



Whales Alive!

Vol. XVIII No. 2

A publication of Cetacean Society International

April 2009

When in Rome, Do as the Whales Do!

By Heather D. Rockwell, CSI Board Member

I recently returned from the three-day Intersessional meeting of the International Whaling Commission, held at the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) Headquarters in Rome, Italy. From the front of the FAO building, you could see the ruins of the Colosseum, the iconic site of bloody gladiatorial fights and animal hunts, and the Circus Maximus, where chariot races were watched by over 250,000 spectators. And although one does not normally equate whales with Rome, whales have been a part of Roman history and culture for centuries. The scientific name for the killer whale, *Orcinus orca*, is credited to the ancient Romans, who called orcas “sea devils” and supposedly named them after Orcus, a Roman god of the underworld. And, ancient Romans thought that whales stranded on their beaches were being punished and driven ashore by Neptune, the god of the sea. However, for three days in March in modern Rome, the world’s whales were at center stage for a meeting attended by over 40 nations.

The Intersessional was the first time that NGOs (non-governmental organizations) were allowed in the room to hear discussions on the work and progress to date of the Small Working Group (SWG) on the Future of the IWC, which had met twice before behind closed doors in St. Petersburg, Florida and Cambridge, England. The primary focus of the Intersessional was the “Chairs’ Suggestions,” a

document prepared by SWG Chair Ambassador Alvaro de Soto and IWC Chair and U.S. Commissioner William Hogarth. The document essentially seeks a compromise with Japan by offering to legalize commercial whaling, lift the moratorium, and legalize coastal whaling – in exchange for Japan reducing or ceasing their special permit (scientific) whaling in the Antarctic.

However, Japan does not appear to be willing to negotiate when it comes to scientific whaling, even if the deal would give them the coastal whaling quotas they have sought for so long. Japan appears reluctant to end their scientific whaling program in the Southern Ocean or to reduce the numbers of whales killed there. While Japan was relatively silent throughout the meeting’s proceedings except for a rambling diatribe on safety at sea issues regarding the tactics of Sea Shepherd around the Japanese whaling fleet in the Antarctic, the Republic of Korea was quite forthright in stating their sup-

port for the proposed “deal” with Japan. Korea’s desire for coastal whaling, ostensibly to support communities suffering economic and social hardships, verifies the concerns of many nations and NGOs that if Japan’s coastal whaling is allowed other nations will want the same, proliferating commercial whaling.

The compromise is so focused on Japan’s scientific whaling program in the Antarctic that major issues, includ-



**The Colosseum with a modern Rome street view.
Photo by Heather Rockwell.**

ing the continued scientific whaling by Japan in the North Pacific; the continued commercial whaling by Iceland and Norway in the North Atlantic under objection to the moratorium; the increased trade in whale meat between Japan, Norway and Iceland; and the category “b” issues like animal welfare, whale watching and bycatch, were barely touched upon during the meeting. After one full day and two half day sessions, the meeting concluded with the SWG being tasked with the directive to continue its work to complete a proposal that would contain a package or packages to be considered by the entire Commission at the IWC Annual Meeting in June in Madeira, Portugal. The SWG continued to meet in Rome for another two days after the close of the Intersessional, again behind closed doors and out of view of the NGOs, to further their work on developing options for a final SWG document, which will be released on May 18th.

Despite the willingness of many countries to negotiate with Japan, there were a few positives for the whales at the Intersessional. For the first time in many years, a representative from the White House Council on Environmental Quality was on the U.S. delegation. The WhalesNeedUS NGOs welcomed the addition of Michael Weiss to the delegation and viewed his attendance at the meeting as a positive step forward by the Obama Administration in making sure IWC proceedings are transparent and open to all observers. In addition, three anti-whaling

NGOs were allowed to speak for five minutes during the second day of the meeting. Sidney Holt spoke first on the history of conflict resolution and conservation issues in the IWC. Nanami Kurasawa’s speech focused on the protected J-stock Minke whales and coastal whaling. And finally, Tanya Schumacher touched on the animal welfare problems associated with whaling. And while NGOs welcomed this chance to have three of our associates address the full Commission, we will continue to push for the rights of all NGOs to speak to each agenda item considered by the IWC at the Annual Meeting.

CSI was well represented at the Intersessional meeting. Four CSI Directors attended: Kate O’Connell represented CSI; Deb Adams represented LegaSeas International; Nancy Azzam represented WindStar; and while also representing CSI, I was appointed to the U.S. Delegation to represent all U.S. NGOs. We will continue to urge the U.S. government to stand strong and continue to support the commercial whaling moratorium (which was President Obama’s campaign position) and to call on Japan to end its scientific whaling program. The details contained within the final SWG documents will set the tone for the 61st Annual Meeting of the IWC (IWC/61), where governments will need to decide whether to compromise with Japan or continue to push for greater worldwide protection for whales. IWC/61 will be held in Madeira, Portugal, with sub-group meetings occurring during the week of June 16th and the full Plenary meeting running from June 22nd through June 26th.

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A publication of Cetacean Society International
Editor: Brent S. Hall

CSI is an all-volunteer, non-profit, tax-exempt conservation, education, and research organization with representatives in over 25 countries. Our goal is the “optimum utilization of cetacean resources,” as called for in the 1946 Treaty of the International Whaling Commission, through the protection of viable habitat and the cessation of all killing and captive display of whales, dolphins, and porpoises. We support and promote benign activities such as regulated whale watching, nonlethal and humane research, and widespread educational, environmental and observation programs relating to free-roaming cetaceans internationally. Our ultimate objective is the global acceptance of peaceful coexistence and mutual enrichment for both humans and cetaceans.

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A few whaling updates since the Intersessional:

A report from the Ocean Life Symposium held in late March in the Caribbean reaffirmed that Dominica is committed to the protection of whales and the environment and that they will not support Japan and its whaling agenda.

Due to an increase in their 2009 whaling quota, Iceland is currently being targeted for a fisheries boycott by U.K. and U.S. based retailers, which could seriously impact that already

Thank you, thank you, thank you, to everyone responding to CSI’s IWC support appeal. We wouldn’t have asked for your help if we didn’t need it, but we do. We guarantee that everything you give to this campaign will go directly to saving whales at the IWC.

But these are hard times for many people, and a time for hard choices by groups like CSI. A few months ago CSI’s directors discussed the economic realities, versus our oncoming obligations to be at the IWC meetings. It wasn’t a hard choice for us to commit to being at the IWC, even if it took our bank balance to zero, because this is what we’re about. No apologies for sounding melodramatic; the times demand it.

Now we know we’ll not only be at the IWC but we’ll survive the year as well. Thank you!

CSI also thanks the Animal Welfare Institute and the World Society for the Protection of Animals for collaborating with us to assist five Latin American experts from Argentina, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Uruguay to this IWC meeting in Portugal.

crippled Icelandic economy.

On a more upbeat note, the incoming Icelandic government has indicated it will seek to end the commercial whaling of fin

and minke whales by 2010, thus ending the five year hunt that began in 2006 and was approved of by the outgoing Icelandic administration.

