and toes.

(Richard Ternullo’s photo here gives glimpses of the white but you’ll have to go to the web site to see the blue legs: [www.starrsites.com/acsmf/Sightings](http://www.starrsites.com/acsmf/Sightings) archives; this issue available next month on the website.)

In addition to low production of food, there are other threats. Cassin’s auklets’ nesting sites are burrows the birds have dug, easily ravaged by Western gulls (in CA), gulls, crows and ravens, foxes, peregrine falcons, and destruction of habitat by goats and other domestic animals. Oil pollution is a potential cause of heavy losses to the population. In 2002, Cassin’s auklet was proposed as a California Species of Special Concern (second priority).

*Photo by Richard Ternullo*

Continued at bottom of next page

## Krill in Monterey Bay: Much, Little or Variable

What we've noticed about whales feeding in the summer always takes our thoughts to food supply. The best is krill that has begun tiny in the spring upwelling and has grown to good size (about an inch or so) for filter feeding humpbacks and blue whales. If winds and sea temperatures lead to failure of upwelling production and ongoing support of krill swarms, humpbacks resort to feeding on schools of little fish, if possible, and blue whales leave the area.

One thing about krill that keeps us guessing is its habit of changing locations. We expect swarms of krill to be at the edge of the submarine canyon, with rocky chinks for hiding and steady upwelling for planktonic food. During heavy upwelling and production we may see streams of krill at the surface, a meandering river of red. At times we have seen blue whales feeding on krill quite near the rocky edge of Point Pinos. Solitary blues sometimes cruise the shoreline from Monterey Breakwater to the outer bay, probably exploring for food, and probably startling skiff fishermen along the edge of the kelp. Local scientists have many monitoring projects and soon may better understand what causes upwelling to appear in varying locations and for different lengths of time. If upwelling re-locates, evidently the krill swarms do too.

Since the 1990s, upwelling, resource production and its effect on whales, fisheries, seabirds and other marine life, have been studied by Don Croll, Baldo Marinovic and colleagues at UCSC. The following information is from an online report from 2002. (see list of sources on p. 6)

The strength of the upwelling determines how many of the juvenile krill survive to become adults, and also whether the krill stay bunched up in the dense swarms blue whales like to feed on. The system varies from year to year and also from place to place along the coast. If the upwelling is weak in one area, it may be strong somewhere else, and the whales move around accordingly.

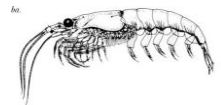
"I realize now that, in terms of the spatial scale, Monterey Bay to a whale is probably like a grocery store is to us, and they're in this grocery store looking for the krill aisle," Croll says. But that store may be all out of krill, so they have to go across town to another store. For a whale, that might mean going from Monterey Bay to the Channel Islands off southern California or

the Cordell Bank north of San Francisco – that's their idea of local stores." [Ed.note: ...or to another neighborhood, such as the Queen Charlotte Islands...]

If Monterey Bay studies show low production of krill here, yet a number of whales show up to feed, it is possible other upwelling locations are faring even worse.

"One of the most important sources of variability is El Nino. Unusually warm, nutrient rich water moves up the coast and disrupts the layering of warm water over deep cold water. Coastal upwelling becomes much weaker than usual, resulting in a drop in phytoplankton production that affects the whole coastal food web.... Sea surface temperatures are expected to increase with global warming, as they do along the coast with El Nino. Furthermore, the frequency and intensity of El Ninos may increase with global warming."

That relationship is yet to be widely accepted. Changes in major current systems, high and low pressure centers, wind patterns and variable upwelling/production are all parts of mysterious interactions that current data cannot substantially correlate. Maybe pieces of the picture include the feeding grounds of blue whales, the lives of seabirds, fisheries and the vast oceanic weather systems. ~



*Krill*

*Drawing by Richard Ellis,*

*The Book of Whales*

**Auklets, continued from previous page**

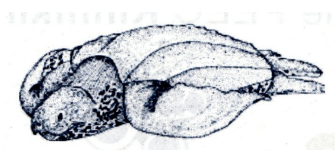
Another breeding failure to notice may be common murrens, another seabird species nesting off the Central Coast including the Farallons. Murrens feed on baby rockfish, which feed on krill. Cormorants may never attempt to breed during low-krill seasons. Beach surveys by Moss Landing Marine Lab have found increased mortality of auklets, cormorants and Common murrens, apparently from starvation. Samples from regional fishermen find empty stomachs, none containing juvenile rockfish. Trawl surveys by NOAA Fisheries off the Central Coast have found near-record lows on young groundfish, squid and krill. For two years in a row, blue whales have not spent much time finding prey (krill) off the Central Coast and we've wondered where they've gone to find food. See the report from Canada in this issue. Reports of seabird deaths began ranging from California to British Columbia two or three years ago. The lack of krill may lead to a crash of the whole food system for ocean life. ~



## CALENDAR

*Sep. 27:* This month's regular program meeting. See cover.

*Oct. 25:* The next regular meeting.



*Leatherback, Canadian gov*

Selected Local Seminars to which the public is invited:

*Sep. 24:* MBARI, 2 pm, in the Pacific Forum, Moss Landing [www.mabri.org/seminars/](http://www.mabri.org/seminars/)  
Tony Koslow, PhD, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Marine and Atmospheric Research, Perth, Australia, "The Silent Deep: the history, ecology and conservation of the deep sea."

*Oct. 5:* Hopkins Marine Station, noon, Boatworks lecture hall [www-marine.stanford.edu/seminars.htm](http://www-marine.stanford.edu/seminars.htm)  
Kelly Andrew Baker, University of Miami/RSMAS, "Changing by degrees: understanding, predicting and accelerating the adaptive response of reef corals to climate change."

*Nov. 2:* Hopkins Marine Station, noon, Boatworks lecture hall [www-marine.stanford.edu/seminars.htm](http://www-marine.stanford.edu/seminars.htm)  
Jim Morin, Cornell Univ., "Dazzling luminescent light shows by tiny ostracods in a big, dark ocean: sex, competition, precision and speed."

And possibly gone when you receive this newsletter:

*Sep. 9:* Monterey Bay Aquarium "Fiesta del Mar" [www.mbayaq.org](http://www.mbayaq.org)  
"Celebrate ocean conservation through Hispanic cultural traditions at the third annual "Fiesta del Mar" event on September 9. "Fiesta del Mar" will include live musical performances, auditorium programs, bilingual feeding shows, conservation information booths, crafts for kids and more. Included with regular aquarium admission. Children 12 years and younger will receive free admission

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**Sources used for articles in this issue are given below.** Please use them for more complete information.

### ◆ *Krill in Monterey Bay*

Croll, Don quoted in "From Wind to Whales: Understanding an Ecosystem," by Tim Stephens,  
[//review.ucsc.edu/summer-02/...](http://review.ucsc.edu/summer-02/)

### ◆ *Leatherbacks*

US Fish & Wildlife Service, [www.fws.gov/northflorida/SeaTurtles...](http://www.fws.gov/northflorida/SeaTurtles...); [www.turtles.org](http://www.turtles.org);  
Hawaii Assoc. for Marine Education & Research, [www.hamerhawaii.com/Leatherback...](http://www.hamerhawaii.com/Leatherback...)  
NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Ctr, [//137.110.142.7/default.asp](http://137.110.142.7/default.asp)

### ◆ *Blue Whales*

Calambokidis, John and John Ford, report posted at [www.cascadiaresearch.org/BC-Blue.htm](http://www.cascadiaresearch.org/BC-Blue.htm)  
Map, Rand McNally Road Atlas '07

### ◆ *Cassin's Auklets*

Sources for this article are largely based on reports during the past two years from the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, which maintains a research station on the Farallon Islands:  
Nielsen, John, "Shifting Winds Disrupt Island Birds' Feeding Habits," National Public Radio, [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org), August 21, 2007.

