



# Spyhopper

ACS Newsletter  
March 2011

## ACS Moves Ahead With Great Leadership and Strong Direction

*This Spyhopper issue highlights recent activities of the American Cetacean Society. It also requires your critical assistance! The ACS National Board has spent a great deal of thought and effort to update the organization's governing documents to prepare ACS for effective action. Please be sure to return the enclosed ballot. Thank you for being a part of ACS and all we will accomplish in the days ahead!*

*Photo © Michael Daniel Ho*

## The Conference

### **Whales 2010: Inspiring a New Decade of Conservation, November 2010**

**by Carolyn Kraft**

The ACS Conference was first and foremost inspiring, but it was also eye-opening, fascinating, captivating and heartbreaking. It was an opportunity to reconnect with old friends, meet new ones and bond over our favorite cetaceans during breakfast and breaks. We were inundated with information, but kept going back for more. The weekend was non-stop activity, but so much fun.

Conference participants who went on Friday's all day whale watching trip started the conference weekend with the most famous cetaceans of all time...killer whales. The orcas swam quite close to the boat. Those of us who didn't go on the whale watching trip really wished we had once we heard all the orca buzz.



*Photo © Patty Geary*

But we forgot all about the killer whales once we walked into the Welcome Reception and came face-to-face with life-size whale photos. Bryant Austin's photography provided a truly eye-opening experience. Looking at a life-size photo of a sperm whale causes instant eye bulge; it's simply amazing to be able to stand and look eye to eye with a whale. We were graced by Austin's beautiful photos throughout the weekend, making it seem like the whales were sitting in on the presentations and keeping an eye on us.

Friday evening was all about whale photography and art. Austin started the evening with a presentation about his amazing encounter with a mother humpback whale. He was diving and photographing humpback whales off Ha'apai in the Tonga Islands when a mom and calf surfaced around him. Austin felt a tap on his shoulder; he turned around and saw that the mother humpback whale had reached out her 15 foot long pectoral fin and tapped him to get his attention, perhaps indicating her displeasure

# Conference, cont.



Bryant Austin generously shared his photos and experiences with conference participants. Photo © Patty Geary.

that he was in between her and her calf. Needless to say, this was a life altering moment. Now Austin takes his life-size whale photography to whaling nations for display to help people relate to whales and ultimately end whaling.

This was followed by an inspiring presentation by Richard Ellis, renowned cetacean illustrator and writer. He discussed the evolution of his career, and in the beginning it wasn't always easy because this was a new field. No one was drawing whales, much less had a photograph of one.

He received a request from Encyclopedia Britannica to paint several animals for a new set of revised volumes about to be published, including a blue whale. The people at Encyclopedia Britannica knew so little about whales that they printed it upside down. But thanks to Ellis's hard work, talent and dedication, he has helped make whales and dolphins household names and images. Today no one

would make the mistake of printing an upside down whale.

Suddenly it was Saturday morning and time to be inundated with information. John Calambokidis started off the day with new developments in whale research in the North Pacific and challenges facing whales. His research

team has observed blue whales spotted off California's coast in the 1990s near Canada and Alaska, most likely in search of krill. In an interesting twist, humpbacks near Canada and Alaska seem to have switched their diets to mostly fish and away from krill. (Maybe they have a feeding agreement with the blue whales?)

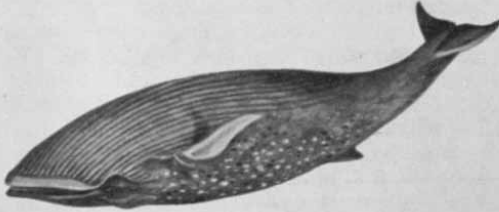
Calambokidis reminded us of the grim fact that only five to 10 percent of dead whales actually wash up on the beach leaving many unknowns when it comes to understanding whale mortality. These statistics are a real concern considering there were four washed-up blue whales hit by ships during one month in 2007. He also noted that based on dive patterns blue whales are more likely to be hit by ships at night.

This sad news segued into a whirlwind tour of all the small cetaceans of the world by Thomas Jefferson. The tour started with the poorly understood pygmy and dwarf sperm whales


**blue vitriol:** *see* copper sulfate.

**Blue-Wallowa Mountains**, range of Oregon.  
 45°10' N, 117°20' W  
 · locations, distinctions, and climate 13:673c

**blue whale**, OF SULPHUR BOTTOM WHALE (*Balaenoptera musculus*), mottled, blue-gray baleen whale of the family Balaenopteridae; it is also known as "sulphur bottom" because of the colour of the yellowish diatoms (algae)



Blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*)  
Painting by Richard Ellis



Blum  
By courtesy of the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris

cialist (and the first Jewish) premier of  
 presiding over the Popular Front  
 government in 1936-37.  
 The son of a millinery supplier  
 achieved a distinguished academic  
 the École Normale Supérieure (where  
 influenced by its Socialist director  
 Herr) and at the faculty of law at  
 bonne, graduating with honours in 18  
 another year at the Institut des Scie

Upside down blue whale graces the pages of Encyclopedia Britannica.

and continued at a brisk pace on to belugas, narwhals, 21 species of beaked whales, bottlenose whales, snubfin dolphins, killer whales, pilot whales, false killer whales, estuarine dolphins, humpback dolphins, rough-toothed dolphins, “plow-shared” headed dolphins, Fraser’s dolphins...and the list goes on.

Jefferson concluded his small cetacean journey by saying that most endangered cetaceans are small cetaceans, not the great whales, and unfortunately small cetaceans are also the least well known. The thought that we might be losing cetacean species before we even understand them carried over to the talk by Bernd Würsig

Würsig launched into the top threats facing cetaceans: overfishing of food supplies, entanglement in fishing gear, ship strikes and noise, habitat degradation, large scale habitat transformation, and climate change. Some of these problems have solutions such as modifying fishing gear to prevent entanglement, but other problems require a much broader solution. He urged the scientific community and government agencies to resist the need to gather more and more data and information before acting. *We can't wait until it's too late.*

Würsig said the reality is we are a consumer society and we reap what we sow as far as environmental degradation. To overcome this we must change our attitudes, our world view or as he summed it up in German, our “Weltanschauung.” No small task...

This overwhelming job ahead stayed with us as we heard an update from Brenda Rone on struggling North Atlantic right whales. The good news is that the new population estimate rose to 400, the bad news is that there are only 400 whales considering they received protection as far back as 1935.

Ship strikes account for 40 percent of mortalities; new high tech buoys that “listen” for right whales may provide hope by alerting ships that right whales are near. But compared to the North Pacific right whales, North Atlantic right whales are doing great. Only 30 North Pacific right whales remain, with two males for every female; heartbreaking statistics in every way.

We were thankfully distracted from these numbers by Ari Friedlaender’s fascinating presentation on feeding strategies of humpback whales. He described their ability to feed with

a complex set of maneuvers that includes bubble netting, lob tailing and kick feeding. Humpbacks have also been observed diving to the ocean floor, turning to the side and taking in sand and prey just like gray whales! Wow!

This was followed by a captivating discussion on cetacean cultures by Hal Whitehead. He defined culture as behavior patterns shared by members of a community and when individuals rely on socially learned behaviors transmitted by other animals. Certain sperm whale groups exhibit higher reproductive success and better feeding strategies, this can only be explained by culture, they are learning from each other. Killer whales also have unique stable, sympatric and multifaceted cultures rivaling those of humans.

Speaking of culture, Robin Baird shared his findings on Hawaii’s false killer whales. After catching a fish, Hawaii’s false killer whales bring it to the surface and pass it from one whale to another and then eat it. One time the false killer whales brought a fish to one of the researchers who, per protocol, passed it back.

Once again, fascinating information was accompanied with heartbreaking numbers. There are only an estimated 150 Hawaii false killer whales left. This is due to reduced levels of available food, high amounts of chemicals such as PCBs, fishing gear entanglement and being shot by fishermen. The National Marine Fisheries Service is considering whether or not to list Hawaii’s false killer whales as endangered. Hopefully this will happen and it won’t be too late.