“BIG 3” Military Sonar Training Ranges Receive NOAA/NMFS Approval

By Taffy Lee Williams / www.ny4whales.org

In a major, although not unexpected victory for the US Navy, NMFS recently approved the Environmental Impact Statement for the last of three major US sonar training ranges. Known as the Atlantic Fleet Active Sonar Training (AFAST), the range is a vast region encompassing almost the entire east coast of the US and the Gulf of Mexico. The approval closely follows NMFS' similar rulings for the Southern California Range Complex (SOCAL) and the Hawaii Range Complex (HRC). SOCAL's training range is spread over some 120,000 square nautical miles (nm²) of Southern California's coast, open ocean, biologically rich near shore areas within the Southern California Bight and even portions of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.¹ The Hawaiian training range includes 235,000 nm² around the Main Hawaiian Islands and 2.1 million nm² of areas encompassing the Northwest Hawaiian Islands.

Known as the “Big Three” for their immense geographical coverage, the combined training areas will acoustically impact some two million marine mammals, as estimated in the Navy's three EISs. Environmental groups shudder at the potential “take” of marine mammals, which will range from disorientation to hearing loss, stranding and death. Joel Reynolds, NRDC senior attorney says, “These new sonar rules were completed in the waning weeks of the Bush administration to prevent review by the Obama administration. The rules will illegally harm entire populations of whales and dolphins over millions of square miles of ocean and rich marine habitat, and they will do so for years to come.”²

Environmental groups and scientists note the almost identical EISs for each of the three training ranges and are cringing at the EISs' shortcomings. Most notably, the US EPA, which respectively presented almost identical comments for the ranges, claims that both the SOCAL and HRC EISs contain insufficient information regarding impacts to marine resources. Additionally, they note that the Navy has “changed the methodology used to estimate sonar hours of mid-frequency active (MFA) use for the exercises and has changed the methodology used to evaluate effects of MFA sonar on marine mammals. The new methodologies result in substantially lower estimates of sonar hours and predicted adverse impacts to marine mammals.”³

In its SOCAL comments dated December 29, 2008, the EPA recommended a “precautionary approach be taken with regard to increases in the use of MFA sonar, commensurate with the scientific controversy, uncertainty, and unknown risks to marine mammals, including seven threatened or endangered species in the Range Complex.”⁴ The EPA also notes that the Navy

will implement the preferred alternative, which will increase the scope and intensity of existing annual training operations from 39,000 to 50,000 per year, impacting 112,884 marine mammals with behavioral harassment, 10,897 marine mammals with temporary hearing loss, and 19 marine mammals with permanent hearing loss.⁵ The EPA also questioned the Navy's estimate of zero mortalities during its operations: “The basis for concluding no mortalities will result is unclear considering the important role hearing plays in communication, navigation and foraging.” (p. 3.9-90) It seems the large numbers of animals experiencing Level B harassment (behavior and temporary hearing loss) could even have significant consequences. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service 2007 Biological Opinion on the effects of Composite Training Unit Exercises and Joint Task Force Exercises, acoustic exposures can result in the death of an animal by impairing its foraging, ability to detect predators or communicate, or by increasing stress, and disrupting important physiological events (B.O. p. 101).⁶

In addition to the ensonification of these areas, underwater detonations which disperse PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) and heavy metal contamination, as well as their associated pollutants, will further environmentally stress these broader areas as well.⁷

The US Marine Mammal Commission advises that the Navy revise the DEIS to give public officials charged with decision-making adequate information on the costs of the Navy's preferred levels of activity. It further advises the Navy to limit its activities to those that can be sufficiently described in order to achieve a reliable assessment of impact, and “subject its reviews of marine mammal density, distribution, behavior and habitat use to scientific peer review.”⁸ The MMC's comments on the Cherry Point Operating Area for the Atlantic Fleet off North Carolina should be considered here as well: “The conclusion that training operations and support activities would have negligible impacts on marine mammals at any of the possible alternative sites is based on sparse data about the presence of marine mammals in the area and potential impacts to them as well as a series of assumptions, many of which are questionable at best.”⁹

It's a sordid business, this sonar. The Navy is pushing for unrestricted training, and NMFS historically complies. While sonar training ranges fall under the category of *military readiness*, many believe our marine resources should not be sacrificed for a technology that leaves so many questions unanswered and with so much potential for destruction. A recent incident exposed the vulnerability of the system when a Chinese vessel

easily fouled the sonar system of a US Navy vessel that had allegedly meandered out of international waters. In any case, shouldn't the Navy be protecting our resources, not launching relentless barrages of acoustic weaponry upon them?

1. EPA. *Comments on the Southern California Range Complex Final Environmental Impact Statement*. December 29, 2008.
2. The Acoustic Ecology Institute. *NMFS Gives Sonar OK for Atlantic Coast*. <http://aeinews.org/archives/100>.
3. EPA. Letter to Tom Clements, Pacific Missile Range

Facility. April 10, 2008.

4. EPA. *Comments on the Southern California Range Complex Final Environmental Impact Statement*. December 29, 2008.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Marine Mammal Commission. *Letter to Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Atlantic*. February 16, 2009.
9. Marine Mammal Commission. *Letter to Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Atlantic*. January 18, 2006.

Ocean Noise

By William Rossiter

Acoustic Ecology Institute's excellent overview of ocean noise issues is available at: http://www.AcousticEcology.org/spotlight_oceannoise2008.html.

For those smart enough not to have a computer here is a summary of the contents of the Ocean Noise 2008 overview:

Behavioral impacts clearly replaced strandings and deaths as the key issue for marine mammals encountering human noise. Several studies released during 2008 all suggest that whales of many species may stop or reduce their feeding when moderate to loud human sounds enter their habitat, and this particular impact is likely to become a central focus of future research and regulatory consideration.

The legal tussles over mid-frequency and low-frequency active sonars continued, and the Supreme Court decision does not put an end to the controversy. The Navy crossed an important threshold, completing full Environmental Impact Statements for their sonar training procedures for the first time; the lack of sufficient NEPA analysis was the root of most of the legal challenges. The plans they are putting forward to govern sonar training off most of the US coastline continue to rely on safety measures that Federal Courts have found wanting, though it appears that challenges to their proposals are more likely to focus on avoiding biologically important areas than increasing the safety zones that are designed to avoid injury.

All parties seem to be accepting that gross injury is rare to the point of being difficult to use as a lever to shift the balance of interests with the Navy's national security imperative, but NGOs, many field researchers, and agency staff are all looking more closely at the behavioral impacts that take place at much longer ranges (up to several or even tens of kilometers). The next round of Navy sonar conflicts will center on how willing the Navy is to consider these subtler impacts, and whether NMFS or the courts will impose broader territorial restrictions on sonar training to protect areas where whales may be more susceptible to repeated disruption by sonar transmissions.

Shipping noise is moving very quickly to the forefront of international concerns about rising ocean noise. This year the US, with strong German support, initiated a two-year process at the International Maritime Organization to come up with ship

quieting recommendations. Also, the unusual sensitivity of harbor porpoises to boat noise has become clearer.

The scientific community appears to be entering a new phase in its engagement with ocean noise, a natural result of the increasing emphasis on these issues over the past five years. The European Science Foundation, the US Marine Mammal Commission, and a National Marine Fisheries Service-led group have all recently published important reports that attempt to provide frameworks within which future research priorities can be clearly considered. These frameworks promise to provide much-needed big-picture coherence to what has been largely a scattershot approach to increasing our understanding of ocean noise.