Schweig Frank, of NOAA, Russ Bradley of PRBO and others were quoted by Associated Press, "Warming Pacific Hurts Food Chain," [Wired](http://www.wired.com), [www.wired.com](http://www.wired.com), July 7m 2006.

Bradley, Russ, "Cassin's Auklets Abandon Farallon Nest Colonies," PRBO Conservation Science: [The Observer](http://www.prbo.org) Number 149, [www.prbo.org](http://www.prbo.org), 2007.

Basic information came from books:

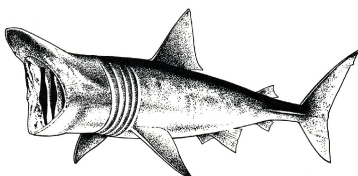
Manuwal, David A. "Alcids," in [Seabirds of Eastern North Pacific and Arctic Waters](#), ed. By Delphine Haley, Pacific Search Press, 1984, pp. 178-180.

Roberson, Don. [Monterey Birds](#). 2d ed. Monterey Peninsula Audubon Society, 2002

## SIGHTINGS

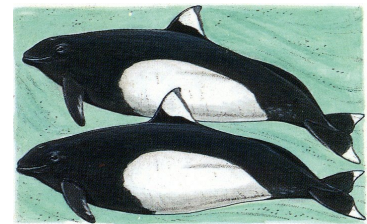
First, *Soundings* will represent the ACSMB Board to say "Many thanks" to Monterey Bay Whale Watch for the benefit cruise on Aug. 18. Jerry Loomis, chapter president, reported there was good weather and the seas were moderate. Sightings included Pacific white-sided dolphins, Dall's porpoise, Northern right-whale dolphins and at least 12 Humpbacks off Moss Landing. There were 35 people for ACS and the chapter gained 17 new members. Nancy Black did a fine narration. Tony Lorenz brought bagels and cream cheese and was on the boat. David Zaches, chapter vice-president, gave the welcome aboard, and Sally Eastham and Diane Glim were sign-in greeters. Proceeds from the cruise help support our programs and research. Thanks !

Date	#	Type of Animal(s)
8/1 am	4	Humpback whales
	1	Blue Whale
	50	Risso's dolphins
	1	Harbor porpoise
8/1pm	3	Humpback whales
8/2am	300	Risso's dolphins
	4	Humpback whales
	1	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	2	Northern elephant seals
8/2pm	3	Humpback whales
	10	Risso's dolphins
8/5am	4	Humpback whales
	1	Basking shark



8/5pm	6	Humpback whales
	1	Blue whale
8/6	6	Humpback whales
8/7am	1	Humpback whale
	40	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	300	Risso's dolphins
	80	Northern right-whale dolphins
8/7pm	2	Humpback whales
	30	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	10	Northern right-whale dolphins
8/8am	3	Humpback whales
	20	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	2	Northern elephant seals
	3	Northern fur seals
	2	Blue sharks
8/8pm	4	Humpback whales
	6	Harbor porpoise
8/9	5	Humpback whales
	30	Risso's dolphins
8/10am	4	Humpback whales
	6	harbor porpoise
8/10pm	2	Humpback whales
	40	Harbor porpoise
8/11	5	Humpback whales
	8	Harbor porpoise
8/12	4	Humpback whales
8/13am	6	Humpback whales
	15	Risso's dolphins
	2	Northern fur seals
8/13pm	1	Humpback whale
8/14	2	Humpback whales
	60	Risso's dolphins
	3	Harbor porpoise
8/15am	1	Humpback whale
8/15pm	6	Humpback whales
	7	Harbor porpoise
8/16	9	Humpback whales
	60	Pacific white-sided dolphins
8/17	5	Humpback whales

8/18am	18	Humpback whales
	500	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	600	Northern right-whale dolphins
8/18pm	10	Humpback whales
8/19am	9	Humpback whales
	200	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	10	Dall's porpoise
	1	Northern fur seal
	1	Blue shark
8/19pm	12	Humpback whales
8/20am	2	Humpback whales
	20	Risso's dolphins
8/20pm	2	Humpback whales
8/21	2	Humpback whales
8/22am	7	Humpback whales
	6	Harbor porpoise
8/22pm	2	Humpback whales
8/23am	8	Humpback whales
8/23pm	6	Humpback whales
8/24am	5	Humpback whales
	20	Dall's porpoise



8/24pm	6	Humpback whales
8/25am	6	Humpback Whales
8/25pm	1	Humpback Whale
	7	Harbor Porpoise
8/26am	6	Humpback Whales
	8	Killer Whales (transient type)
	10	Dall's Porpoise
8/26pm	2	Humpback Whales
8/27am	4	Humpback Whales
	6	Killer Whales (transient type)
8/27pm	5	Humpback Whales

Picture sources:

Bob Giuliani, Illustrations of Marine Mammals, Dover 1995.

John Green, Whales and Dolphins Coloring Book, Dover 1990

**American Cetacean Society**  
**Monterey Bay Chapter**  
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**Pacific Grove, CA 93950**

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**American Cetacean Society Membership Application** Chapter#24

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Renewal \_\_\_

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# Soundings



**American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter**

**October 2007**

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS  
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER  
Monthly meeting at HOPKINS MARINE STATION, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building  
(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

Date: Thursday, October 25, 2007

Time: 7:30 PM. PLEASE JOIN US AT 7:00 FOR REFRESHMENTS

**Speaker: Don Croll, Phd.**

**Title: Wind To Whales: Foraging Strategies of Rorquals in the California Current**

Rorquals are baleen whales which are characterized by a body with longitudinal grooves or ventral pleats, long sleek bodies, a small dorsal fin and a median notch in the flukes. This family of cetaceans includes the largest animal believed to have lived on the planet, the Blue whale, which can reach a length of about 100 feet and weigh nearly 300,000 pounds and much smaller members such as the Pigmy Right whale which reaches a little more than 20 feet in length and about 10,000 pounds in weight. Other Rorquals are the Humpback, Minke, Fin, Bryde's whale, Pygmy Bryde's whale, Sei whale and *Balaenoptera omurai* a possible new species reported in 2003 with no common name available.

Among other things, our speaker's research takes an in depth look at the effect of this size difference in rorquals. He compared the foraging ecology of two rorquals of dissimilar sizes, Blue and Humpback whales, to demonstrate that extreme body size in blue whales facilitates the integration of patch prey resources over large spatial scales to buffer environmental variability.

Don Croll is Associate Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, UC Santa Cruz. Don has been a researcher, lecturer or professor at UCSC since 1994 and from 1996 to 2000 was a lecturer in the Ocean Sciences Department at UCSC. Among many other accomplishments, Don co-founded and is Research Director of the Island Conservation and Ecology Group which deals with some of the conservation issues affecting Mexico's Baja Peninsula and the coast of the Gulf of California.

Please join us for what promises to be an interesting opportunity to learn more about Blue and Humpback whales and perhaps find out if bigger is really better....



15 and 20 feet across, flukes of humpbacks (rounded) and blues (streamlined), are both crowd-pleasers and reminders of the sizes of these Great Whales.



Photos taken at sea by Esta Lee Albright



## Welcome to Tony Lorenz, *Soundings* Editor Again

By Esta Lee Albright

The next issue (November) of *Soundings* will be my last as editor. I would like to submit articles now and then, for I love writing about cetaceans and other ocean stuff, but, **beginning with the January issue, the editor will be TONY LORENZ.** Bless him for that. **He will need a volunteer to help with editorial tasks.** You should contact Jerry Loomis (419-1051 or Loomis@mbay.net) and he'll refer you. Tony is a nice guy to work with; he loves whales, has good contacts, is 'out there' often, and he has his own job, a delightful wife, and a darling son. Try it; there's nothing like working on *Soundings* to keep you thinking about ocean life.