This was followed by more heartbreaking numbers and situations. According to Rod Hobbs, there are an estimated 340 Cook Inlet beluga whales left, down from 653 in 1994. Next Randall Reeves provided a run down on the world’s freshwater cetaceans. They face the standard threats, plus more unique threats including dams, bridge construction, gold mining and sand mining.

Teri Rowles provided an overview of cetacean related impacts from the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, which included 108 dolphin and two whale strandings to date. Then it was on to the vaquita porpoise, the most endangered cetacean in the world. Lorenzo Rojas-Brancho provided a detailed look at the history of the vaquita and its ongoing demise from gillnet fishing leading to only 125 to 150 porpoises left. He reminded us that there are heroes and villains in every story, the vaquita

## Conference, cont.

is no exception. And lastly, John Wang presented on the importance of correct taxonomy for the conservation of finless porpoises.

At the banquet on Saturday evening, Randy Wells wowed us with detailed findings from a long-term study of the Sarasota Bay dolphins. An evening highlight was the presentation of the first *John Heyning Lifetime Achievement in Marine Mammalogy Award* to Dr. Steve Katona recognizing his distinguished career. The cetacean community lost an amazing man in John Heyning, but it was inspiring to know that his memory lives on and that he touched so many lives so deeply. Heyning's family made remarks before presenting the award and there were very few dry eyes left in the room.

Sunday was another whirlwind tour of experts presenting on past, present and current threats facing cetaceans. Since the fate of many cetaceans is entwined with our own, Tim Ragen touched on the politics of helping whales and dolphins and the reality we humans must work within to save them. He provided an overview of competing issues and crises draining the U.S. budget such as the economy, skyrocketing diabetes rates, Social Security budget demands and a major conflict or war going on every 15 years. Not to mention upcoming environmental changes due to global warming, over-population and the competitive need for resources.

Ragen left us with this thought: The real question isn't what's sustainable; it's what will be left when we get there. This is not good considering the already dire situation of many cetaceans. Ragen said we as humans need to be able to adapt to change and be resilient. But can we help animals do this too? Because that's the least we can do since we the people cause 99 percent of our own conservation problems.

This eye-opening and overwhelming discussion of reality was followed with an informative talk by Bob Brownell on beaked whale mass strandings. This is definitely not a light topic, but captivating none the less because the numbers tell an interesting story. Before 1960 there were nine mass stranding events and usually only three to five animals at a time. But after 1960 there have been 113 mass stranding events sometimes with more than one hundred whales involved in one stranding. The increase in strandings coincides with wide-scale navy use of mid-frequency sonar in the early 1960s.

If only we could save beaked whales from sonar, maybe we should bring that up with the IWC! But alas, the IWC is not even equipped to come up with a way to end whaling. Sue Fisher explained the whaling deal was too flawed to work, but also that the IWC really isn't the right type of organization to make things happen. When it was launched in 1945 the rules of order established that a 75% majority vote is needed to pass anything. So ultimately very little is accomplished. But the fact that the IWC even exists is a miracle considering the mistrust and economic hardships many countries were facing after WWII. Maybe its conception was miraculous, but 70 years later it's just driving us crazy.

From the crazy IWC we transitioned into climate change and the challenges cetaceans will be facing. Ian Dutton highlighted some of the major challenges facing the earth and all of its inhabitants including over population, global consumption, energy demands and acidic oceans. More specifically, cetaceans face problems from dead zones, over fishing and shipping growth.

Which is a perfect segue to the talk by Chris Clark on whales and the impacts of ship related noise. The bottom-line is that the oceans are getting louder. Soon whales will have to SHOUT to be heard. Thanks to all this noise, whales have to be closer to each other to hear. Clark described this as a whale version of being at a crowded bar when you have to get really close to the person you're talking to in order to hear.

Noisier oceans are a symptom of a more crowded ocean environment, which indicates a need for Marine Spatial Planning. Pat Halpin said this is a real concept already in use by Europeans to allocate ocean resources. The idea is to apply land-use planning to the ocean and map out areas strictly for conservation and areas where companies can invest in ocean related businesses. To make this work, it requires a lot of very accurate data to make informed decisions on where to draw boundaries. It's extra challenging because most oceans fall outside of national jurisdiction - owned by everyone and no one, which is an even less effective governing method than the IWC.

Then it was time to switch to Rosalind Rolland's presentation on whale health in an urban ocean. She wowed us with a fascinating research method used to determine the health of North Atlantic right whales...dogs trained to



*ACS National Secretary, Patty Geary and "The Cove" Director, Louie Psihoyos. Photo © Patty Geary.*

sniff whale poop! It turns out you can tell a lot about a whale from its poop. Plus, they were usually able to match the whale with its poop based on observations and the very detailed right whale identification photo files. It also helped that whale poop has a strong smell; trained dogs are able to smell it a mile away. Ultimately, all this poop research paid off, Rolland was able to find the culprit causing some right whales to be extra thin...cryptosporidium.

We went from being poop struck to star struck. Louie Psihoyos, Director of "The Cove," was the last speaker. He feels strongly that when it comes to our oceans and global warming, our proverbial "house is burning down," but scientists are still trying to take the temperature or even paint the house! What we really need to do is put out the fire. And on that note the conference presentations came to a close.

Afterwards, a discussion took place among participants on how best to proceed. Ideas were exchanged and we all agreed on one thing, we can't give up despite the obstacles. Cetaceans are our passion, but also our future. Their success is linked with ours - by letting them down, we only hurt ourselves.

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

**Future Spyhopper issues will not be automatically mailed to you. In the interest of conservation, we will make each quarterly issue available online at [www.acsonline.org](http://www.acsonline.org). We will send an e-mail blast out to members as each new issue becomes available.**

**Please be sure the ACS office has your current e-mail address!**

**You may, however, request that a paper copy be mailed to you if you cannot access the newsletter online. To request a hard copy mailing, please contact the National Office:**

**[kreznick@acsonline.org](mailto:kreznick@acsonline.org)**

**P.O. Box 1391 San Pedro, CA 90733**

**310-548-6279**





# Governance Documents

**Your Action  
Required!**

## ACS Updates Governance Documents ... With YOUR Help!

Dear ACS Members,

There has never been a more exciting time to be a member of the American Cetacean Society than right now! ACS is on the cusp of so many positive changes. We're rolling out a dynamic expansion of the Society's programs, and setting the stage for a terrific "growth spurt" that strengthens the base of our membership, increases ACS's influence in domestic and international arenas, and ultimately allows us to do even more of the high quality education, research, and conservation you come to expect from ACS.

We've launched an extensive initiative to ensure that the Society is resilient and flexible in its ability to respond to constantly-evolving business environments. The first order of business was to revisit our organization's governing documents – our Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. The former hadn't been reviewed and updated since the early 1990s, while the latter hadn't been updated since the organization's inception in the late 60s. Working with nonprofit professionals, we have revised those documents to comply with all federal and state nonprofit laws, allow smart growth, flexible and inclusive board structure, and streamlined operations.

As stewards of the Society, we are mandated to make the most of limited assets, so we know you'll appreciate the fact cetaceans aren't the only resources that ACS will be saving as a result of adopting the new governing documents – we save time, manpower, energy, and money – allowing us to direct more focus on programs and projects that protect whales, dolphins, and porpoises. *That benefits ACS, our members, and the cetaceans we care about!*

As a member of the Society, you will barely notice a change to your membership – you will still receive all of the benefits you enjoyed prior to the changes. You will no longer be required to cast votes for National Directors on a biennial basis. In the future, board members will be appointed by the National Board itself. Please note that this does not preclude members from serving on the National Board; if you are interested in board service, please contact ACS Headquarters. Also, in the future, simple amendments to Bylaws and/or Articles of Incorporation will not require a majority vote of the general membership for passage, as is the case under the existing Bylaws. Rather, changes will be made by a majority vote of the National Board, thereby decreasing costs and time.

Lastly, existing and future chapters will form a Chapter Council, in an effort to encourage and maintain consistency of operational practices at the chapter level, and to ensure unified chapter cohesion, engagement, and equitable representation on the National Board.