An independent and striking development this year was the emergence of more scientists speaking out forcefully about their concerns about ocean noise; these scientists have, at times, directly critiqued the more modest and diligently objective conclusions of the larger institutional reports just noted, and are representative of a subset of scientists who are more willing to push for extra precaution in our noise-making until we better understand what the effects are.

Among the most interesting things to watch for in 2009:

The Navy and NRDC will be "test-driving" their recent agreement on mid-frequency active sonar, which set up a 4-month period of dialogue after any major MFAS rules are issued, in an effort to avoid more litigation. With final EISs and NMFS-issued permits issued for the three most important sonar training ranges released in December and January, the clock is ticking, and there is plenty to discuss: NRDC has expressed vehement concerns about the large numbers of animals who will hear and change their behavior in response to sonar training.

In Alaska, Shell Oil will be challenging a recent ruling by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals that revoked their permits to conduct seismic surveys, using a line of argument very similar to that which prevailed for the Navy before the Supreme Court in its sonar case, and which was already voiced by the dissenting judge on the 3-judge panel that ruled that the Minerals Management Service had not done a thorough enough environmental review: Shell will argue that the court has exceeded its field of expertise, and in so doing, ignored the expertise of the federal

regulators.

How will the Obama administration approach new offshore oil exploration and development on the US Outer Continental Shelf? The MMS completed two years of preliminary work just as the Bush administration left office, culminating in a draft proposal to open 22 new lease areas, and to conduct an EIS for widespread seismic surveys as decades-old data is updated. Secretary Salazar's first move was to extend the comment period on these plans to six months; hearing have already begun in the House to consider next steps for OCS development.

The possibility that noise causes stress responses in marine life is under increasing scrutiny, and could fundamentally alter the equation that is central to ocean noise regulation: if and how noise may contribute to long-term, population-level impacts. The Navy and NRDC are working together on a research program that includes study of stress in marine mammals, and the Okeanos Institute is following up on its symposium that addressed stress impacts with a new meeting in 2009 that will address synergistic impacts of multiple marine stressors, including noise. This is the big question: does noise induce stress which then makes animals significantly more susceptible to other physiological stressors, such as toxins or food shortages? (There are indications that these sorts of synergistic impacts do occur in terrestrial species.)

LFA

The USNS Impeccable stood off several Chinese vessels with fire hoses in early March. For some reason the Navy chose to make videos available and the prime time news had a happy time with it. Our attention was riveted by what was shown, but not said: the Impeccable was there to deploy the Low Frequency Active Sonar (LFA) system, and the Chinese vessels appeared to be trying to snag the array!

Welcome to usually secret spy games shown in prime time. The typical spy vehicle is ugly, unarmed, alone and vulnerable. Besides satisfying the first three requirements the Impeccable



Photo courtesy Wikipedia.

cannot exceed a few knots or maneuver when the LFA is deployed, just enough to keep the array vertical.

The Impeccable, T-AGOS-23, is a catamaran on steroids, a Special Missions Program ocean surveillance ship noteworthy for deploying the LFA, which is why CSI cares, along with other gadgets. We do not know any secrets, but let's assume the LFA system that caused such a fuss from 1996 has been modified and improved, and now was monitoring Chinese naval submarines and other weapon systems in the South China Sea. This LFA mission is not a drill, and it may be provocatively successful in tense waters China regards as theirs.

The Chinese vessels might have intended an elegantly simple defense against the LFA, by rigging a cable between two boats, dragging below the lonely and handicapped Impeccable until the LFA array was snagged, then either retrieve it for analysis (risking a war) or let it drop to the bottom. The US reaction then was limited to fire hoses, but from now on an escorting destroyer may prevent such risky games.

Spy vessels, whether ships, aircraft or whatever, are often provocative. They commonly skirt edges of sovereignty. They intentionally seek and test responses. They sometimes unintentionally put the US on the verge of war (think USS Pueblo, or the U2). The US military plays these games because there is a real need and, almost always, the other side cannot do anything about it. But China can, and did, and may again. If this odd vessel, above, was flying the ensign of the Chinese Navy, while sitting in international waters off some US sub base in Asia, or on the edge of the continental shelf off Washington, and exposing all the US subs within hundreds of miles, the US would not and could not ignore it. A diplomatic furor would erupt over sovereignty and rites of passage, and unintended consequences might happen.

Spy games and wars aside, CSI's concerns remain about acoustically blinding cetaceans and other marine life exposed to the LFA's power, over thousands of square miles at once. Because it is spawning versions, some used by other nations, we are even more concerned that the proliferating LFA system may kill or harm an inordinate range of life, including cetaceans, with powerful, coherent, controlled noises unlike anything heard since the creation.

L-DEO

The Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (L-DEO), a part of Columbia University, was given an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) by NMFS on 30 March "to take marine mammals, by harassment, incidental to conducting a geophysical seismic survey in SE Asia between 31 March and 14 July 2009 to better understand mountain building processes but information gained from the surveys will allegedly also increase understanding of the nature of earthquakes."

The National Science Foundation's R/V Marcus G. Langseth, below, operated by L-DEO, will deploy a large 36-airgun array to transmit intense explosive sounds (265 dB re 1 microPa-m, peak-to-peak) continuously for many minutes at a time, over and over for hours. The experiment will follow track lines through

the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of China, Taiwan, Japan and the Philippines as well as adjacent high seas.



Photo courtesy of Columbia University.

Experts believe the noise will harm populations of marine mammals, some of which are endangered. Following the lead of Dr. John Y. Wang, *FormosaCetus* Research and Conservation Group, CSI became exhaustively involved. Besides coordinating with other US NGOs and submitting our own comments, we assisted regional experts to engage in the US public comment period, which was unique to many of them. But the process, so familiar to CSI, gave them false hopes; they expected that logic and science would prevail over money and influence. CSI has previously reported our loss to the US Navy at the Supreme Court, a decision based upon national security perspectives. The Court essentially ignored the contribution of science to quantifying the effects of noise on marine life.

For this L-DEO authorization NMFS did not ignore the considerable scientific evidence the experts provided during the public comment period. This was a welcome and positive response for all concerned but L-DEO. Heeding some of the experts' advice several modifications to procedures and mitigations will be detailed in the IHA.

But L-DEO had intentionally ignored the world's experts when making plans for these surveys. There is an arrogance about these L-DEO projects that boggles the mind, as if only their scientific purpose counts and whatever collateral damage they produce is irrelevant. That attitude was evident when, months earlier, L-DEO had approached regional experts with the South Pacific Whale Research Consortium (SPWRC) for comments on the now-completed surveys near Tonga. Instead of an open process with respected experts they demanded confidentiality from the scientists. The SPWRC refused, rightly, on principle. L-DEO Tonga was a surprise to the rest of us, following the

wake of previous L-DEO projects that simply plowed through whatever process was required without pause. Well, there was one pause, when the R/V Ewing plowed into a protected coral reef in Mexico, and so insulted that government the project was kicked out. The Ewing then was retired, with distinction or in disgrace, depending upon one's perspective.

Because it is planned to bang away within EEZ's of at least four nations, this L-DEO project may run aground on the regulations each nation has on allowable takes of marine life. From here it gets complicated, mixing in relations between nations, demands by local fishermen, lots of money, and a now-started schedule that was not planned around national regulations and perspectives.