I took over from Tony in the summer of 2002, and have been editor ever since. I also remember taking the newsletter job from Milos Radakovich in 1986 — until the end of 1987. That's 8 years. It's going to be a bit weird to be "Soundings-less." Looking back at *Soundings* archives, I see I was the one who changed the format from half-page size to full 8 ½ by 11 in 1986. I also had *Soundings* at the bottom of the cover because I had heard from the Monterey Library that the program information would attract more attention if it were at the top of the page. In 2002, Tony passed along to me his improved font and heading, the way the cover looks today.

All that goes to show the editor has lots of freedom to try new things and have his/her own flavor on the newsletter. The continually important elements (I don't want to say 'rules'...) probably include the following:

1. There needs to be a graphic on the cover, even if nowhere else, to attract attention to program information.
2. Because the newsletter goes Bulk Mail, and because people throughout the Central Coast area want to get it in time to come to the meeting, the newsletter needs to hit the post office, at the latest, during the second week of the month. The first week would be better for those who might drive a distance to attend a meeting.
3. All graphics, photographs, and information must have sources cited. This isn't my rule; it's the copyright law. We grab a lot of things for the newsletter and, as an educational non-profit, we get by with it if we are careful to list sources. This means having time to hunt and time to ask for permission. Publishers back east take forever to respond; MBARI, MBA, Monterey Bay Whale Watch, Cascadia Research Collective and a bunch of others are much quicker.
4. The newsletter needs to have at least something about local critters (even if it's about those species doing something elsewhere) and needs to be readable to a wide range of interests in the Monterey area.
5. Information in the newsletter needs to be accurate, or as accurate as some research and editing can get it.

Why am I quitting the editor position? Well, after all these years it's about time someone else had a shot at it! Predominantly it's because I live more than a thousand miles from the Monterey Bay (since January 2006). I live on the edge of a dry, rocky canyon instead of a submerged one. The pines in my yard roar in a storm but not like waves. I visit Monterey and the bay and soak up ocean spray but only two or three times a year.

It has been hard to know what's going on there. Then, there's hardly any way of telling what you've already read in newspapers or seen on television. Finding news and getting to deadlines in good shape hasn't been that easy from here during some months — I couldn't go to board meetings and I really miss the monthly programs. About three times a year there are ACS events to push, publicize and report. Otherwise it's off to the web, to listservs, to publications that require memberships, to offhand emails and reports from friends and relatives in far-flung places. This all may seem rather routine but it becomes immediate and meaningful while one is going to ACS meetings and being first-hand, in contact. Much more pertinent ..... much the way it should be.



Here's one way to generate articles: have a long, rambling conversation with Alan Baldrige and come out with several ideas and some information to go with it. In addition to Alan, I have some other thanks: to Jerry Loomis who answered my emails (Jerry is a master at writing one-to-two-line messages); to Sally Eastham who listened to me complain about flaky service from copy centers; to Tony Lorenz and Tom Kiekhefer and Carol Maehr who sent me great emails about events, reports, news, and dogs; to Richard Ternullo and his cell phone, and to Leon Oliver, too; to people who let me use articles and photographs; to my daughter Heather Burke who took on a lot of the formatting duty the past year.

So, the November issue of *Soundings* will be my ending effort.

Once more with gusto !

**Book Review by Alan Baldrige**

**Whales, Dolphins, and Other Marine Mammals of the World**

By Hadoram Shirihai, illustrated by Brett Jarrett

At last a first rate, highly portable, comprehensive field guide to all the world's marine mammals!

This book is a mine of information, much of it new and not previously gathered in one place. Upon reading and re-reading several times, I am impressed with its comprehensiveness and the sheer elegance of arrangement of a mass of information. It may be somewhat daunting for the beginner with the volume of illustrations and information, but having said that, the page layout (three columns of text), the use of differing typefaces, and the spectacular combination of paintings and photographs make it worthwhile for all interested in marine mammals.

Each species account begins with a box listing "priority characters on surfacing" followed by "typical behavior at surface." Maps for each species show ranges, both summer and winter, migration routes, seasonal occurrence by month plus "known viewing hot spots worldwide". The surfacing and diving profile, as well as the shape of the blow, are diagrammed. The Humpback whale, for example, is treated in four pages with five paintings of different age classes and thirteen photographs illustrating typical behaviors. The illustrations show both sexual as well as geographic variation.

It compares with National Audubon Society's 528 page Guide to Marine Mammals of the World, Knopf 2002. This publication has a bigger format and fewer but larger illustrations of a finer quality by Pieter Folkens but was not intended to be a field guide. It is much admired but less portable.

This Princeton field guide reflects new taxonomies including for the first time species such as Omura's whale, the Tucuxi (split into two species, freshwater and marine), Spade-toothed beaked whale, and Australian Snub-finned dolphin, all of which are now considered newly accepted species. Special attention is given to the confusing small "blackfish" whales such as Pygmy Killer, Melon-headed, and False Killer whales.

Whaling is not addressed in the species accounts but is briefly covered in a three-page segment on conservation in the introductory chapter. It does not include mention of the long ongoing subsistence whaling of Grays by Russian natives in Eastern Siberia, where an average about 180 are taken per year.

The book has 450 color photographs, 500 other illustrations, 124 maps of worldwide distribution. Among the most prolifically illustrated species are no fewer than 24 depictions of the two species of Tursiops. The map for the Northern Right Whale Dolphin (a North Pacific endemic) points to Monterey Bay as the only reliable place to search for this species. It is so comprehensive that it includes extinct forms including Steller's Sea Cow!

Hadoram Shirihai, the principal author and Brett Jarrett illustrator, together with five internationally known marine mammal specialist consultants, have produced a volume of which they can be justifiably proud. The British origins of the volume are betrayed by the spellings of "Grey" whale and "Harbour" seal.

Princeton University Press. 2007 \$24.95 (paper) \$55 (cloth)

*Northern Right Whale Dolphin by John Green,  
Whales & Dolphins Coloring Book, Dover Press*

ACS Monterey Bay Meetings

October 25: This month's meeting

November 29: Next month's meeting

NO meeting in December



## **Whales Get Blown Off: Federal Court Says Navy Can Do Sonar Testing**

Bob Egelko, Chronicle Staff Writer, 9/1/07, San Francisco Chronicle

A federal appeals court allowed the Navy on Friday to resume using underwater sonar blasts in anti-submarine warfare tests off Southern California despite possible harm to endangered whales, saying the nation's military needs come first.

"The safety of the whales must be weighed, and so must the safety of our warriors. And of our country," said the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco.

The 2-1 ruling suspended an Aug. 6 injunction by a federal judge in Los Angeles that ordered the Navy to halt the sonar experiments during training exercises off the Channel Islands planned through January 2009. Three of the 14 scheduled tests had already been conducted before the judge intervened. In her ruling, U.S. District Judge Florence-Marie Cooper said the underwater sound waves could harm nearly 30 species of marine mammals, including five species of endangered whales. She said the Navy's planned protective measures were "woefully inadequate and ineffectual," and cited the Navy's estimate that the tests would cause 466 permanent injuries to whales. The appeals court said Cooper had failed to consider the need for military preparedness.

"We are currently engaged in war, in two countries," said Judge Andrew Kleinfeld in the majority opinion, joined by Judge Consuelo Callahan. "There are no guarantees extending from 2007 to 2009 or at any other time against other countries deciding to engage us, or our determining that it is necessary to engage other countries.

"We customarily give considerable deference to the executive branch's judgment regarding foreign policy and national defense," the court said.

In dissent, Judge Milan Smith said the nation's environmental laws apply to the armed forces. He said the Navy is conducting similar tests all over the world and would suffer no hardship by delaying its Southern California exercises until it adopts adequate protective measures.

"There is no 'national security trump card' that allows the Navy to ignore (the environmental law) to achieve other objectives," Smith said.