*The picture above is of a young humpback whale celebrating his freedom just after Michael Fishbach helped free the whale from fishing nets in the Sea of Cortez. Photo © Michael Fishbach.*

**How can you help ensure a brighter, more effective future for ACS? Return Your Ballot!**

*We need you, our valued member, to cast your vote on the important governing documents that underpin ACS. In your mailing of this edition of the *Spyhopper*, you’ve received an official ballot, as well as an addressed, postage-paid envelope.*

Using this ballot, please vote “for” or “against” adopting the Restated Bylaws and the Restated Articles of Incorporation. **Sign and date your ballot, and use the postage-paid envelope to return your ballot to ACS Headquarters no later than Friday, May 13th, 2011.** Your vote will be recorded immediately. ***In order to ratify and adopt these documents, we are bound by the terms of our existing bylaws to reach a quorum of 51% of affirmative votes by our members!***

The *Restated Bylaws* and *Restated Articles of Incorporation* are available for review on the ACS Members page of our website at: <http://www.acsonline.org/members/>

To view the Articles, click on “*American Cetacean Society Restated Articles of Incorporation.*” To review the Bylaws, click on “*American Cetacean Society Restated Bylaws.*” Existing Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are also posted if you would like to compare the documents.

If you would like a hardcopy of either or both documents mailed to you, please contact ACS Headquarters by phone at (310) 548-6279, by e-mail at [acsoffice@acsonline.org](mailto:acsoffice@acsonline.org), or by mail at P.O. Box 1391, San Pedro, CA 90733-1391.

*Every vote counts, and your vote is critical* in helping us reach our goal of receiving a 51% affirmative return rate. We know it will be a challenge; but we also know how dedicated our members are!

**We can do this. Together.**

We look forward to experiencing great things for ACS in 2011 and beyond, and we encourage each and every one of you to join us in catapulting ACS to the peak of its potential, where we can best work in the service of cetaceans everywhere. Please contact ACS Headquarters if you have any questions about the documents, proposed changes therein, and/or the voting process.

On behalf of whales, dolphins, and porpoises,



Kathy Zagzebski  
President, ACS



Cheryl McCormick  
Executive Director, ACS



Photo © Michael Ho, [www.michaeldanielho.com](http://www.michaeldanielho.com)

# The Student Coalition

## ACS Forms First Nation-Wide Student Coalition

by Cheryl McCormick

In times of crisis, student activism has been an indomitable force behind social and environmental change. Students around the world have been at the front lines of movements to promote democracy, demand human rights, and inspire environmental awareness leading to changes in social consciousness.

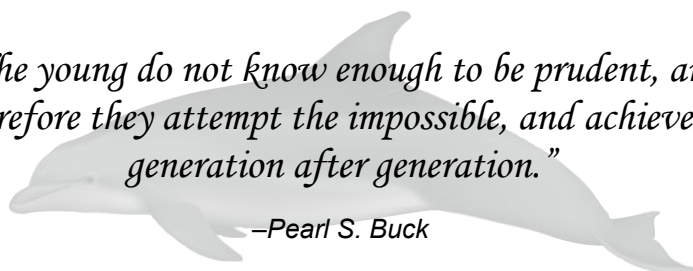
Thus, it comes as no surprise that during a time when cetaceans are facing more challenges than at any other point in history, a group of concerned, dedicated students will emerge to lead the charge on behalf of the next generation of cetacean conservation practitioners, educators, and researchers.

I am very pleased to announce the formation of the first ACS-National Student Coalition (ACS-SC). Comprised of college-aged youth from across the country, the youth-led chapter is based out of Indiana University Bloomington (IUB) with a national reach. The officers of the chapter were selected in early January and they're already hard at work organizing their peers to implement effective campaigns that result in positive advances in cetacean protection and ocean health. Their 2011 campaigns will focus on plastics and debris in the oceans and promoting sustainable fisheries conservation and management by educating and encouraging consumers to make ocean-friendly seafood choices. Both of these issues are paramount to the health and safety of whales, dolphins, and porpoises worldwide.

At this point you may be wondering, *Who are these amazing young people?* It's my honor and privilege to introduce the officers of the ACS-Student Coalition:

*"The young do not know enough to be prudent, and therefore they attempt the impossible, and achieve it, generation after generation."*

—Pearl S. Buck



## Sabena Siddiqui, President

Sabena is a Junior at IUB majoring in Psychology with a concentration in Animal Behavior. After watching the Award-winning documentary, "The Cove," she became interested in links between cetacean captivity and small cetacean drive hunts, and became involved with ACS in early 2010. Sabena co-authored an extensive research paper with ACS Executive Director Cheryl McCormick, which served as the basis for a poster presentation entitled, "*Cetaceans in Captivity: The Education Fallacy and the Modern Ark's Voyage to Apathetic Attitudes Concerning the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Wild*", which she presented at the 2010 12th Biennial ACS International Conference. She hopes to study cetacean behavior in a graduate program.



Do you know a student who might be interested in joining the student coalition? Have them contact the ACS office. Special \$15 rates for the first year will apply for those who join now as the chapter is forming.

ACS National Office  
310-548-6279  
acsoffice@acsonline.org



**Jennifer Swilik, Vice President**



*Jennifer*

Jennifer is a Freshman at IUB majoring in Biology with minors in Spanish and Economics. Like Sabena, Jennifer became interested in cetacean conservation after watching The Cove, and is particularly intrigued by the waxing and cycles of the ‘Save the Whales’ movement since the 1970’s. Following completion of her undergraduate degree, Jennifer would like to complete her Ph.D. in a marine conservation-related field and protection marine wildlife and habitats through nonprofit service, research, or both.

**Lizzie Treviso, Secretary**



*Lizzie*

Lizzie is a Freshman at IUB majoring in Biology, and hopes to complete a Study Abroad program in Australia during her Junior year. She is keeping an open-mind about post-graduate plans or a definitive career path at this point, and is receptive to allowing positive experiences like her involvement in the ACS Student Coalition influence her decisions. She has an avid interest in marine wildlife conservation and ocean protection.

**Tamar Brendzel, Treasurer**



*Tamar*

Tamar is a Sophomore at IUB whose major is Biology. She first become interested in marine conservation after reading two influential books – *The Whaling Season: An Inside Account of the Struggle to Stop Commercial Whaling*, by Kieran Mulvaney, and *The Fragile Edge: Diving and Other Adventures in the South Pacific*, by Julia Whitty. Tamar is hoping that her experience with ACS will help learn and subsequently share a broad range of issues affecting cetaceans – from whaling and captivity, to pollution and depleted fish stocks. Following graduation from IUB, Tamar would like to complete a Ph.D. in Marine Biology. She also aspires to research

and write books about the effects of pollutants on marine species and how pollutants may influence behavior.

Together, these four young ladies will undoubtedly prove to be a nexus of inspiration, leadership, and camaraderie for their peers as they advance their education and conservation goals. In their own words, their goal is “to train, empower, and organize youth to run effective campaigns that result in tangible environmental victories and that develop leaders for the future of the environmental movement.”

To date, the Student Coalition has recruited 20 student members and are meeting with their peers regularly to develop strategies and goals for their first campaigns. I hope you will join me in welcoming Sabena, Jennifer, Lizzie, Tamar, and all who follow their lead. 2011 will indeed be a very exciting year - for the Student Coalition and for ACS - we are a much stronger, more effective organization when we inspire young people to embrace our mission.

We will continue to report on the activities of the ACS Student Coalition in the Spyhopper. If you would like to keep apprised of their progress on a more frequent basis, you can follow them on Facebook at: <http://on.fb.me/f1092R> (keyword search: American Cetacean Society Student Coalition-ACSSC). Please offer a word of positive encouragement on their page! Additionally, the group can be contacted at: ACS\_Students@acsonline.org.