We could detail the numbers, facts and theories that make the L-DEO so controversial, but the real controversy is their prioritizing their needs, with financial consequences, over the clear potential for causing significant harm to vulnerable species and habitats. Why do they have to be forced to use appropriate science to make decisions or authorize actions that may have the potential to do harm?

The impact swath of the L-DEO survey tracks is enormous. The array's pulsed underwater noises are predicted to cause "permanent physiological damage" within 3,694 meters from the array, from received levels at or above 180 dB re 1 microPa-m (rms) noise (Level A Harassment). Temporary damage occurs within 8,000 meters (five miles!), at or above 160 dB exposures. Multiply that width by the track lengths and factor in the locations and affected habitats and species. This will be the zone of direct harm, whereas detrimental behavioral responses could reach out to wherever the ocean becomes normally noisy again, denying hundreds of thousands of square miles of habitat.

The cetacean species likely to be impacted by this L-DEO project include the western gray whale, North Pacific right whale, blue whale, humpback whale, sperm whale, beaked whales, the ETS population of humpback or Chinese white dolphin *Sousa chinensis* (*Sousa*) and others. These cetaceans are fully protected legally in at least some of these countries and regions. Many, many thousands of animals are predicted to be affected. But even *one* is too many for the *Sousa* dolphin population. Because possibly fewer than 70 individuals exist in a very restricted habitat they were listed as Critically Endangered in the 2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Will L-DEO suffer any consequence if any of these cetaceans are left dead in their wake?

Cetacean News

By William Rossiter

Right Whales

At least 39 North Atlantic right whale calves were born this winter, exceeding the 2001 record of 31. Although some losses have already occurred, extraordinary monitoring will con-

tinue to try to follow each surviving calf to the summering grounds. They have a hard trip ahead, through the myriad obstacles of shipping, noise, chemical pollution and fishing gear.

Five right whales were known to be entangled this winter with wraps of rope and gear through their mouths. Four were



Photo courtesy of Lance Shaw, Fiordland Ecological Tours

life-threatening. One of the three whales successfully freed by highly trained and motivated teams had carried Canadian lobster gear at least since starting to migrate south last fall. According to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team's March Summary, "These entanglements represent more than twice the number usually seen in the Southeast U.S. during right whale calving season, which spans from November 15 through April 15."

New York's Department of Environmental Conservation support of an underwater acoustic monitoring system for right whales has run out of money and ended. Intended to plug the gap between monitoring efforts in summering grounds in New England and the calving and wintering grounds in Georgia and Florida, the project had begun just last spring. Ship strikes have threatened the species' survival, and New York is acknowledged as a gauntlet of vessel traffic right whales naively run twice a year.

Beaked Whales

12 Arnoux's beaked whales cavorted this February in Doubtful Sound, Fiordland, New Zealand. Local tour boats gave lucky visitors a never-before-seen treat. There seems to be no record of anyone ever having seen a group of Arnoux's beaked whales like this, except for some trapped in polynias in the Antarctica ice. The closely related Northern bottlenose whale is known for similar antics off the west coast of Scotland, and the behaviors of a group resident offshore near Eastern Canada's "Gully" have provided a major source of information on the living whale.

According to Wade Doak, the group "spent a lot of time diving ~20-25 minutes at a time and then they would surface for 5 minutes before diving again. Lots of breaching and energetic activities were seen. While they spent most of their time in and around Hall Arm and Deep Cove parts of Doubtful Sound they were also spotted on the outer coast. A resident group of bottlenose dolphins is well known in this area." http://www.wadedoak.com/_disc1/00003ff9.htm.

CSI connected Wade with Dr. Colin D. MacLeod, School

of Biological Sciences, University of Aberdeen, to gather and share information as possible. Colin, a world-authority on all beaked whales, collects the ever-increasing data on "beakers" and probably has the best perspective in the world of these elusive, still-mythical species that, just decades ago, were rarely seen, and so thought to be rare. As *Whales Alive!* readers know, some beaked whales appear to react to mid-frequency active sonars in ways that cause them injury and death. It is no consolation that the direct evidence is sparse; these whales are rarely close enough to shore to be noted as suffering from anything, and the sonar culprit could have been transmitting from over a hundred miles away. Two known experiments found that beaked whales appeared to treat sonar-like sounds as a predator. They modified their behavior to escape the area quickly without being noticed. On a large scale this could cause a wide-spread population of beaked whales to stop essential behaviors, like feeding, or flee necessary habitats.

The Hong Kong Humpback

The Hong Kong humpback became an overnight sensation in mid-March, the first-ever sighting of a live baleen whale in Hong Kong waters. Thanks to the continuous efforts by Dr. Samuel Hung, Director of the Hong Kong Cetacean Research Project, and Chairman of the Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society (<http://www.hkdcs.org>), the exciting news quickly spread to experts around the world. The still-evolving email thread is a wonderful example of the way so many experts contribute and share today; they were excited, too!

Everyone wondered why the whale was near Hong Kong, with added concerns for the potential for ship strikes if the whale ventured into shipping lanes or fast ferry routes. Hong Kong authorities were eager to seek expert advice, funded the scientific monitoring of the whale, and reacted responsibly to alert mariners. The media frenzied to the max.

The whale's behavior was normal, even suggesting occasional feeding, with a few breaches and tail slaps for good measure. *Whales Alive!* readers familiar with New England's robust humpbacks may speculate about the whale's health after look-



Photos courtesy of the Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society

ing at these photos. Dr. Jooke Robbins, Senior Scientist and Director of the Humpback Whale Studies Program at the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies (PCCS), verified that the independent juvenile whale was unusually thin, even compared to “the struggling juveniles that we sometimes see in unusual places here in the North Atlantic.” She pointed out the good news that the whale showed no signs of entanglement. David Mattila, Science and Rescue Coordinator for the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and PCCS Adjunct Scientist, offered very useful suggestions for monitoring the whale and managing the human responses, and a lot of data on behavior during migration. He pointed out that the widespread eye projections were not unusual, and the whale might do that to see better to the front.

Comparisons of photos with the several humpback catalogues from the Philippines, Ogasawara and Okinawa in Japan, and the enormous NW Pacific SPLASH project did not find a match, but there are many uncataloged humpbacks in the North Pacific. A Japanese whaling station at nearby Daya Bay had wiped out the few hundred humpbacks that used that area over winter. Some winter near the Northern Philippines, Taiwan, and the Babuyan Islands, and deep water migration routes are known, but there are no known migration paths of humpbacks near Hong Kong.

The region’s humpbacks travel over deep water, which may

explain the enormous number of circular or ovoid scars all over this whale’s body. Usually attributed as “cookie-cutter shark bites”, they also could have been caused by lampreys and other animals. But so many recent and unhealed bites suggested a horror story, if humpbacks told horror stories, of being surrounded by small, fast, vicious predators biting out chunks at will. Some circles on the whale’s flukes look like they go through to the skin on the other side, almost a complete hole! They suggest the whale simply laid there, defenseless, maybe giving up, instead of thrashing its flukes in defense.

At this writing the whale has been in downtown Victoria Harbour. Hong Kong residents wharf-side watched the whale breach at night, illuminated by the lights of the city! The exhausted media even asked CSI for an opinion, so we said: “Hong Kong is being treated to a spectacle of nature, the appearance of a creature that used to be mythical, but with the help of modern science, you will find that the reality about whales is far more fascinating. Your readers may want to know why the whale is there, and what will happen next, but the wonderful truth is that even the experts can’t be sure. There are many, many unknowns, enough to inspire a whole new generation of scientists.”