But the court majority said the tests should be allowed to resume, while the case continues, because the government is likely to be able to show that sonar can be used safely, with some protective measures, and that the Channel Islands area is an essential testing site.

## **The Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary re: Cetaceans in That Area**

See the web site:

[//channelislands.noaa.gov/animals/animals.html](http://channelislands.noaa.gov/animals/animals.html)

"At least 27 species of cetaceans.... whales and dolphins have been sighted in the sanctuary and about 18 species are seen regularly and are considered "residents."

Little is known about the areas of concentration, life history or behavior of the resident populations. The sanctuary lies on the migratory pathway of the California gray whale and other large baleen and toothed whales. Gray whales with calves have been observed in the nearshore kelp beds of the sanctuary. The gigantic blue whales have also been sighted in sanctuary waters in recent summers."

According to Tony Lorenz of ACSMB, , who stays in touch with whale watchers in southern CA, this year (2007) has been an exciting summer for blue whale sightings in the Channel Islands area, with seventy blue whales reported in the Santa Barbara Channel. Whale watch boats have reported 30 to 40 each trip.

## **Danger in the Channel Islands - Santa Barbara Channel: Ships vs. Whales**

Los Angeles Times, Sep. 23, 2007 excerpts

Three blue whales -- members of the largest species on Earth -- have been discovered dead off Southern California in the last two weeks, the most recent on Wednesday. Two found in the Santa Barbara Channel were thoroughly examined by scientists, who concluded that they were hit by ships. One found in Long Beach Harbor was towed out to sea, but a biologist who viewed it said it probably had been hauled into port on a ship's bow. The questions looming around this puzzling and highly unusual succession of deaths await extensive laboratory testing of the samples extracted Saturday. The tests, which may take months, could point to an illness or infection that slowed the whales as they swam through the busy shipping lanes off Southern California.



Gray whale flukes

Photo by ed.

## **Warming May Be Hurting Gray Whales'**

### **Recovery**

By Juliet Eilperin, Washington Post Staff Writer, Tuesday, September 11, 2007; A12 [from MARMAM listserv]

As many as 118,000 gray whales roamed the Pacific before humans decimated the population through hunting, and human-induced climate change may now be depriving those that remain of the food they need, according to a study released yesterday. The research, based on a detailed analysis of DNA taken from gray whales living in the eastern Pacific, highlights how human behavior has transformed the oceans, the scientists said.

Today there are only about 22,000 Pacific gray whales, including about 100 in the western Pacific. By examining the genetic variability of the current population, scientists at Stanford University and the University of Washington at Seattle calculated that there were between 76,000 and 118,000 gray whales in the Pacific before commercial whaling in the 1800s shrank their numbers.

Federal officials took eastern Pacific gray whales off the endangered species list in the mid-1990s, but a rise in sea temperatures appears to have limited the whales' available food. A recent spike in deaths among gray whales may suggest "this decline was due to shifting climatic conditions on Arctic feeding grounds," the researchers wrote in the paper, being published online this week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"There definitely are large-scale ecosystem effects going on," said Stanford doctoral student S. Elizabeth Alter, the lead author, in an interview yesterday. "One of the most exciting things" about DNA analysis, she said, is that it gives us "the opportunity to look back in time and see what the ocean looked like before human impact." The decline in gray whales has affected the ocean in a variety of ways, according to the researchers. Because the animals feed on the ocean bottom by sucking in and expelling sediment that contains shrimplike creatures called amphipods, the scientists wrote, historic populations may have redistributed enough sediment to feed a million seabirds.

Aboriginal tribes are currently allowed to kill as many as 125 eastern Pacific gray whales a year under International Whaling Commission rules, though this practice has sparked controversy. In light of the new data suggesting that the whales' numbers were more depleted than was previously known, international

officials need to reconsider the amount of gray whale hunting they currently allow, the researchers said.

Stephen R. Palumbi, a professor of marine sciences at Stanford and a co-author of the study, said the research suggests that given the right conditions, the number of gray whales could increase in the years to come. But a warmer Bering Sea could impede this recovery, he said, because it is killing off some of the food the whales consume. When emaciated gray whales washed ashore between 1999 and 2001, scientists initially speculated that the animals were exhausting the ocean's "carrying capacity," Palumbi added, but it could be instead that global warming is to blame. "It's not a conclusion we can come to. It's a hint," he said in an interview. But if humans are affecting the ocean's "capacity to support life, it's got to make you worry, it's got to make your wonder."

### **Gray Whale Shot, Killed in Rogue Tribal Hunt**

By Lynda V. Mapes and Keith Ervin, Seattle Times staff reporters, 9/9/07, [www.seattletimes.newsource.com](http://www.seattletimes.newsource.com)

Five Makah Nation members harpooned and shot a gray whale east of Neah Bay on Saturday morning, shocking environmentalists and tribal leaders alike. The whale died less than 12 hours later, sinking while heading out to sea. The move short-circuited years of wrangling in the courts over whaling by the tribe, which hunted its first whale in 70 years in 1999. A marine biologist who works for the Makah pronounced the whale dead at 7:15 p.m., U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer Shawn Eggert said. The whale went under about a mile from Cape Flattery, and did not resurface. The Coast Guard, following the whale at a distance of 500 yards, saw that buoys attached to the harpoon stopped moving.

The Coast Guard took the five rogue whalers into custody and turned them over to Makah tribal police for further questioning around 6 p.m. Saturday. "Their fate will ultimately be decided by the tribe," Eggert said.

The hunt wasn't authorized by the tribal council or by the federal government. "I don't know why they did this. It's terrible," said John McCarty who, as a former member of the tribe's whaling commission, has been an advocate of the Makah Nation's right to resume whaling under an 1855 treaty. "I think the anti-whalers will be after us in full force, and we look ridiculous," McCarty said. "Like we can't manage our own people, we can't manage our own whale."



“The scientific research permitting process has been under considerable review and increased scrutiny during the past few years..... We would appreciate your review and any suggestions on where improvements in the regulations would benefit the permitting process.” Close of comment period: Nov. 13, 2007  
Chief, Permits, Conservation and Education Division, ATT: Permit Regulations ANPR, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; or FAX (301) 427-2521, followed by mail; or email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov (Include in the subject line of the email “Permit Regulations ANPR”); or via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov

“On May 10, 1996, a final rule was published establishing requirements for issuing permits to take, import or export marine mammals (including endangered and threatened marine mammals) and marine mammal parts under the NMFS [National Marine Fisheries Service] jurisdiction for purposes of scientific research and enhancement, photography, and public display. NMFS intends to revise these regulations to streamline and clarify permitting requirements, simplify procedures for transferring marine mammal parts, possibly apply to the General Authorization (GA) to research activities involving Level A harassment of non-ESA listed marine mammals, and implement a ‘permit application cycle’ for application submission and processing of all marine mammal permits. NMFS intends to write regulations for photography permits and is considering whether this activity should be covered by the GA.....”

<b>MARMAM      How to Subscribe</b>	Marine Mammals Research and Conservation Discussion is an e-mail list established in August 1993, run through the University of Victoria (BC, Canada) to serve researchers, managers and others working with marine mammals. Subscriptions are free and open to anyone interested in marine mammals. Postings to the list are restricted to messages directly relevant to marine mammal research or conservation.
To subscribe to MARMAM, follow the instructions located at <a href="http://lists.uvic.ca/mailman/listinfo/marmam">//lists.uvic.ca/mailman/listinfo/marmam</a>	

**Cat Litter Killing Whales, Dolphins, Porpoises**      Posted on MARMAM by William Rossiter, Cetacean Society International, 9/1/07 See also [www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2007/aug/30/3/](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2007/aug/30/3/)

Pet owners who flush used cat litter down the lavatory may be responsible for the deaths of whales, dolphins and porpoises around Britain’s coast, according to academics and public health experts. They have found evidence of a common parasite in dead marine mammals and say family cats could be the unwitting source. Cats are essential to the life cycle of toxoplasma gondii, which can infect most mammals and birds but only as part of the food chain.