# Iceland Action Alert



Photo © Doc White/naturepl.com

## by Cheryl McCormick

In a letter dated December 20th, 2010 addressed to Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke and Secretary of the Interior Kenneth Salazar, the American Cetacean Society expressed grave concern regarding Iceland's escalating commercial whaling and international commercial trade in whale products. We also took the opportunity to commend the Obama Administration's strong statement on November 23rd, 2010 criticizing Iceland's decision to resume international trade in fin whale meat, and its escalation of commercial whaling outside of the control of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). **In the last two years, Iceland has killed 273 endangered fin whales.** IWC scientists fear that removing more than 46 fin whales per year from the population is unsustainable. In the November 23rd press release, Secretary Locke stated:

*"The United States strongly opposes Iceland's defiance of the commercial*

*whaling ban. We urge Iceland to cease international trade of whale meat and work with the international community to safeguard whale species. It is troubling that Iceland continues to pursue commercial whaling outside the boundaries of the IWC, without member oversight or analysis by the Commission's scientific committee."*

[Link to U.S. Statement on Iceland's Escalating Commercial Whaling:](http://bit.ly/fRwAzS)  
**http://bit.ly/fRwAzS**

In our letter, ACS strongly urged the Obama Administration to consider using the **Pelly Amendment of the Fishermen's Protective Act 22 U.S.C. §1978** (an American law which prohibits the import of fishery products from a country which weakens the effectiveness of the IWC) as a basis for imposing significant, targeted trade sanctions against specific Icelandic companies and products linked to whaling until such time as Iceland complies with the following actions:

- Ceases its defiant commercial

whaling operation outside the auspices of the IWC;

- Withdraws its reservation to the IWC moratorium on whaling, and;
- Desists from conducting international commercial trade in whale products.

Iceland's trade in whale products has increased dramatically in the last three years, with exports of hundreds of tons of whale meat to Japan, Latvia and the Faroe Islands, in addition to several shipments of whale oil to Norway and Belarus, and "other frozen products" to Japan. Iceland has exported nearly 800 tons of whale products worth almost \$11 million in 2010, almost ten times as much as in 2008, which is the next highest year for exports.

Regrettably, more than six years of U.S. and other countries' diplomatic efforts to curtail Iceland's commercial whaling and trade in whale products have failed. We now believe that the U.S. needs to take significantly stronger measures against Iceland and its whaling industry.

The U.S. has acknowledged that the Pelly Amendment “has been one of our most effective tools in the effort to conserve the greatest [sic] whales.”<sup>1</sup> However, despite an initially encouraging strong stance, the Obama Administration has since gone silent on the issue of Iceland’s increased whaling under its legally disputed reservation to the IWC’s moratorium on commercial whaling.

### What Can You Do?

I strongly urge ACS members to become directly involved in this international issue that significantly impacts whales and to establish a precedent for public support of U.S. trade sanctions against Icelandic companies and products linked to commercial whaling. You can send an e-mail directly to Secretaries Locke and Salazar using an e-mail address provided by NOAA specifically for this purpose: **PublicConcerns.whales@noaa.gov**

### Sample e-mail message:

Subject Line: Support for U.S. Pelly Amendment trade sanctions against Iceland

Dear Secretary Locke and Secretary Salazar:

I urge you to certify under the Pelly Amendment that Iceland is diminishing the effectiveness of both the IWC and CITES, and to encourage President Obama to impose trade sanctions. Diplomatic efforts to negotiate with Iceland have not worked. It is time for the U.S. to take stronger steps to put an end to Iceland’s expanding commercial whaling program and international trade in whale products. Taking these actions against Iceland will provide the U.S. with the opportunity to demonstrate the kind of leadership on whale protection that the public demands.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

(Your full name)

City, State

ACS is a leader in the issues that affect the whales, dolphins, and porpoises you care deeply about. *But we cannot continue our important work without you.* Your input sends a clear message to the Obama Administration that you and millions of other concerned citizens expect decisive and immediate action on this critical issue affecting whale conservation world-wide.

Thank you... for caring and supporting ACS in our efforts to protect whales, dolphins, porpoises, and their habitats. Together, we can and do make a difference!

1. H.R Rep. No. 95-1029, 95 Cong., 2d Sess. (1978), reprinted in 1978 U.S.C.C.A.N. 1773-1775, 1780 states that the Secretary of Commerce certified different nations five times as engaging in fishing operations that diminish the effectiveness of IWC quotas and that the Pelly Amendment “has been one of our most effective tools in the effort to conserve the greatest [sic] whales.”

# Charles “Flip” Nicklin Joins the National Board



**World Renowned National Geographic Society Whale Photographer Charles “Flip” Nicklin Appointed to the American Cetacean Society’s National Board of Directors - by Cheryl McCormick**

It is an honor and a privilege to announce that Charles “Flip” Nicklin, widely regarded as the world’s finest whale photographer, has accepted an invitation to serve on the ACS National Board of Directors. Flip grew up around his father’s small dive shop in San Diego, California, and went on to become the premiere whale photographer and marine mammal specialist for the National Geographic Society, which has featured his photos and audio tracks of humpback and killer whales in numerous magazines and television specials since 1976. Over three decades, Flip has photographed more than thirty species of whales and dolphins, some so endangered their survival is in question. In 2001, he co-founded *Whale Trust*, a nonprofit organization dedicated to research and public education.

He is the author of several books, including *With the Whales* and *Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises*. Flip’s latest book, *Among Giants: A Life with Whales* (University of Chicago Press), tells the story of his life-long passion for a career on the high seas, interwoven with stunning photographs of killer whales, narwhals, humpback, sperm whales, and others. Flip has been described as “equal parts photographers, adventurer, self-trained scientist, and raconteur,” and his latest book reveals all of those facets of his personality. Through Flip’s narratives and vivid photographs, we come to appreciate on a deeply visceral level the critical importance of conservation initiatives directed toward whales and their habitats, and in our understanding of the nuances of whale behavior.

Welcome aboard, Flip – we are honored to be working with you in 2011 and beyond!

*Among Giants: A Life with Whales* is available in March 2011. You can purchase a signed copy and help support Flip’s work through Whale Trust at [http://www.whaletrust.org/publications/publications\\_among\\_giants.shtml](http://www.whaletrust.org/publications/publications_among_giants.shtml)





# Whalewatcher to Decision-makers

## Whalewatcher Gets Into the Hands of Congress Members

by Cheryl McCormick

If you've read the recent *Whalewatcher* devoted to the challenges faced by cetaceans from global climate change, you know what a special issue it is – informative and insightful, with articles by some of the world's leading authorities in the field. The outpouring of support and accolades for this edition has been astonishingly positive. I am very proud of the team of contributing authors, editors, and ACS staff for transforming a frequently overwhelming, complex, large-scale phenomenon into a compelling, easy-to-understand, and fascinating account of what we can expect in terms of short- and long-term impacts to cetaceans.

After reading that edition, you are well-informed about the latest research, and may not need to be further convinced that there will likely be significant shifts in the abundance, distribution, and structure of cetacean populations in response to widely-accepted scenarios of climate change. But others may not be so enlightened – particularly, politicians and administrators - the very people who make critical decisions on national and international marine/wildlife policy. Policy makers need accurate, timely information at their disposal about the anticipated effects of climate change on cetaceans and their habitats based on the latest scientific findings, explained in layman's parlance. Moreover, as concerned citizens who vote our values, we should remind our elected officials that they will, on occasion, hear from us – to reward a positive environmental track record, acknowledge contributions to legislation that protects cetaceans and their habitats, and to offer expert guidance and consultation, should they require it.

It is in this spirit of informing and engaging that the climate change edition of *Whalewatcher* has been forwarded, along with a personalized cover letter, to President Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and senators, representatives, and governors in Alaska, California, Florida, Massachusetts, Washington, and Georgia.

We hope that the politicians and policymakers who receive the *Whalewatcher* will read it, and find it as interesting, enlightening, and informative as our members and colleagues.

## Sample Letter Sent to Massachusetts Senator John Kerry:

Dear Senator Kerry:

On behalf of the American Cetacean Society, I would like to thank you for your outstanding service to the US citizenry, and especially for your support of anti-whaling bill S3116, the International Whale Conservation and Protection Act of 2010. I understand that this bill is currently stalled in committee, but I remain hopeful that the proposed legislation will gain momentum in 2011. Because of your leadership and vision, the future looks brighter for whales.

The American Cetacean Society (ACS) is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation based in San Pedro, CA. Founded in 1967, ACS was the world's first conservation organization dedicated to the protection of whales, dolphins, and porpoises (collectively known as cetaceans) and their habitats. We have members in almost every US state and in 12 countries. The vast majority of ACS members reside in California.