Meanwhile the whale is being monitored as the experts long for the word that this humpback has vanished, presumably safe and sound and a long way from Hong Kong.

Strandings in Australia

By William Rossiter

Australia has been overwhelmed by strandings since December 1st, when about 150 long-finned pilot whales died in a mass stranding off Tasmania’s west coast. Another 30 milling near the site were shepherded offshore by boats. The total number of cetaceans stranded just in Tasmanian waters since then is more than 400!

A “nursery pod” of 50 sperm whales stranded and died in late January, near the mouth of the Duck River, Tasmania. The photo shows the tightly packed bodies typical of groups of sperm whale mothers, calves and related juveniles that may well be trying to help each other during an unfathomable crisis. Why did this event happen? A calculated guess would be that, as the group ventured over the shallow, sloping bottom and the tide

fell, a youngster grounded in the sand and called in distress. The mother responded, became grounded, cried out and, as the responding whales also became trapped, panic spread.

Perhaps some whales stayed clear, and survived, but when the human responders from Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife and Department of Primary Industry and Water finally got to the isolated, shallow water site, a sandbar East of Perkins Island, there was little that could be done beyond providing humane care until the whales died, then study them carefully to learn whatever could be learned. Tasmania’s rescue craft and local fishermen were ready to help, but the event overwhelmed the best intentions.

At least two sperm whales from other events have been saved



Photo courtesy of Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service

by the Tasmania Wildlife and Marine Conservation Section's pioneering sperm whale rescue gear, nets strung between two boats to cradle the whales until offshore. But what if the rescued whales had refused to leave, driven instead to respond to their group's plight? In contrast to the nursery groups' behavior, age-related male groups may not respond to a stranded member, and so survive. Among the many unknowns to these events are the reasons that the North Sea, New Zealand, and Tasmania experience 60% of all known sperm whale mass strandings.



King Island. Photo courtesy of Reuters

194 long-finned pilot whales and at least seven bottlenose dolphins mass-stranded on March 2nd at Naracoopa beach, King Island, Australia. Hundreds of rescuers worked to rescue 54 of the whales still alive, to help them rejoin a large number of whales milling offshore. Onshore winds and the gentle slope of the beach could have been factors. 11 of the rescued whales were fitted with location transmitters, and monitored for several weeks after they were released. That last point is extremely significant, as some far-away experts maintain that on-site rehabilitation and release is not effective, that the whales just swim to the horizon and die. The belief that stranded whales suffer stress to the point that they cannot survive release without long term, captive rehabilitation has stymied or conflicted with many efforts to develop and sustain on-site efforts in some sections of the US.

On March 21st more than 80 long-finned pilot whales and bottlenose dolphins mass-stranded along a four-mile stretch of



Hamelin Bay. Photo courtesy of Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Liz Wren, HO

beach at Hamelin Bay, Western Australia. Using techniques pioneered over 20 years ago by Project Jonah, Victoria, hundreds of volunteers and professional staff tended the animals. 11 likely survivors were trucked to Flinders Bay to be individually stabilized in protected waters, then helped to reestablish their social bond before being released, although one did not make it.

When is this trend going to end?

Mass strandings of mixed species of cetaceans are very unusual, conjuring many guesses about human activities contributing to the cause. Bottlenose dolphins and "false killer whales" have been observed hunting together in New Zealand, perhaps for squid. Given their similar appearances, could those "false killer whales" have been long-finned pilot whales, as in these strandings?

As to human causes, could a far-away active mid-frequency sonar cause a tightly-social cetacean group to stampede until they ran aground on a beach? CSI would relish a chance to prove there was no connection, but both navies and agencies increasingly prevent legitimate review of naval exercise locations, sonar logs, and results from many necropsies focused on acoustic trauma. The system does not demand proof that sonars do no harm. Instead it demands proof that sonars do harm, and without a court's assistance the evidence stays locked away.

When is this trend going to end?

What is it about strandings? No, not about why whales strand, but why do people care so? Strandings are extreme events, our reactions to extremes helps us to understand ourselves, so the question deserves a careful study. Not only might such a study help to save more cetaceans next time, it may also help us to understand why so many people simply love whales, dolphins and porpoises. It's wonderful, it's deep, it's spreading, and it's something to be grateful for, because throughout human history stranded cetaceans were simply meat and by-products, and still are to many poor shore communities. But poverty does not drive the inhumane brutality in the Faroe Islands and Japan as dolphins and whales are slaughtered, so any correlation between "developed" societies and responses to distressed cetaceans needs some fine tuning.

Witnesses to a stranding are deeply motivated to help. They may not know what to do, but they have to do something: a non-

swimmer jumps into surf; a man pushes against a thrashing animal that outweighs him over a hundred times; a woman wades into water without being aware of the cold; she could die within minutes unless rescued.

Well trained and equipped stranding response units have developed around people who care even more, because they will walk a cold, desolate beach on Christmas hoping they can help an animal, or at least learn from its ordeal.

Why are there such strong feelings among so many people about creatures that are so different from us? They are more than mystery and myth, perhaps even kin, and while their stranding may be a completely natural event, to us it is a catastrophe.

But so are road accidents, airplane crashes, and building fires, all of which would be professionally studied for who did what and when. The human factors of the event would be analyzed and the conclusions shared far and wide, because more people would survive similar future events.

So, if the goal of stranding responses is to help as many animals survive as possible, including re-establishing the social integrity of mass stranded cetaceans, why aren't there more pub-

lished, readily available reports on who did what and when, and what worked and what failed? There are some often closed-door workshops for specialists, and endless media reports, but neither make facts widely known.

There are several reasons why the human factors of an event are not available for general study. For one, they are often exhausting and numbing events to the people who participated, each having sacrificed the time from normal life to participate. After an event the priority is to rest, then try to get life back to normal. Rehashing events by reliving traumas, losses and perhaps mistakes is painful, and while the dreams may persist the objective memory of the event soon fades.

The only study of the human factors in a stranding response that CSI knows of is a careful reconstruction from participants' interviews of a 1980's mass stranding on Cape Cod, one of the world's hotspots. Fred Wenzel, a whale expert now with NOAA, was the only person who could have accomplished this task, because he was extremely well respected and trusted by everyone involved. We need more Freds!

CSI and Science

By William Rossiter

The Society for Marine Mammalogy's 18th Biennial Conference will be held in Quebec City, Canada, 12-16 October 2009. The Society has committed funds for travel grants to students and "a limited number of colleagues in developing and soft-currency countries," so as to promote student and international participation in the biennial conferences. For details see: <http://marinemammalogy.org/conference/>.

Science is a charity, at least at the level of cetacean science that CSI supports. We specialize in helping people and projects in Latin America and the Caribbean, and we know what's going on there, both good and bad. We're pleased to say we've spent all our available money on 127 projects and people since June, and dismayed to say we don't know when we'll have enough to start again. Regional cultures generally don't support charitable giving or patronage to science, and NGOs have had to react to the financial chaos by stopping or severely limiting grants. Some

current projects are slowing or stopping, an emerging generation of marine mammal workers is not finding the support they need from the student's family, university stipends, and grants, and many careers are being affected. Associations of scientists have fewer resources to pool, and occasional contracts are becoming more limited.