The possible link to dolphin deaths has been raised by staff from Swansea and Glamorgan universities and the National Public Health Service for Wales in a letter to the Veterinary Record. They say that in CA concern that cat faeces have contributed to sea otter deaths has led to disposal warnings on bags of cat litter. But little is known about infection in marine species around Britain. Blood samples from dead stranded cetaceans revealed infection in one in 70 harbour porpoises, in six of 21 common dolphins and in the only humpback whale tested. Nearly one in eight Swansea University and health service employees admitted flushing cat litter away.



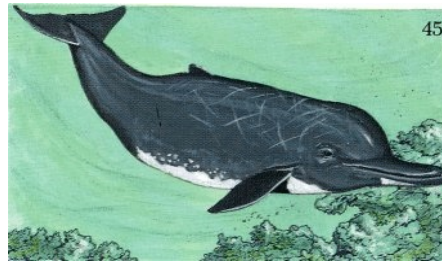
*String of dolphins by Bob Western*

# SIGHTINGS

Compiled by Monterey Bay Whale Watch Center, at Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf

Date	#	Type of Animal(s)
9/1	1	Humpback whale
	7	Killer whales
9/2am	2	Humpback whales
	7	Killer whales
9/2pm	1	Humpback whale
9/3am	4	Humpback whales
	25	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	40	Risso's dolphins
	20	Northern right whale dolphins
9/3pm	3	Humpback whales
9/4	25	Risso's dolphins'
	1	Steller Sea Lion
9/5am	5	Humpback whales
	40	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	70	Risso's dolphins
9/5pm	2	Humpback whales
9/6	6	Humpback whales
	50	Risso's dolphins
	15	Dall's porpoise
9/7	5	Humpback whales
	50	Risso's dolphins
	15	Dall's porpoise
9/8am	15	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	120	Risso's dolphins
9/8pm	4	Humpback whales
	6	Killer whales (transient type)
	10	Dall's porpoise
9/9am	4	Humpback whales
	60	Risso's dolphins
9/10a	4	Humpback whales
	30	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	50	Risso's dolphins
9/10p	3	Humpback whales
9/11a	4	Humpback whales
	150	Risso's dolphins
9/11p	4	Killer whales (transient type)
9/12a	3	Humpback whales
	4	Killer whales (tran-

	600	Risso's dolphins
	200	Northern right whale dolphins
9/12p	2	Humpback whales
	6	Harbor porpoise
9/13a	4	Killer whales (transient type)
	1	Humpback whale
9/13p	4	Killer whales
	1	Humpback whale
9/14a	3	Humpback whales
	500	Risso's dolphins
9/14p	1	Humpback whale
	120	Risso's dolphins
9/15a	6	Humpback whales
	20	Pacific white-sided dolphins
9/15p	3	Humpback whales
9/16a	5	Humpback whales
	15	Baird's beaked whales
9/16p	2	Humpback whales
	30	Risso's dolphins
9/17	2	Humpback whales
	45	Risso's dolphins
9/18a	5	Killer whales (transient type)
	2	Humpback whales
9/18p	5	Killer whales
9/19a	4	Killer whales (transient type)
	2	Humpback whales
9/19p	3	Humpback whales
9/20	4	Humpback whales
	30	Risso's dolphins
9/21a	4	Humpback whales
9/21p	5	Humpback whales
	60	Risso's dolphins



Baird's Beaked Whale by John Green

9/22a	9	Killer whales (transient type)
	3	Humpback whales
9/22p	6	Humpback whales
	25	Risso's dolphins
9/23a	3	Humpback whales
	15	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	550	Risso's dolphins
	70	Northern right whale dolphins
9/23p	6	Humpback whales
	15	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	550	Risso's dolphins
	70	Northern right whale dolphins
9/24a	1	Humpback whale
	350	Risso's dolphins
	40	Northern right whale dolphins
9/24p	1	Humpback whale
9/25a	5	Humpback whales
9/25p	4	Humpback whales
	80	Pacific white-sided dolphins
	350	Risso's dolphins
	15	Northern right whale dolphins

For updates see 'Sightings' at [www.gowhales.com](http://www.gowhales.com)

## Baird's Beaked Whales

*Berardius bairdii* 12.8 m. long  
 Large, longish, robust body - the largest beaked whales, restricted to deep offshore waters of northern N Pacific. May be relatively approachable in regions where not hunted. Rounded head with distinct bulging forehead (melon higher and whiter with age). Long beak with lower jaw projecting beyond upper. Surface periods short, at most 5 min. Low circular 'puffy' blow often visible at long distance. Rather social, often in tight groups that typically surface, log and blow in unison.

Source: excerpts from Shirihai p. 112 (see this Soundings p.3)

**American Cetacean Society**  
**Monterey Bay Chapter**  
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# Soundings



American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter

November 2007

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS

## AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY- MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER

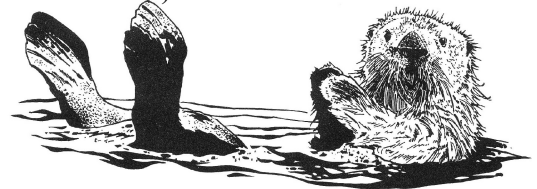
Monthly meeting at Hopkins Marine Station, Lecture Hall, Boatworks Building

(Across from the American Tin Cannery Outlet Stores)

Date: Thursday, November 29, 2007

Time: 7:30 PM, Please join us at 7 for refreshments

Speaker: Dr. James Estes



Supervisory Zoologist, GM-486/15, California Science Center, National Biological Service, Santa Cruz, CA; Adjunct Professor, Biological Sciences, University of California, Santa Cruz; Research Biologist, Institute for Marine Sciences, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Title: From Killer Whales to Kelp Forests

Dr. Estes is an internationally recognized expert on the coastal ecosystem of Alaska's Aleutian archipelago and, among other critters, the sea otter. Jim has studied this ecosystem since the early 1970's. Because of his many years of collecting data, making observations and publishing of results Jim's work has made ground breaking contributions to what is known about this coastal ecosystem and the linkages it has to other marine habitats.

In the early years, Jim's research team observed killer whales swimming with otters with no apparent interaction. In 1991 an orca was first observed attacking a sea otter and the attacks continued. A 25% decrease in the sea otter population was observed during the first few years of the 1990s. This shift in the orcas' predation caused a substantial disruption in the coastal ecosystem and Jim's observations were summarized in the October 18, 1998 issue of the UCSC's Currents:

"The new phenomenon of killer whales preying on sea otters appears to be one link in a chain of interactions extending from the open sea to the coastal zone and involving a wide range of species at different levels of the food chain. Over exploitation of certain North Pacific and Bering Sea fisheries may have initiated this cascade of ecological effects."

Ultimately, with the decline in sea otters there was also a decline in the coastal kelp forest.

Recently, Jim was a co-editor of a new book, Whales, Whaling and Ocean Ecosystems, University of California Press, December 2006. One of the ideas discussed in this book is that commercial whaling prompted a dietary shift in killer whales that previously preyed on the large whales. Now smaller marine mammals, including sea otters are targeted by orca.

Please join us at our monthly meeting to hear the latest from this cutting edge marine scientist, researcher and thinker.

Program information by Bob Mannix; contact him for references re the above summary of Dr. Estes' work.

Drawing by Bob Giuliani, *Illustrations of Marine Mammals*, Dover 1995.



## Gov. Schwarzenegger Signs Bills to Protect California's Ocean Resources

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger today signed a series of bills designed to protect ocean and environmental resources. The bills, listed below, will maintain and improve the quality of California's marine environment, promote ocean and coastal research, further develop fisheries management plans and guard against the threat of aquatic invasive species.