I have enclosed the latest issue of *Whalewatcher*, ACS's premiere journal, for your review and consideration. Each issue is devoted to a particular group of cetaceans or ecological phenomena affecting the health and status of cetaceans and their habitats. Articles are written by preeminent researchers in marine mammalogy, and are peer-reviewed to ensure the highest quality and accuracy of information. What makes *Whalewatcher* unique is that it is written by scientists in layman's parlance, making complex conservation issues and ecological phenomena both easy-to-understand and compelling. The purpose of *Whalewatcher*, and indeed of ACS, is to serve as a 'communication bridge' between scientists and the lay community. The effect is to empower concerned citizens to make prudent voting, consumption, and lifestyle choices that are aligned with their values.

To that end, I hope that you find the climate change issue a helpful resource as you consider important environmental policies and legislation that influence climate change and subsequent impacts on vulnerable key wildlife species in sensitive habitats, including cetaceans. As an important policy-maker who makes critical decisions with long-lasting impacts for generations of American – and global – citizens, you will, I trust, appreciate straight-forward, scientifically credible, and timely information on this complex phenomenon.

There is unequivocal evidence that climate change is affecting the world's oceans, but just how it impacts cetaceans and what conservationists, scientists and governments should do about it remain critical questions. At least a quarter of the world's cetaceans were recently confirmed as endangered, and the situation may worsen as the status of many others remains unclear. The situation is likely to be exacerbated by climate change, thus adding to the need to address this and the other factors that negatively impact cetaceans and other vulnerable wildlife species.

If environmental policies directed toward healthy ocean ecosystems and cetacean protection are to succeed in the face of climate change, decision makers like you must be swift to react to emerging developments that are a result of climate change; focus on reducing other pressures on populations where possible; and, be more responsive as new information becomes available. I respectfully encourage you to consider the latest scientific research on climate change and its projected long-term impacts on the health of people and the vulnerable wildlife species, such as cetaceans, that serve as reliable bellwethers for healthy, productive ecosystems upon which we all depend.

ACS is known for its scientific integrity and thoughtful consideration of environmental policies in light of the latest peer-reviewed research concerning ocean health and cetacean conservation. Our Scientific Advisory Council is comprised of some of the world's most well-respected marine mammalogists. I offer ACS as an objective resource to you as you and members of your staff as you consider important environmental legislation and initiatives in the coming years.

I hope you find the climate change issue of *Whalewatcher* helpful, compelling, and enlightening. I have also included the previous issue devoted to the plight of porpoises (Phocoenids) worldwide. Please feel free to contact me if you would like additional copies of either.

Thank you, Senator Kerry, for your time and consideration; it is greatly appreciated. I would enjoy the opportunity to further discuss this and other marine protection policies with you. I can be reached during business hours at (310) 548-6279 or via email at [c.mccormick@acsonline.org](mailto:c.mccormick@acsonline.org).

Best wishes to you, Teresa, your families, and staff for a healthy and happy new year.

Respectfully,

Cheryl M. McCormick, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
American Cetacean Society

Watch for the next  
*Whalewatcher* -  
The Orca Issue!

# Cheryl Prepares for IWC 2011

## What to Expect at the 2011 Meeting of the International Whaling Commission

by Cheryl McCormick

The 63rd Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) will be held from Monday, July 11th through Thursday, July 14th, 2011 at the Hotel de France in St. Helier, Channel Island of Jersey, United Kingdom. ACS representation at annual IWC meetings is very important to our members, and is responsibility that I take very seriously. It's not enough to simply attend and report back in a passive but ineffectual way. We are compelled – by our organizational legacy, the expectations of our members, the mandate of our mission, and our own passion for the issue – to engage “like-minded” Commissioners and Delegates, respectfully parley with those “on the other side of the issue,” and to persuade those “on the fence” about commercial whaling, that they and their constituents have far more to gain – economically, socially, and politically – by supporting motions that promote non-consumptive use of whales and their habitats, such as whale watching and sustainable fishing practices. ACS also benefits tremendously from professional networking opportunities at the venue, allowing us to form strategic partnerships and coalitions among other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that add value to ACS long after the IWC meetings end.

Many of you have asked about whether the aptly named “compromise package” on commercial whaling will be revisited at this year’s meeting, and if so, in what capacity, and what can ACS do to help put it on the back burner (again!). IWC Commissioner



Monica Medina (NOAA) has indicated that there has been “no movement” from the Administration on this issue to date, nor does she expect there to be. I have no doubt that this is indeed the case. Why? The Administration may already be laying the foundation for a strategy to navigate the 2012 meeting, which may prove to be contentious. During that meeting, the U.S. will vigorously defend and seek to renew its bowhead quota for indigenous Alaskan communities that still hunt this species. The hunt takes approximately 50 bowheads annually, and is managed by the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission, which reports to NOAA. Strategically, the Japanese Delegation may seek to block or otherwise jeopardize the U.S. objective of securing the bowhead quota (does anybody else detect the high irony here?) in order to gain political advantage and force negotiations on issues that the Japanese Government would like to advance in the international geopolitical arena, whether it be trade, military policy, or revoking Sea Shepherd’s tax exempt status, as was discussed during the weeks leading up to the 2010 meeting, as revealed

by Wikileaks cables (<http://huff.to/eWmkcT>). It would be challenging indeed for the U.S. to concurrently lead renewed discussions on the “Future of IWC” with Japan if it feels its bowhead quota hangs precariously in the balance and under the influence of pro-whaling nations.

So, my sense is that this year’s IWC meeting will be an opportunity for laying groundwork for upcoming strategies and alliances- for all of us. Dr. Simon Brockington (France) will be officiating as Secretariat of the Commission following Dr. Nicky Grandy’s (United Kingdom) resignation at the end of the 2010 meeting. We will likely see the Commission elect a new Chair, but as yet, no obvious candidate has emerged as the front-runner for the position. Once again, the IWC finds itself at a crossroads – leaderless, in flux, polarized, and with both sides just beginning to reposition their proverbial pieces to engage in a match with no foreseeable endgame.

As for the venue of this year’s event, I personally am grateful for the opportunity to experience the culture and

landscapes of the host country. However, I am opposed on principle to the Secretariat's selection of a venue that is relatively opulent, decidedly remote, and expensive by any measure (a reservation inquiry at the Spa Hotel de France list a single room with few amenities for \$320/night USD). At a time when the IWC is under international scrutiny and rocked by scandal, including allegations of vote-buying, bribery and corruption, with its own leadership accepting 'gifts' of travel and lodging, I would think that prudence would dictate a more thoughtful consideration of the 'not-so-minor' decision of meeting venue.

If delegates of developing countries could afford to attend and fully participate in IWC meetings, their governments might not be so easily tempted to accept offers of an "all expenses paid vacation" to IWC meetings courtesy of the Japanese Government. Even for a pair of delegates, attendance will be a five-figure tab, including IWC annual dues. Is it any wonder some nations look to outside sources for "assistance"?

To my mind, the holiday resort venue reflects neither a serious commitment to institutional reflection and reform, nor a sincere desire to "roll up one's sleeves" to break through the polarized stalemate that has rendered the IWC impotent. For the record, I won't be spending ACS's hard-earned dollars rubbing elbows poolside with Joji Morishita. I'll be staying at the international hostel in the next town.

*Channel Island of Jersey?* Perhaps *New Jersey* would have been a more suitable alternative.

**Cheryl will resume her annual IWC blog, "IWC: The World is Watching", in preparation for this year's meeting beginning in April. Follow all of the IWC news and events at [www.iwcblogger.wordpress.com](http://www.iwcblogger.wordpress.com)**

## 2nd Annual "50-Mile Dolphin Dash" Planned for California Central Coast on July 7

ACS Executive Director Cheryl McCormick has abandoned her attempt to complete the 50-Mile Dolphin Dash run for a second year...in Los Angeles. Instead, she has decided to complete the grueling one-day event around the Monterey Peninsula on California's beautiful Central Coast!