So what? Similar issues are sweeping the world, powered by failed economics.

We're not trying to save the world. We're trying to save whales. Human impacts on cetaceans continue to grow, habitats continue to be compromised, and now the progressive momentum we've helped to generate over almost 30 years of grant-giving is faltering. Science is a tool to define problems and priorities, and we invest in scientists to find solutions. Without science none of us can help whales.

We'll take any ideas you have...

Blue Vision Summit

CSI members Dan Knaub and Barbara Kilpatrick participated in the Blue Vision Summit in Washington, DC. They were able to attend panel discussions, presentations, workshops and talks on a wide variety of topics related to the ocean. Dan wrote about his experience on a personal level. Barbara gave an overview of the program to illustrate the wide range of topics. All of the speakers, presenters and panelists provided information which made this meeting a wonderful learning experience.

My View of the Summit

By Dan Knaub, CSI Board

Imagine walking into a room where everyone cared about the very thing that you worked hard for twenty years to protect and bring into the public eye. Now imagine that many of the people attending were the rock stars or celebrities of the ocean

movement.

Where else would you be able to talk with Sylvia Earle, Roger Payne, Philippe Cousteau, Roz Savage, Enric Sala, David Helvarg and Nancy Knowlton? I also introduced myself to an alumnus of the Naval Academy '79, Phil Renaud, Executive Director of the Living Ocean Foundation. His Royal Highness Prince Khaled bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz, the grandson of the King of Saudi Arabia is its founder. His view of the seas is very exciting.

"What we have done so far is just the beginning. There is much more that must be accomplished to guarantee the integrity of our oceans. That is why I look forward to a partnership with peoples throughout the world, working to benefit the oceans - and our future."

I believe to my core that learning about individual sea creatures, not species, but individuals is the way to spur people to action. As Roger Payne said, "we will only protect what we love."

My goal at this summit was to introduce a new dedication for protecting cetaceans again, as I believe interest in this aspect of the oceans has waned in recent years. I was surprised to find a room full of ocean experts and scientists unfamiliar with the notion that whales can be thought of as individuals. I tracked down dozens of people during the summit and introduced them to the concept on my laptop. Most seemed impressed and fascinated.

Oceans in Crisis

By Barbara Kilpatrick

Why did hundreds of individuals gather in Washington, D.C. for the Blue Vision Summit from March 7th to 10th?

Saturday evening the auditorium at the Carnegie Institution for Science was filled with people of all ages and backgrounds. Ralph Nader welcomed all participants for a renewal of activism. David Guggenheim, marine explorer, moderated "Why Conservation needs Exploration". Members of the panel Sylvia Earle, Philippe Cousteau, Phil Renaud and Roz Savage presented their observations. Clips from Adam Ravetch's Arctic Tale were shown. A question and answer opportunity completed the program. A reception was held in the Rotunda. Deep concern for the ocean and a glimmer of hope united the group.

The Sunday morning session at the Marvin Center of George Washington University was opened by a welcome from sponsors. In the keynote address, Dr. Roger Payne spoke about the many problems facing marine life and human involvement. He

stated that the chance to make a giant change has never been better than at this moment. A glimmer of hope!

Climate and Ocean was the topic of the next panel discussion. Moderator Mike Hirshfield introduced Michael Lemonick, Ove Hoegh Guldberg and Terry Tamminen. All speakers addressed the urgent need to halt the destruction of the ocean. Terry Tamminen stated that we can make a difference and inspire the next generation. A challenge for all of us!

At the Blue Frontier "Peter Benchley" Award Luncheon, an introduction by Wendy Benchley and David Helvarg was followed the presentation of awards to Jeremy Jackson and Nancy Knowlton, Mark Shelly, Zander Srodes, Richard Charter and Rep. Sam Farr. An inspiration for all of us!

The afternoon sessions covered the following topics: Future of Sustainable Seafood, The Ocean and Human Health, Clean Ocean Energy, Renewing America's Global Leadership on Oceans, Coastal Adaptation to Climate Change, Solutions to Pollution, Marine Debris and Marine Education. Participants needed to select one topic per session. A learning experience for all of us.

At the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, the theme of the evening event was Celebration of the Sea. Food, drink, and entertainment set the stage for casual conversations.

Monday morning, the first Plenary topic was Advancing Federal Ocean Policy in the 111th Congress and the Obama Administration. CEQ Chair Nancy Sutley, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Rep. Sam Farr and Delegate Madeleine Bordallo addressed the issues that need to be faced by this government. Opportunity for positive change.

State and Regional Initiatives, topic of the second Plenary with moderator Sarah Chasis and panelists Mike Chrisman, George Stafford, and Deerin Babb-Bott, were outlined to demonstrate the progress being made at the local levels and plans for the future. Change happening.

Blue Beat Media Luncheon and panel discussion with moderator David Helvarg and panelists Joel Bourne, Tim Wheeler and Anne Thompson offered a glimpse into the world of media. Members of the audience had a chance to pitch a story.

The afternoon session topics were Greening Ports and Shipping, The Arctic Meltdown: What a Changing Arctic Means for Our Oceans Planet, Marketing Strategies for the Ocean, Ocean Funding Workshop, Workshop on Field Organizing and Artists and Writers for the Sea.

Question answered. What a wonderful, educational and motivating experience! With hope, renewed energy and a broader vision, I headed home.

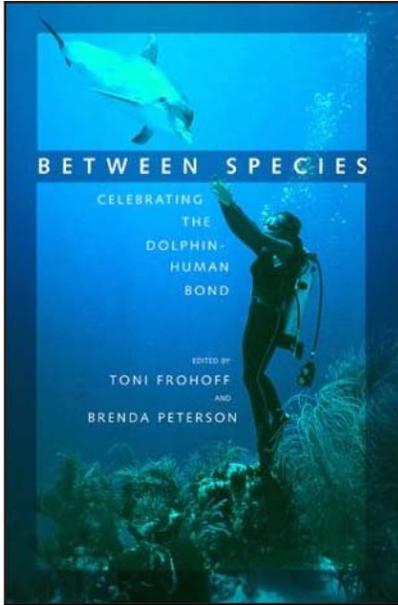
News From CSI Hawaii

By Patricia Sullivan, CSI Board

The Hawaii Superferry "Alakai" suspended operations on Thursday, March 19, 2009, and now faces a questionable future in the Islands after the state Supreme Court ruled that a state law that saved the project two years ago is unconstitutional. This

decision reverses a decision (Act 2) made by Governor Linda Lingle on November 2, 2007 that allowed the Superferry to operate while the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was being prepared - a decision that was met at the time with extreme

CSI Again Offers “Robbins Barstow Marine Science Book Awards” To Connecticut High School Seniors



In keeping with its aim to promote education about whales, dolphins, and porpoises, the Connecticut-based Cetacean Society International is offering again this year to present a Robbins Barstow Marine Science Book Award to up to 40 Connecticut high school seniors who have shown a special interest in whales, dolphins, and porpoises. The Science Department Head at each secondary school in the state, both public and private, is invited to designate an individual student to receive the award. The selected student's name should be sent by email to Dr. Robbins Barstow at: robbinsb@aol.com. A specially inscribed book will be sent to each school for presentation to the student. The first 40 requests will be honored.