"California's coastline is magnificent. The coast is not only where we live, but where we work and play," said Gov. Schwarzenegger. "These bills will allow California to continue on the path as a world leader in the preservation and protection of our ocean resources."

The following bills have been signed into law:

**[AB 1056](#)** by Assemblymember Mark Leno (D-San Francisco): Authorizes the Ocean Protection Council to establish a science advisory team to identify scientific research priorities necessary to protect coastal water and ocean ecosystems and authorizes the Ocean Protection Council to spend funds without the approval of the State Coastal Conservancy.

**[AB 1280](#)** by Assemblymember John Laird (D-Santa Cruz): Expands the eligible uses of monies in the California Ocean Protection Trust Fund to include the development of fisheries management plans and authorizes expenditures from that fund for community-based management and allocation strategies that would increase incentives for ecosystem improvement.

**[AB 740](#)** by Assemblymember John Laird (D-Santa Cruz): Expands the marine invasive species program by requiring specified inwater cleaning and record keeping for vessels that visit a California port or place, and requires State Lands Commission to develop regulations governing the management of hull fouling on vessels by January 1, 2012.

**[AB 800](#)** by Assemblymember Ted Lieu (D-Torrance): Requires a person, without regard to intent or negligence, who permits or causes the discharge of sewage or waste in or on any waters of the state to notify the local health officer (LHO) or director of environmental health (DEH) as soon as the person has knowledge of the discharge and requires the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to immediately notify the appropriate LHO or DEH. Upon receiving notification of the discharge, requires the LHO or the DEH to

determine whether notification of the public is required to safeguard public health and safety.

**[AB 1220](#)** by Assemblymember John Laird (D-Santa Cruz): Makes a number of substantive and technical amendments pertaining to the Lempert-Keene-Seastrand Oil Spill and Response Act.

**[AB 1396](#)** by Assemblymember John Laird (D-Santa Cruz): Requires the Department of Transportation, consistent with existing law, to annually identify excess coastal zone property and provide the information to specified agencies, including the State Coastal Conservancy. Existing law authorizes the Legislature to transfer excess specified coastal zone property to specified agencies, including the State Coastal Conservancy.

(Contributed by Jerry Loomis and Carol Maehr for *Soundings*)

### Comments on the bills from North County Times, San Diego & Riverside Counties, Oct. 15, 2007

One of the bills seeks to encourage prompt reporting of sewage spills by creating a system in which people are not held criminally liable when they report spills, said Gabriel Solmer, legal director for the conservation group San Diego Coastkeeper. "The idea is to get these spills cleaned up as quickly as possible. That's our first priority," Solmer said. "We want these to be reported before they become disaster." Solmer said her group welcomes all the new laws. "In general, they are important steps on the path to a healthy ocean and coastline," she said.

Some local lawmakers say some of the legislation was not needed and could create unwanted, unintended side effects. For example, the bill that targets nonnative species is likely to increase costs for international shippers, leading some to move products through West Coast ports outside California, said Assemblyman Martin Garrick, R-Carlsbad, in a telephone interview.

"We don't want to lose any business," Garrick said, noting that ports such as those in Los Angeles and San Diego are major employers. "It is a competitive world out there." Garrick said federal laws already address the problem.

Assemblywoman Mimi Walters, R-Oceanside, also voted against the shipping bill. "Small shipping companies who would not be able to absorb additional hull cleaning costs would be particularly

discouraged from entering California ports," Walters said. "Instead, these and other shippers would choose to use ports in Oregon, Washington, Alaska, or even Canada and Mexico."

Assemblyman John Laird, D-Santa Cruz, who wrote the legislation, dismisses those concerns. "It's not going to drive them away from California," he said. "It's just going to make California's waters safer." Laird said the legislation, Assembly Bill 740, targets the problem of ship-hitchhiking nonnative species such as mussels and barnacles that, if they become established, prey on native fish and rob them of their food supply. The bill requires operators to thoroughly clean ship hulls and ballast water before they reach California and to keep detailed records of such activities.

"Right now there is no real requirement for any regular cleaning or maintenance," Laird said by telephone. "This now will set up a framework for ships to better clean and maintain their hulls in a way that prevents invasive species from entering California waters."

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#### **U.S. Dept of Interior Ignores Marine Mammal Population Decreases**

"Marine mammals are being managed based on outdated population figures that show more animals than actually exist. ...Two conservation organizations have filed a lawsuit against Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne for failing to take into account the latest information on global warming and population numbers in management decisions concerning protected marine mammals." - excerpt from Environment News Service article and Center for Biological Diversity press release.

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#### **Sanctuary Symposium, April 5, 2008**

"At our meeting last week, the planning committee agreed on a theme for this year's symposium, which will be held April 5 at CSUMB. The theme is: Climate change, the role of the ocean, and the effects of climate change on the marine environment." writes Kaitilin Gaffney, The Ocean Conservancy, via an email from Carol Maehr



Jan. 19, 2008 Sat. 8 am at  
Monterey Whale Watching Fisherman's Wharf,  
Monterey Whale Watch Cruise  
Spend 2 hours with gray whales and naturalists to  
tell you all about them ! This is a benefit  
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For information call  
Jerry Loomis 649-1249  
Sally Eastham 372-6919

### **C A L E N D A R**

Next regular meeting: January 24, 2008  
No meeting in December 2007

Annual Election of Officers will take place in the January meeting. Please note we are in need of a volunteer for the position of Historian. Contact Jerry Loomis if you can do this: [loomis@mbay.net](mailto:loomis@mbay.net)

This is a great bunch of folks involved in interesting work for whales, dolphins and the ocean environment. Join us !

Below is the roster for the January elections:

President, Jerry Loomis  
Vice President, David Zaches  
Treasurer, Katy Castagna  
Secretary, Gina Thomas  
Membership secretary, Sally Eastham  
Newsletter mailing, Barbara Oliver  
Publicity chair, Diane Glim  
Program chair, Bob Mannix, Alan Baldrige  
Conservation chair, Carol Maehr  
Education chair, Morgen Puckett, Rene Rodriguez  
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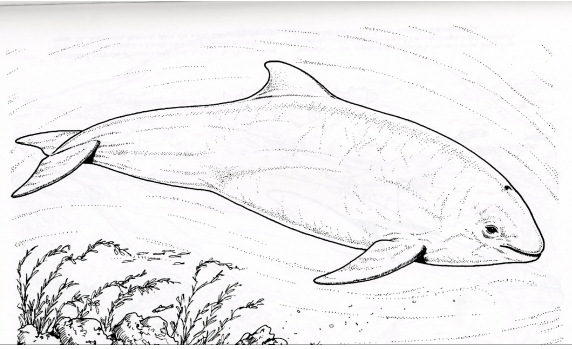
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Alan Baldrige  
Tom Kieckhefer  
Jerry Loomis  
Richard Ternullo  
Jud Vandever

Editor of *Soundings*: Tony Lorenz  
Webmaster: Evelyn Starr

+

Dolphin smiles and happy spouts for the Holidays to all of you from The Board of ACS Monterey Bay !

## Here Today: Will They Be Here Tomorrow?



### Vaquita

“In addition to being the rarest of cetaceans, the vaquita is also the smallest. Its torpedo-shaped body measures less than five feet from snout to tail; calves are just twenty-eight inches long at birth, the size of a large loaf of bread. From a distance, the vaquita appears drab gray with a lighter belly, but at close range some intriguing details in the paint job emerge. A black stripe runs forward from each flipper to the middle of the lower lip, so the animal appears to be holding its own bridle. It has a black, circular patch around each eye. And its black lips set off a haunting little smile: Mona Lisa with black lipstick.