McCormick and her support team hope to repeat their success in raising awareness about the threats posed to whales from commercial whaling. Funds raised for the event will be used for McCormick to attend the 2011 Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), where she will represent ACS members and millions of concerned citizens around the world who care about the protection and welfare of whales and their habitats.

*Can Cheryl complete the run for the second year in a row?* We hope so! What we *do* know is that each of the 100,000 steps between the start and finish lines is a poignant reminder that nothing worthwhile is accomplished without committed teamwork, passion, and a positive sense of *esprit du corps*. ACS members aren't lacking in any of these traits, so when you have a virtual army of amazing, caring people encouraging you on... how can we possibly fail? The 2nd Annual 50-Mile Dolphin Dash event will be held on Thursday, July 7<sup>th</sup>; she departs for IWC the following day. Follow Cheryl's running blog leading up to the event beginning on April 1st, 2011 at: <http://acsdolphindash.blogspot.com>

**Donate Through Eventbrite!  
Link from the ACS web site at  
[www.acsonline.org](http://www.acsonline.org)**



# Website Redesign

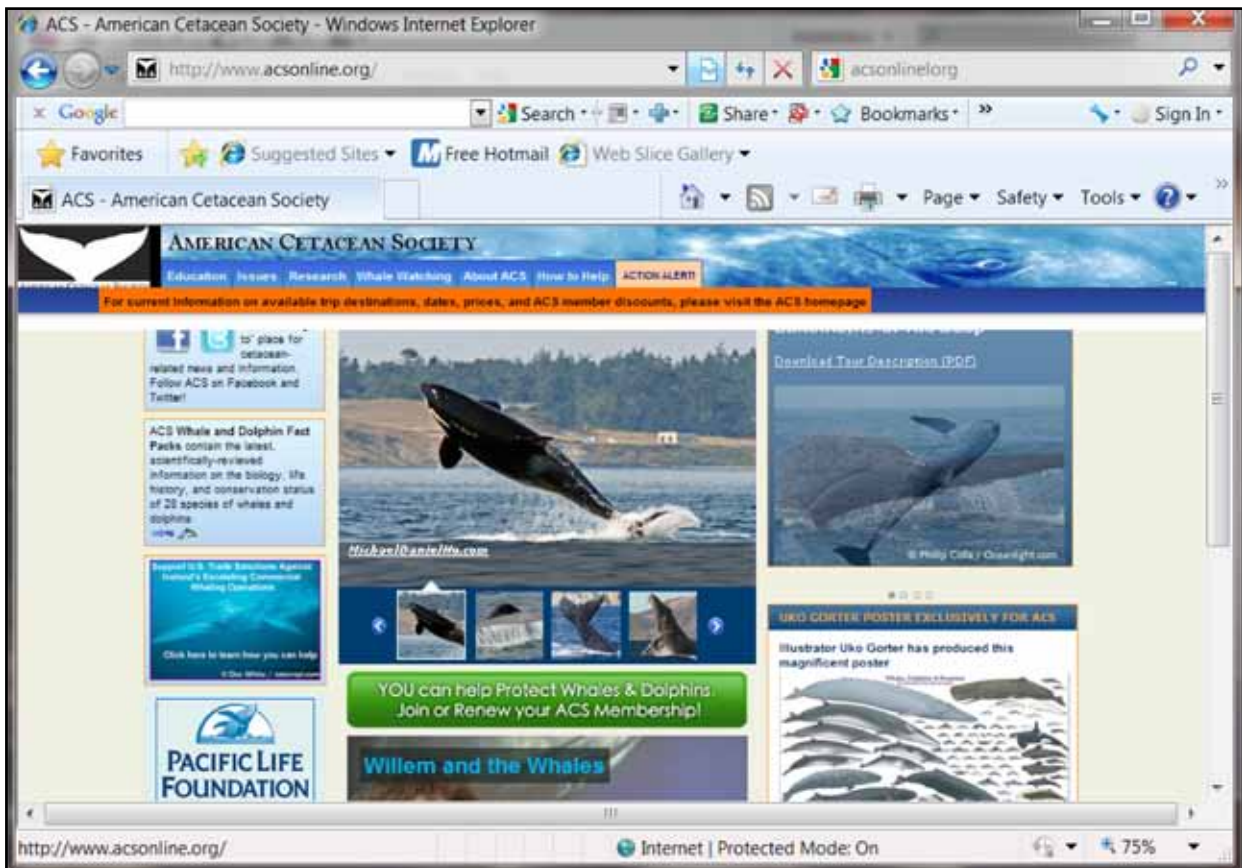
## Coming Soon...A Newly Designed Website by Cheryl McCormick

It's been seven years since our website has received a facelift. ACS has reached a critical point in our organizational growth - expanding into new and exciting demographics, becoming a leader amongst our peers in the use of social media, and engaging members and the lay community in more interesting, relevant, and dynamic ways. It's time for the ACS website – our 'portal to the world' - to receive similar consideration.

A major goal for the new site will be making our vast archive of content more easily accessible and better organized. We'll also give it a fresh, inspiring new look. To help with this exciting project, we've recruited the assistance of Yikes, Inc., a nonprofit-friendly web design

and development company based in Philadelphia (www.yikesinc.com). We've already been working with Yikes to implement major changes to the ACS homepage, which you may have already noticed. We're very pleased to be working with Kim and Scott from Yikes, Inc. as we move toward a more dynamic model of internet presence. As a bonus, they feel as though by helping ACS, they're also helping protect cetaceans and their habitats; it's wonderful to partner with small companies who truly believe in ACS's mission.

Look for the new website to go 'live' within the next three months. Until then, if you haven't already done so, visit the newly-redesigned homepage (www.acsonline.org) and discover what's there – action alerts, wildlife adventures and whale watching trips, new merchandise, social media links, videos, and beautiful images of the cetaceans you love.







# Social Media

## ACS is the 'Go-to' Source of Cetacean News, Information, and Education on Facebook and Twitter

by Cheryl McCormick

If you haven't visited ACS-National on Facebook or Twitter, you're really missing out! ACS's social media outlets are widely regarded as *the* 'go-to' source of daily news, information, and education about the whales, dolphins and porpoises you care about. Join an interesting, informed, and engaging community of thousands who want to learn and share information about the most pressing issues facing cetaceans from around the world. Both our Facebook and Twitter sites are updated 2-3 times per day.

In just the past few days alone, we've posted information, links, videos, and photos about:

- Strandings
- Commercial whaling
- Lectures, conferences, festivals
- Book reviews
- Species videos and photos
- Species facts and information
- Whale watching
- Vessel strikes
- Voting record of elected officials
- Cetacean captivity
- Sustainable seafood
- Evolutionary adaptations of cetaceans
- Cetacean behavior
- News around the world
- Inspiring, education video presentations
- Echolocation
- Whale population census
- Dolphin communication/cognition
- IWC
- Advocacy and action alerts
- Cetaceans and climate change
- Entanglement
- Bycatch
- Cetacean art
- Whaling history
- Marine policy
- Whale migrations
- Travelogues
- Habitat quality
- Research reports
- Education resources

**Visit ACS-National on Facebook:**

**<http://on.fb.me/h5tD7F>**

**Visit ACS-National on Twitter:**

**<http://twitter.com/CetaceanSociety>**

**Join the dialog – See you there!**



# Solomon Island Dolphin Exports

## ACS and Whales Need US (WNUS) Speak Out on Dolphin Exports from Solomon Islands by Cheryl McCormick

The American Cetacean Society, along with eight partnering organizations\* of the Whales Need US coalition (WNUS) representing millions of concerned citizens worldwide, has been actively engaged in a campaign to speak out against the exportation of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*) from the Solomon Islands destined for captive entertainment facilities.

On January 11th, *The Solomon Star* reported that Robert Satu, Director of the Solomon Islands Marine Mammal Excursion Center, as confirming orders for shipments of live dolphins from Europe and the Middle East. He further added that “hunters will soon head out to sea again to look for dolphins to be trained and then exported...”