The book being given to the students is *Between Species: Celebrating the Dolphin-Human Bond*. It is a 360-page compilation of essays and articles by outstanding writers and scientists exploring the unique bond and varied inter-relationships between humans and dolphins and other cetaceans. The book was edited by Dr. Toni Frohoff and Brenda Peterson. It is hoped that students receiving the award will be encouraged to pursue college-level studies in marine science and possibly eventually enter careers in this field.

opposition by whale, environmental and cultural activists.

In a press release statement, Tom Fargo, President & CEO of Hawaii Superferry, explained his disappointment while he attempts to find a new home for the Alakai, which left Hawaii for its home in Mobile, Alabama. “We have believed from the start and continue to believe that there is a clear and unmet need for an Inter-Island High Speed Ferry System for the state.”

The ruling is a long time in coming for the passionate surfers, swimmers and protestors who organized in 2007 for the Alakai's first voyage from Honolulu to Nawiliwili Harbor, Kauai,

and for the legal plaintiffs who fought a hard-won battle. Opponents often cited the possible increase in humpback and other cetacean mortality, the possibility of increase in invasive species, drug trafficking, stolen property, crime, and auto traffic as critical to the argument. They also organized a grassroots boycott; the bumper sticker read, “Cuz, No Take Superferry: Whales Die or Go Deaf, Traffic, Crime, Mongoose, Mo'Ice”

Approximately 240 Superferry employees were laid off on March 21st.

Resources

By William Rossiter

“Ocean Mind” is the provocative radio series by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, with two one-hour programs of interest to *Whales Alive!* readers, available on the web at: <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/features/ocean-mind/>

“Life on earth began in the ocean and then moved onto the land. But one precocious line of mammals returned to the sea. How has water shaped the minds, the bodies, the sensory worlds and the societies of whales? Our guide is Jeff Warren. Jeff is an explorer of consciousness in its various forms. In 2007 he published a book called *The Head Trip: Adventures on The Wheel of Consciousness*. He's spent the past 2 years thinking about whales and dolphins, visiting researchers in their labs and in their boats around North America and the Caribbean to find out

what they're learning about mind, culture and society in the ocean.”

Hal Whitehead, Dalhousie University, Canada

Watching Giants: The Secret Lives of Whales. Elin Kelsey. University of California Press, 2009, 176 pp. plus endnotes, index and 16 pages of color photographs by Doc White and Francois Gohier.

Readers of this deeply humane and ecological book will gain surprising insights into the cultural lives of various whale species, the motivations, hopes and fears of those who study them, and the ecosystems that support all of us. *Watching Giants* focuses on the Gulf of California, one of the ocean's most

beautiful and productive ecosystems, but contains information about other regions and will be of interest to readers anywhere.

The book's very special character comes from themes of family and culture as author Elin Kelsey interweaves vignettes of her personal life as a woman and mother of two young children to illustrate important similarities and differences between human and whale societies, providing uniquely refreshing perspectives on both.

Scientifically accurate and broadly informative, *Watching Giants*' chapters touch on nearly all aspects of the life cycle of whales, including the vigorous communities of external parasites they host and the specialized animals that colonize and decompose whale carcasses in the deep sea. Remarkable facts abound, but beyond its scientific interest, *Watching Giants* is creative, deeply thoughtful, caring and inviting. It whets our curiosity about lives so different from our own, but also discusses them in ways that engage our relationship, for example in the very humorous chapter on whale sex and another entitled 'What's the Use of Granny?' on the evolution of postmenopausal females and matrilineal societies.

Above all, *Watching Giants* welcomes us to understand and celebrate our kinship and connectedness with all life and to reflect on what we could do to reverse the harm we have caused in the ocean and elsewhere.

Dr. Steven Katona Past President, College of the Atlantic

Hawaii's Humpbacks; Unveiling the Mysteries, Jim Darling, Whale Trust, 2009, 239 pages with extensive references, notes, glossary and appendices, illustrations by Susan W. Barnes, photographs by Flip Nicklin.

Even the die-hard New England whale people will admit that Hawaii does have some magical humpbacks and whale watches. And Jim Darling of course. Jim is the man to go to for humpbacks. He has put his heart and mind into this just-released book, earnestly giving us the benefit of his decades of work learning to fathom the whale's world. He has certainly listened to a lot of questions, because he has answered many here you may not even have thought of yet, with clear and well-expressed facts, theories, and even a few best guesses. Sections like "What are they doing out there" and "How are the whales doing" suggest his style, which is to keep the science readable. With this book in hand you can almost feel like a humpback expert, except that it's not waterproof.

But there's more. Flip Nicklin's photographs have inspired generations by illuminating the oceans with impossible images that really put you right in there with the whales, and they are looking at you. His images demand you stop and really look, not at them, but in them, often into that very special eye. He can explain how he does it, but even then no one can do it as well.

Susan Barnes' illustrations pop up in all the right places, lightening the pages, explaining facts with a glance, and leading chapters with too-tiny versions of her best signature works. She has a huge following of fans eager for her illustrations, which are always cheerful reminders of warm, sunny, carefree days, often found on calendars, stationary, and cards.

Hawaii's Humpbacks; Unveiling the Mysteries brings home

the truth that clear, warm water has enabled the right to understand much about the humpback that would remain obscured almost anywhere else, certainly in New England. Perhaps New England's advantage is in knowing individuals and personalities while tracking generations for decades. Together they give us almost all, except why the whales tolerate us so.

You must see <http://www.odysseytv.com>, proof positive that there are exceptional resources on the Internet. Stan Minasian, who's well-known, or should be, to everyone interested in nature, produced, wrote, and edited most of the short video programs available on this innovative and inspirational website.

To quote their Mission: "OdysseyTV is a concept whose time has come, and, in fact, is way overdue. In a climate where news reporting on issues involving wildlife and nature is at an all-time low, the public's need to know of and understand the pressures on wildlife, and the habitat in which they live, is more critical than ever before. Yet, beyond the scant new stories and documentary films that do make it to the small screen, the stories you will see on OdysseyTV focus not only on the issues, but on those individuals and organizations around the globe that are working day in and day out to resolve them.

"While most of the funding goes to the half dozen largest organizations, OdysseyTV focuses most of its energy on the smaller groups that get little notoriety, yet make a huge difference. With an increasing human population placing more and more pressure on wildlife and the environment, is it critical to find practical solutions to the issues that impact them. OdysseyTV is a portal from which you can not only celebrate the dedication of the many dozens of individuals and organizations, both small and large, that have made this commitment, but a means to join and/or support them as well. OdysseyTV is where you, your family, and your friends can go to see, by way of short, hi-quality video productions, the difference these dedicated individuals and organizations are making. It is educational, inspirational, and motivational television at its very best.

"Our mission, therefore, is to help provide these individuals and organizations with the assistance they need to continue their critically important work, and we do this by displaying video productions depicting their work, and eliciting support from our viewers."

Jaboury Ghazoul's letter to the editor, Science, January 23rd: A perspective on the \$700,000,000 bailout on the financial industry, before the later bailouts were announced:

"An estimated 10 million species populate the earth. To ward against extinction, we could equitably award \$70,000 to each and every one of these 10 million species from our \$700 billion cash injection. The intertidal bryozoans of Scotland's West Coast would alone receive more than \$3 million. In Borneo, the 350 or so species of dipterocarp trees could form a union to demand existence rights, using their \$25 million to lobby for viable landscape mosaics in which they could persist alongside competing land uses...