“But the vaquita has no reason to smile. The world population of vaquitas is probably about 200 individuals—you can see more people in a Wal-Mart on a busy weekend. And though Wal-Martians are definitely in no danger of extinction, the vaquita is losing market share. Gill nets—nearly invisible fishing nets set in the water like curtains and often left unattended—are the single greatest cause of vaquita mortality each year. Vaquitas become entangled and drown when they swim into the nets by accident; or they might be lured there by fish that are already stuck. Vaquitas aren’t the intended targets of any fishery; they’re merely the bycatch of local fishermen trying to earn a living—collateral damage.”

“How Now, Little Cow,” by Robert L. Pitman and Lorenzo Rojas-Bracho, *Natural History Magazine*, July/August 2007, is an excellent article about two small cetaceans on the brink of extinction or already gone. Excerpts are above and below. —ed.

With the vaquita’s population in steady decline, its distribution in the northern gulf has also contracted, so that its range is now the smallest of any marine mammal. Nearly the entire population lives in a region less than forty miles across.....

Even the vaquita’s scientific name, *Phocoena sinus*, acknowledges its claustrophobic range. *Phocoena* is derived from both the Greek and Latin words for “porpoise”; *sinus* is Latin for “bay” or “pocket,” and refers

to the animal’s restricted home waters. (The common name, vaquita, means “little cow” in Spanish—a rather fitting name now that biologists know that all cetaceans are the product of a successful re-invasion of the ocean by terrestrial ungulates.)

In spite of the good intentions reflected by the creation of [northern Sea of Cortez] protected areas, harmful fishing practices have continued virtually unchecked...because the boundaries of the reserve and the refuge are not marked, and because there is little enforcement of the no-gill-netting rule, poor results seem all but inevitable.

Vaquita conservation, of course, raises thorny ethical and sociological issues. The people who live along the desert shores eke out a tenuous living by fishing in the same waters as the vaquita. They simply want to keep their families fed and improve their lot. The tragedy is that their poverty and their struggles will continue long after the last vaquita loses its own final struggle in a ball of monofilament net.

### Baiji

The same article compares the vaquita’s fate to that of the baiji, which already has been considered extinct. One of the article’s authors, Bob Pitman of Southwest Fisheries, CA, has been involved with surveys of both species. The article does not mention one unconfirmed report of a possible sighting Aug. 19, 2007.

“And then there’s the baiji (*Lipotes vexillifer*), a dolphin that lived only in the Yangtze River. In the fall of 2006 one of us (Pitman) took part in a search for the last baiji. For the past twenty to thirty years the baiji had been recognized as the world’s most critically endangered cetacean, because of its high rate of accidental drownings in fishing gear. In a six-week survey, the searchers failed to find a single individual—and in the end, were forced to conclude that the baiji, after more than 20 million years swimming in the Yangtze, was probably extinct.

“There are troubling similarities between the baiji and the vaquita, the next cetacean in line for extinction. Historically, both species occupied small, insular ranges surrounded by fishing communities. They both faced the same threat to survival: nets. Both species, like all cetaceans, were slow to mature and had long intervals between births, so even if the threats to their survival had been removed, their reduced populations would have recovered very slowly. Both had been at risk of extinction for some time. “Protective measures” were put in place for both: reserves were created and laws were crafted that made harmful fishing practices illegal in protected areas.



But the reserves existed largely in name only, and enforcement was unsuccessful.”

### **Pink River Dolphin, “Boto” Grey River Dolphin**

Excerpts from “A Quest to Save Freshwater Dolphins,” by Sibylla Brodzinsky, in Ichilo River, Bolivia, *The Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 9, 2007.

“There is a swell in the water and the dolphin’s elongated pinkish-grey nose breaks the surface. A graceful curve and he plunges back into the river. South America’s river dolphins aren’t as sleek as their marine cousins. Rather than a dorsal fin they have a dorsal hump and an elongated beak. But their coloring is eye catching. *Bufeos* can range from shades of pink blush to flamingo fuchsia, depending on their physical activity.

“Conservationists are counting on the *bufeos* to act as a sort of poster child for South American rivers under threat from pollution, overfishing, and deforestation. An expedition of Bolivian, Colombian, and Argentine scientists is part of a year-long census of freshwater dolphins in the Amazon and Orinoco river basin. The information will help them to establish a baseline population of the dolphins and develop a conservation plan – not just for the mammals but for the entire ecosystem in which they live. Historically, the *bufeos* has been spared human persecution because of beliefs that it has special powers. Riverside communities tell tales of women impregnated by dolphins or how each dolphin is an incarnation of a man. However, today fishermen increasingly view them as an unwanted competitor for fish. “When one gets caught in our nets, it eats half of our fish, and the best ones, too. Of course we get angry. So we kill it.”

“Hope remains for the river dolphins of South America where huge development projects are still on the drawing boards. On the Ochilo River in Bolivia biologists were pleased to see little human impact on the area. In over 550 linear kilometers, they sighted 485 dolphins. Other countries show more alarming figures. In seven days, only 33 pink dolphins were spotted in Ecuador.” In Colombia they found dolphins poisoned with mercury, apparently from eating fish downstream in Venezuela contaminated by gold mining.

The World Wildlife Fund reports survey figures: The survey counted 520 dolphins — 321 grey (*Sotalia fluviatilis*) and 199 pink (*Inia geoffrensis*) — during a 294-kilometre voyage down the Amazon, Atacuari and

Javari rivers in Colombia, Brazil and Peru. (2007) In previous legs of the expedition the team recorded: 270 dolphins in Venezuela (June 2006); 40 in Ecuador (July 2006); 131 on Colombia’s Meta River (August 2006); and 818 in Peru (September 2006).

[http://www.panda.org/news\\_facts/newsroom/index.cfm?uNewsID=96560](http://www.panda.org/news_facts/newsroom/index.cfm?uNewsID=96560)



(Vaquita and sperm whale drawings by John Green, *Whales and Dolphins Coloring Book*, Dover, 1990.)

### **Odontocetes (& Humpbacks?)**

#### **WHALING IN MICRONESIA**

Posted on Marmam listserv Oct. 23, 2007

For all of us working on improving the protective management for cetaceans in Indonesia, the 'knowledge gap' on marine mammal species and habitat use within the archipelago remains a major challenge. This week's entanglement and stranding of a juvenile humpback may indeed be the first report for Bali. However humpback whales have previously been sighted and photographed in east Indonesian waters. Indeed, an adult was harpooned and killed... by the traditional whaling community of Lamalera on Lembata Island in the 2006 season or 'lefa'. This was a highly exceptional event as the Lamalera community routinely targets sperm whales and other odontocetes. These recent sightings in Indonesian waters, coupled with reported increases in numbers of humpbacks migrating north along the NW Australian coast, could indicate (part of) this population is 'recolonizing' an original, pre-whaling habitat in the NE Indian Ocean or is expanding its range - and as such may be increasingly at risk of the numerous cetacean-fisheries interactions while in Indonesian waters. It will be interesting to see if sightings continue in coming seasons and we are looking forward to collaborate with humpback whale projects in the region. Regards, Benjamin Kahn



## **Bottlenose Dolphin**

### **CLASSIC RESCUE BY DOLPHINS**

iVillage, MSNBC's Mike Celizic reported on 11/8/07 that last August a shark bitten surfer was rescued by bottlenose dolphins. Surfer Todd Endris needed a miracle. The shark — a monster great white that came out of nowhere — had hit him three times, peeling the skin off his back and mauling his right leg to the bone. That's when a pod of bottlenose dolphins intervened, forming a protective ring around Endris, allowing him to get to shore, where quick first aid provided by a friend saved his life. The attack occurred on Aug. 28, at Marina State Park off Monterey, where the 24-year-old surfer had gone with friends for a day of the sport they love. Nearly 4 months later Endris is still undergoing physical therapy to repair muscle damage suffered during the attack but is back on his board in the same spot where he almost died. The attack occurred on Tuesday, Aug. 28, just before 11 a.m. at Marina State Park off Monterey, Calif., where the 24-year-old owner of Monterey Aquarium Services had gone with friends for a day of the sport they love. Nearly four months later, Endris, who is still undergoing physical therapy to repair muscle damage suffered during the attack, is back in the water and on his board in the same spot where he almost lost his life (This item cited in email by Heather Burke. Read the whole gory story (excerpts above) at [www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21689083/from/ET](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21689083/from/ET))