In response, the WNUS organizations forwarded a letter to John Scanlon, CITES Secretariat General Commissioner Potocnik, European Commissioner for the Environment CITES Team of the European Commission, respectfully urging Mr. Scanlon not to allow any importation of this species on the following grounds:

- Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins are included in CITES Appendix II. Species listed on Appendix II are not necessarily threatened with extinction, but may become so unless trade in specimens of such species is subject to strict regulation in order to avoid utilization

incompatible with their survival. CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments and one of the largest conservation agreements in existence.

- From 2003-2009, experts including members of the Cetacean Specialist Group (CSG) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), have expressed serious concerns over the unsustainable nature of Solomon Islands dolphin capture operations and trade, concluding, “Without any reliable data on numbers and population structure of bottlenose dolphins in this region, it is impossible to make a credible judgment about the impacts of this level of exploitation. Until such data are available, a non-detriment finding necessary under CITES Article IV is not possible. Therefore CITES Parties should not issue permits to import dolphins from the Solomon Island.”<sup>1</sup>
- In June 2009, the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC-SC) expressed “its concern at ongoing and past levels of take of *Tursiops* in the Solomon Islands, noting that permitted levels of catch for export are not supported by scientific evidence.”<sup>2</sup>

In all likelihood, EU countries will prohibit the import of dolphins from the Solomon Islands, despite Satu’s claims. Nevertheless, a precautionary approach notifying Scanlon of the



intent to export the animals seemed to be the most prudent course of action. We requested that Mr. Scanlon notify CITES authorities in the Solomon Islands to inform them that EU countries will not permit dolphin imports from that country.

Collaborating on cetacean protection initiatives like this allows ACS and WNUS member organizations to expand the breadth and depth of our collective impact, and is a successful example of ‘strength in numbers’. It is an honor and a privilege to work closely with such dedicated, knowledgeable professionals; look for more such alliances in the future.

\* American Cetacean Society, Cetacean Society International, Humane Society International, International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute, Marine Connection, Nantucket Marine Mammal Conservation Program, Project Jonah, Pro Wildlife, Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society

<sup>1</sup> Ross, G., F. Gulland, N. Gales, R. Brownell, and R. Reeves. 2003. Report of a Fact-finding Visit to the Solomon Islands, 9-12 September 2003. Report of the IUCN Cetacean and Veterinary Specialist Groups.

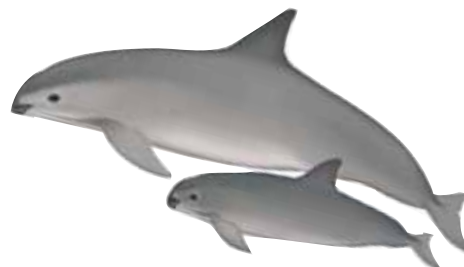
<sup>2</sup> Report of the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission, Madeira, Portugal. 2009. IWC/61/Rep 1.



# Correspondence - Vaquita Update

**Sent by Cheryl McCormick:**

Juan Rafael Elvira Quesada, Secretariat  
Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (SEMARNAT)  
Blvd. Adolfo Ruíz Cortínes  
# 4209 Col. Jardines en la Montaña  
México D.F. C.P 14210



Dear Secretary Quesada,

Thank you for all your efforts to prevent the extinction of the vaquita porpoise, a species unique to Mexico and the focus of international conservation communities. As you know, fewer than 250 individuals remain of the species and on behalf of the American Cetacean Society (ACS), I urge you to take immediate and effective measures to recover the species.

Specifically, I respectfully request that SEMARNAT provide sufficient resources with which to strengthen the enforcement of commercial fishing regulations related to bycatch, and to consider issuing a phased-in moratorium of the use of gillnets within the range of the vaquita, particularly within in the Vaquita Refuge. I fully support the Mexican Government in its effort to continue to secure funds for its “Buy Back” program targeting the gill nets and ancillary gear of local fishermen, a critical and innovative strategy of creating incentives for alternative, thriving economies. Lastly, I would highly encourage SEMARNAT to partner with municipal agencies, local leaders, and fishermen and their families to encourage alternative, creative local industries, such as ecotourism, cottage industries focusing on locally-produced goods, and building connections to promote international tourism opportunities in the area.

Finally, I applaud the Fisheries Ministry’s efforts to promote the development and use of sustainable fishing gear that does not entangle vaquitas and other non-target species.

Your leadership on this critical conservation issue will resonate with international conservation communities, and serve as a model for bringing critically endangered species “back from the brink”. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. If you wish to contact me regarding this issue, would be happy to talk to you at your convenience. I can be reached by phone at (310) 548-6279, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, or via email at: [c.mccormick@acsonline.org](mailto:c.mccormick@acsonline.org).

Respectfully,

Cheryl M. McCormick, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
American Cetacean Society

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## Response:

Dear Dr. McCormick,

We appreciate your support to our efforts of preventing the extinction of the vaquita porpoise. The Mexican Government is committed to accomplish this not only through the buy-out program, but also with the development and implementation of alternative fishing gears avoiding by-catch. Since last year this project has been conducted in coordination with the National Fisheries Institute (INAPESCA), we expect that in the near future we could promote the permanent technological switch.

In addition, we are strengthening law enforcement actions, not only regarding surveillance activities in the Refuge Area, but also promoting compliance of other environmental regulations such as the Environmental Impact Statement for the fisheries in the buffer zone of all the Biosphere Reserve, as well as other fishery regulations.

Roberto LÁpez Izquierdo  
DSCGI

## Trips & Whale Watching



### **Baja Whale Adventure - San Ignacio Lagoon Whale Watching Camp**

Join the American Cetacean Society on our very best and most transformative trip, Baja Whale Adventure! The Baja California Peninsula is one of the great wilderness areas in North America, where a unique combination of geographic variables and progressive conservation initiatives result in extraordinary close encounters with over-wintering Pacific gray whales. Our five-day upscale camping expedition is a unique, custom-tailored adventure, packed with opportunities to see gray whales and other cetaceans, as well as a variety of birds and wildlife that inhabit the San Ignacio Lagoon.

This picturesque lagoon is the perfect place to enjoy encounters with gray whales in comfort and safety. A charter flight delivers you to this remote and pristine desert world. It's just a short skiff ride into the Lagoon, where twice-daily you'll experience the thrill of these gentle giants rolling, breaching, nursing, and even mating, within very close proximity. If you're lucky, a calf

will approach your skiff for a friendly scratch! In between whale watching excursions, you can kayak through labyrinthine mangrove estuaries to bird watch in this natural aviary, enjoy a ride on a mountain bike, venture out to explore the unique salt flats with a friendly and knowledgeable guide, comb the peaceful shoreline to discover remnants of the sea, or... do nothing but relax.

Our catered, upscale camp is situated on a lovely expanse of beachfront, with safari-style tents, cozy cots, and solar-heated showers to make your days and nights comfortable and carefree. The property provides easy access to hundreds of gray whales who over-winter here. You'll enjoy evening cocktails around the barbecue area, where delicious Mexican food is freshly prepared. Afterward, bask in the delightful experience of a crimson sunset behind the Lagoon while whales pass by.

**Includes:**

Comfortable, catered camping on nights 1-4; snack, lunch, and dinner on day 1; breakfast, lunch, and dinner on days 2-4; and breakfast and lunch on day 5; walk-in tent and cot; sleep kit (sleeping pad, sleeping bag, liner and pillow), Two whale watching excursions on days 2-4; kayaks available in camp; ground transfer from hotel in San Diego to air field on day 1 and return on day 5, air transportation to San Ignacio camp on day 1 and return on day 5; services of knowledgeable guides and caring crew members; detailed pre-departure information to help you plan your trip. For a complete itinerary, visit: [www.bajaex.com/si-whalecamp.aspx](http://www.bajaex.com/si-whalecamp.aspx)



Trip Length: Five days/four nights

Price: \$2,395 per person, double occupancy plus a \$30 Conservation Fee\*

Deposit: A non-refundable deposit of \$500 reserves your space!

Remaining 2011 Dates: March 7-11, March 11-15, March 15-19, March 19-23, March 23-27

To reserve your space: Please contact Kaye Reznick at the American Cetacean Society by phone at (310) 548-6279 Monday - Friday 9 am to 5 pm PST, or e-mail [acsoffice@acsonline.org](mailto:acsoffice@acsonline.org).