"Should this not be sufficient, they could team up with their obligately resident invertebrates, ensuring that funds would not

be restrictive. The 43 species of ants from E. O. Wilson's single leguminous tree at the Tambopata Reserve in Peru could pool their resources to buy about 150,000 hectares of Amazonian forest (at \$20 per hectare). The 163 species of beetles occurring exclusively in the tree species *Luehea seemannii* could add an additional 570,000 hectares. Even copepods, those diminutive denizens of the deep, would receive just short of \$1 billion, yet their ubiquity will ensure that they would have little need of such financial security. Consider though, the jellyfish tree *Medusagyne oppositifolia* from the Seychelles. Even \$70,000 should be enough to save its few remaining individuals, which would no doubt appreciate efforts to promote their populations' longevities by investing in simple nursery facilities and a modest propagation and planting program. The endangered Indonesian 'Pakis ata' fern *Lygodium circinnatum* would benefit greatly from a \$70,000 cash injection toward its conservation through propagation, and \$700,000 would go a long way in securing the

future of the 10 endangered British insects recently featured on Royal Mail stamps.

"Species that are doing just fine, on the other hand, could bank their share of funds. The roughly 7.5 million species not considered at risk could bank their collective \$525 billion, hedging their bets against some future need. The interest thereby generated could subsidize species with greater financial and conservation needs and, if reinvested, could maintain the capital stock.

"Some species will undoubtedly be declared genetically bankrupt and lost forever, but many more will be offered a life-line to recovery, flooding the global ecological system with confidence. Growth will be restored.

"But where would \$700 billion come from? From borrowing, of course. We have been borrowing from Nature's capital for nigh on the last few centuries - is it not time we paid some back?"

Whale Watching

By William Rossiter



New England's whale watching is the world's best! Yes, that's an intentional challenge to those of you who think your favorite location is better; dare to tell us why. Whales are in New England's waters all winter, but the weather keeps whale watches in port. Between mid-April and mid-November several world-class whale watches operate from Maine to Long Island, but if you want the best of the best try the **Dolphin Fleet of Provincetown**, operating from the tip of Cape Cod, already 30 miles to sea. CSI sticks by our endorsement of long ago: "The Dolphin Fleet was the originator of east coast whale watching and, to many people, their operation is the standard by which all

others should be judged." People come for the cavorting humpbacks, but eight cetacean species have been seen on one Dolphin Fleet whale watch.

As you read this people walking nearby Herring Cove beach are looking at finbacks, occasional white-sided dolphins, maybe some minke, and most of all, the spectacle of right whales feeding near shore. This March up to 60 rights (15% of the species population!) were seen in Cape Cod Bay at the same time, by researchers from the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies (PCCS), but when the dense patches of their prey vanish almost all the whales will be gone within two days.

Over these weeks the summering humpbacks arrive, world-famous Salt included. Many bring calves, and three or four generations may be seen on one trip. Over thirty years of research have enlightened us about hundreds of well-known and named humpbacks. Along with announcing who you're watching, the family histories and personality quirks of individual whales are part of the information the best whale watches provide, along with an inspiring description of the always fascinating ocean. For example, a good naturalist would tell you that the lower-right feeding humpback (above) is Fulcrum, rescued last year from entangling lobster gear. Watching a feeding whale is exciting, but more so when you realize he's a survivor of a virtual epidemic affecting so many large whales today. Birdwatchers also use these boats, because of the far-wanderers that begin to pass by just a mile or so offshore. You can identify birdwatchers easily; they always have the best binoculars, always ready around their necks!

CSI is pleased to be sponsoring two interns from the Dominican Republic to Provincetown this summer, as we did last summer, for a collaborative program between the Dolphin Fleet and PCCS. They will learn the whale watch naturalist trade aboard the Dolphin Fleet vessels, as part of the naturalist program run by Dr. Carole Carlson, and the science of humpback whales from Dr. Jooke Robbins, Director of the PCCS Humpback Whale Studies Program. This is part of the Sister Sanctuary Program, which highlights the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, where humpbacks spend much of the spring and summer, and the Santuario de Mamíferos Marinos de la República Dominicana, where many humpbacks go in late fall to mate and give birth to their young. Whale watchers take note: Silver Bank has the densest concentration of humpbacks found in the North Atlantic!

The sister sanctuary concept has proven its worth, and should be spread to other areas and migratory species. CSI Director Dr. Nathalie Ward played a significant role in the creation of the sanctuaries. She is the Coordinator of the

Sanctuary Advisory Council of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. Nathalie's a renowned author and expert on the Sanctuary's rich assortment of marine life, fascinating history, and significance to society, and she knows just as much about the Caribbean.

Why do so many cetaceans use New England's waters? Look at the image of the humpback looking at you (above right); the water is green! The green is uncountable numbers of plankton, the foundation of the ocean's food web and so much more. Far up the bountiful food chain, marine mammals feast on the rich shoals of sand lance, herring and other schooling fish. The two feeding humpbacks have surfaced with throats full of water crammed with sand lance, which explains the gulls' frenzy. The harbor seal even has leftovers of something that looks like an octopus tentacle draped on her back!

Look again at that head-on humpback. It is a worthy-of-study fact that many whales seem to like certain boats, perhaps because the boats behave well. Boat approaches are almost common here, even from aloof finbacks. Curiosity can explain why cetaceans approach people and boats, but after many years and hundreds of interactions it might be just a bit deeper than that for some, still beyond our ken. Just ask a Dolphin Fleet crew person how often they have whales near the boat; after a while they may not even notice; just another day at work!

For a great all-day fund-raising whale watch CSI recommends the **Seabird and Whale Tale Excursion**, supporting the New England Coastal Wildlife Alliance (NECWA), a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The trip's out of Plymouth, MA, Sunday, 8-4, June 14, 2009. Hosted by NECWA, Mass. Audubon South Shore Sanctuaries, Captain John Boats and Bridgewater State College, it will have extremely qualified cetacean and bird experts, with the time to go wherever the action is. Tickets are \$90 until May 31, \$100 afterwards. To learn more about this trip or to download the registration form, go to <http://www.necwa.org/trips.html>.

If you haven't tried whale watching you're missing out. Why wait?

Notes

• **Individualized photographic certificates** are now available for new CSI members. If we know their favorite species of whale or dolphin we will use an appropriate and dramatic image as a background. These are particularly suited to gift memberships, so if you know of someone who might enjoy being part of CSI please let us know.

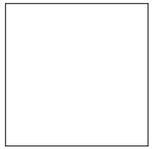
• CSI's educational flyer on cetaceans in captivity is still available. We will be glad to send one as a sample to anyone who requests it. Contact: CSI, P.O. Box 953, Georgetown, CT 06829 U.S.A.

• Current and previous issues of *Whales Alive!* as well as our Photo Gallery and other features can be found on CSI's web site. Check it out at:

csiwhalesalive.org

Cetacean Society International

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Cheshire, CT 06410
U.S.A.



FIRST CLASS MAIL



The whales of New England are waiting. Are you ready to go whale watching?