Timely, even critically important for action for the environment: these are the email updates available from Carol Maehr, ACS Monterey Bay's Conservation Chair. Just send her an email to join her list: [c.maehr@att.net](mailto:c.maehr@att.net)

### **SOLOMON ISLANDS EXPORT LIVE DOLPHINS**

Following the controversial export of 28 dolphins to Mexico in 2003, the Solomon Islands banned trade in live dolphins. Now, however, the Solomon Islands government is set to allow the export of live dolphins for animal shows to resume. The decision is being promoted as a means of improving the livelihoods of villagers. Fisheries minister Nollen Leni said that up to 100 bottlenose dolphins could be exported annually.

Not surprisingly, the move has been widely criticized by environmental and animal welfare organizations.

The Guardian, The Sydney Morning Herald, Intl. Herald Tribune, email from Carol Maehr.

## **Risso's Dolphin**

### **DOLPHIN STRANDINGS ARE A BIG PROBLEM FOR EVERYONE**

At possibly 12 feet in length and 1000 pounds weight, a Risso's dolphin is too heavy to be lifted by a couple humans (though four tried in this event about a year ago) and too big to fit into most pickup trucks, much less the rescue framework designed to keep a stranded dolphin wet. Here, a crane operator from Pebble Beach helps staff from The Marine Mammal Center move a Risso's off the beach, but where to put it!

Dolphin strandings are not unusual on the Monterey Peninsula. As a peninsula, it juts out into the ocean right into the action of passing, hunting, mating, communities of odontocetes (toothed cetaceans). A dolphin often strands alone, which may be an indication something is wrong enough to make it leave its pod. Often it dies shortly after reaching shore. After that, much might be learned from a necropsy and an academic institution might do it – there are strict laws and guidelines about it. Permits are required to even touch the animal, dead or alive.

Those of us who have tried to assist at a dolphin rescue know it is particularly heartbreaking because of the mystique of cetaceans, their ability to look at us in a way we never forget. There is no good way to move them off the beach and there usually is no place to take a living dolphin for study, rehab, medical care or anything else. In the past, TMMC folks have tried to find a tank big enough, but it's difficult and expensive. Any institution with healthy animals doesn't want to risk infection from a wild one.

Doing the best they could with the equipment they had, rescue was attempted. Setting off down the highway, the staff realized the dolphin had died and delivered it to UCSC marine labs for necropsy.

What's to be done on the Central Coast: no facilities, no big tanks, few people with federal permits. –ed. ✦



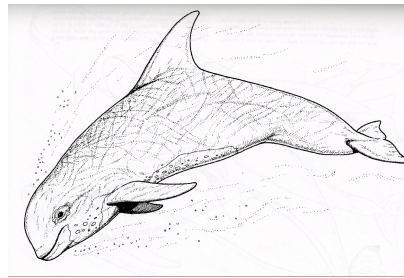
Photo by Ron Kirk

# SIGHTINGS

Compiled by  
**Monterey Bay Whale Watch**  
 For updates see  
[www.gowhales.com/sightings](http://www.gowhales.com/sightings)

10/1 4 Humpback whales  
 10/2am 3 Humpback whales  
 15 Risso's dolphins  
 10/2pm 5 Humpback whales  
 10/3 2 Humpback whales  
 20 Risso's dolphins  
 10/4 No trip, poor weather  
 10/5 6 Humpback whales  
 10/6am 7 Humpback whales  
 60 Pacific white-sided dolphins  
 500 Risso's dolphins  
 30 Northern right-whale dolphins  
 10/6pm 5 Humpback whales  
 10/7am 4 Humpback whales  
 140 Risso's dolphins  
 10/7pm 4 Humpback whales  
 10/8am 5 Humpback whales  
 120 Pacific white-sided dolphins  
 600 Risso's dolphins  
 150 Northern right-whale dolphins  
 10/8pm 3 Humpback whales  
 1 Pacific white-sided dolphin  
 60 Risso's dolphins  
 10/9 4 Humpback whales  
 10/10am 3 Humpback whales  
 30 Risso's dolphins  
 10/10pm 6 Humpback whales  
 10/11am 15 Humpback whales  
 250 Risso's dolphins  
 10/11pm 7 Humpback whales  
 20 Pacific white-sided dolphins  
 70 Risso's dolphins  
 10/12 6 Humpback whales  
 50 Risso's dolphins  
 10/15am 8 Humpback whales  
 25 Pacific white-sided dolphins  
 200 Risso's dolphins  
 10/15pm 12 Humpback whales  
 30 Risso's dolphins  
 10/16am 5 Humpback whales  
 10 Pacific white-sided dolphins

50 Risso's dolphins  
 20 Bottlenose dolphins  
 10/16pm 4 Humpback whales  
 10/17 No trip  
 10/18 4 Humpback whales  
 110 Risso's dolphins  
 22 Dall's porpoise  
 10/19am 8 Humpback whales  
 315 Risso's dolphins  
 19 Dall's porpoise  
 10/19pm 5 Humpback whales  
 1 Minke whale  
 10/20 13 Humpback whales  
 5 Dall's porpoise  
 10/21am 7 Humpback whales  
 20 Pacific white-sided dolphins  
 2 Long beaked common dolphins  
 10/21pm 8 Humpback whales  
 10 Risso's dolphins  
 10/22am 8 Humpback whales  
 11 Dall's porpoise  
 1 Fur seal  
 10/22pm 8 Humpback whales  
 7 Dall's porpoise  
 10/23am 14 Humpback whales  
 45 Risso's dolphins  
 10/23pm 9 Humpback whales  
 35 Risso's dolphins  
 4 Dall's porpoise



Risso's dolphin by John Green, Dover Press

## Just TWO Common Dolphins ?

Common dolphins, long beaked and short beaked, seem to have a habit of hanging around in large groups when we're lucky. At times a few years ago, boats might have been traveling along with dolphins spread as far as the eye could see. No one knows exactly why such large pods come and go, form and dissipate, but that's a grand sight.

Recently, according to Richard Ternullo of *Sea Wolf II*, there have been two, just two, long beaked common dolphins sighted off the end of Monterey breakwater. Given the sometimes big sizes of pods and the distances they travel, the two seemingly normal individuals are quite a puzzle.

Several years ago, Sheila Baldrige, Wildlife Center staff, a few surfers and this editor tried to deal with a stranding of three Risso's dolphins on a beach at the bottom of a cliff in Big Sur. It seemed to us there was one dolphin ill or wounded that stranded high in a beach stream, and two more had accompanied that one to the edge of the sand. Altruism in odontocetes is well known, but we'll never be sure what was going on.

Humpback whale sightings are still almost a daily pleasure. Sometimes it seems the same whales are seen, and there still is a food supply for them in the vicinity. Other times the whales might be passing through on their way south to breeding grounds off Mexico or Central America.

We wonder just where our passing humpbacks have been. Minerals Management service spokeswoman Robin Cacy says endangered humpbacks swam into an offshore oil drilling area in the Beaufort Sea this summer. Center for Biological Diversity Oceans program director Brendan Cummings said the sightings may be a sign of a recovering humpback population expanding its range or of desperate animals in search of food due to the effects of global warming. (Last item is from Carol Maehr 11/8/07)

**Catch Soundings on our web site about a month after the issue is mailed. Photos look good in color !**

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