## Humpback Adventure

Date: Saturday, May 21st, 2011

Cost: ACS member (early bird, before April 23rd): \$88.00  
 Non-member (early bird, before April 23rd): \$93.00  
 ACS member (after April 23rd): \$98.00  
 Non-member (after April 23rd): \$103.00

Location: Santa Barbara Harbor, CA

Vessel: Condor Express

Departure: 8:00 a.m. (please arrive at 7:30 a.m.)

Return: Approximately 4:00 p.m.

Meals: Continental breakfast included. Please bring your own lunch, or enjoy many a la carte items and snacks from the full galley, complete with grill.



Join us, expert natural history interpreters and educators, and the knowledgeable crew aboard the Condor Express for an adventure you won't soon forget! We'll watch for north-bound migrating Pacific gray whales and their calves along the coast, then cross the Santa Barbara Channel toward Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz Islands, where humpback whales spend part of their summers. In addition to humpbacks and possibly Pacific gray whales, we may encounter a number of other marine species in the Channel, including early blue whales, minke whales, bottlenose dolphin, common dolphin, Pacific white-sided dolphin, northern right whale dolphin, Risso's dolphin, killer whales, California sea lions, harbor seals, and elephant seals.

## Blue Whales: Behemoths of the Deep

Date: Saturday, August 13th, 2011

Cost: ACS member (early bird, before July 16th): \$88.00  
 Non-member (early bird, before July 16th): \$93.00  
 ACS member (after July 16th): \$98.00  
 Non-member (after July 16th): \$103.00

Location: Santa Barbara Harbor, CA

Vessel: Condor Express

Departure: 8:00 a.m. (please arrive at 7:30 a.m.)

Return: Approximately 4:00 p.m.

Meals: Continental breakfast included. Please bring your own lunch, or enjoy many a la carte items and snacks from the full galley, complete with grill.



Like other baleen whales, the blue whale feeds almost exclusively on krill, small shrimp-like organisms that are especially abundant in the Santa Barbara Channel, particularly along the northern edge of the Channel Islands. Blues are frequently seen feeding in the same krill patches as humpback and fin whales. During the peak of the whale feeding season in the Santa Barbara Channel, it is not unusual to see 5 or 6 different species of cetaceans (whales and dolphins) all in the same area at the same time. The Santa Barbara Channel is generally considered to hold the highest concentration of blue whales in the world during the months from June through August. Don't miss this amazing experience!

To reserve your space on one or both of these trips, please contact Kaye Reznick at the American Cetacean Society by phone at (310) 548-6279 M-F, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PST, or via e-mail at: [kreznick@acsonline.org](mailto:kreznick@acsonline.org). You can pay by credit card or mail a check to: American Cetacean Society, P.O. Box 1391, San Pedro, CA 90731-1391

# Chapters In Action

## Diane Alps, Los Angeles

The Los Angeles Chapter of ACS has enjoyed a great season of its monthly speaker series which meets the last Tuesday of each month at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium.

Our series began with photographer, Jodi Friediani and her beautiful photo presentation entitled "Swimming with Humpback Whales on the Silver Bank: A Photographic Journey." Dr. Graham Slater of UCLA followed with "Diet Matters: Why do cetaceans have the greatest size range of all mammals?" Susan Chivers of Southwest Fisheries Science Center gave an update on her latest study "Quest for Two Dolphins: Results of the 2009 survey to study common dolphin populations in the California Current." Our most recent presentation was from Dr. Mark Springer from University of Riverside who presented his research on the evolution of baleen. We look forward to continuing the series each month. Be sure to join us!

The ACS/LA Gray Whale Census and Behavior Project has had an exciting season, with a peak whale watching day topping the charts with 38 gray whales! Keep up to date with the daily sightings at [www.acs-la.org/seewhales2.htm](http://www.acs-la.org/seewhales2.htm).

The Cabrillo Whalewatch Naturalist Program is a long-standing partnership between ACS/LA and Cabrillo Marine Aquarium. The program is in its 40th year this year! Over 95 volunteers meet each week with lectures from experts such as Diana McIntyre, Alisa Schulman-Janiger, Bernardo Alps and more. Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Programs Director, Larry Fukuhara, also works closely with naturalists to help them learn how to engage passengers of all ages while on boats or in classrooms. We reach close to 15,000 school children, families and friends during the gray whale season.

Both the census and our Whalewatch program are fully volunteer-based.

If you're interested in participating in either one, please e-mail us at [acsla@acs-la.org](mailto:acsla@acs-la.org), or give us a call (310) 847-0516.

Save the date, or better yet, sign up today! ACS/LA's annual "Ultimate Whale Watch" is March 26th. We'll head out to the west end of Catalina Island on this special 9-hour whale watch trip. Last year, we had a super-close approach from a fin whale! I can't wait to see what this year has in store for us.

To find out about our monthly speaker series, to become a Census or Whalewatch volunteer, or to sign up for our Ultimate Whale Watch, visit [www.acs-la.org](http://www.acs-la.org). Happy Whale Watching!

## Kim Valentine, San Diego

Our 2011 first quarter speaker series began on January 25 with Ann E. Bowles, Ph.D., Senior Research Scientist at Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute. Ann's presentation was about "Alarms, AHDs, and Diagnostics: A Look at the Bioacoustics Toolbox for Marine Mammal Management.

Speaker for March: Wednesday March 23, 2011 ( Please note that for March our date is NOT the last Tuesday of the month!) - Dr. Brandon L. Southall, Ph.D., President, Senior Scientist, SEA, Inc. and Research Associate, University of California, Santa Cruz. Brandon will follow up with some discussions/results of his BRS (Behavioral Response Studies) that he spoke about in our May 19, 2010 Meeting.

We are proud and pleased to announce Mr. Brad Maybury as our new Education Department Chair. Brad is the owner of a sailboat named Jada--for information see [www.sailjada.com](http://www.sailjada.com). If anyone is interested in helping out with the Education Department, please let me know. We hope to have some educational outings on board Jada in the future.

We are currently working on partnerships with some of the local whale watch operations in San Diego. Please watch our website for upcoming events and whale watch trips!



## Uko Gorter, Puget Sound

We started 2011 with a new sense of optimism. Many of our ACS/PS members and supporters stepped up and answered our call for our donation to our Student Research Grants fund. So, we hope to have two grants available for this year.

With Spring just around the corner, we are also beginning to set up educational outreach events. First ones are planned for Lockwood Elementary for the Northshore School District on March 10-11, and March 23-24.

Our ACS/PS Speaker Series (held every third Wednesday of the month) will continue to June. We will reconvene in September for our Fall Quarter.

- February 16: Sue Moore, “Marine Mammals and Climate Change: Whales facing climate change in the Pacific Arctic.”
- March 16: ACS Executive Director, Cheryl McCormick, “IWC: Whales in a Sea of Trouble.”
- April 20: Sophie Pierszalowski, “Investigating the usability of DNA from sloughed skin for individual identification and kinship analysis in humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*).”
- May 18: Frances Robertson, (title TBA)
- June 15: Erin Falcone/Greg Shorr (Hawaiian beaked whales, title TBA).

Please keep checking our website ([www.acspugetsound.org](http://www.acspugetsound.org)) for updated schedules and events. Also visit us on Facebook for updates and discussions.

## Wellington Rogers, Orange County

The Orange County chapter guest speaker on February 24 was ACS Executive Director Cheryl McCormick on the topic of IWC issues.

We will have a booth at Dana Point Whale Festival March 6 all day. March 13 we take our “Around Catalina” trip looking for whales, dolphins and porpoises.

Our speaker for March 24 is Kurt Lieber, President of the Ocean Defenders Alliance, about their efforts to remove fishing gear from whales.

We are working on an alliance with Newport Landing and Davey’s Locker in Newport to provide information to schools about whale watching year-round.

### ACS Says Farewell to John Olguin

Many of our members were able to attend January memorial services for John Olguin, the heart of the San Pedro community and an ACS charter member. ACS National Board Member Barbara Bennett took this photo of a portrait painted by Charlene Smith displayed at the memorial - John surrounded by the marine life he loved. John will be greatly missed and always remembered! An ACS grant will soon be established in John’s name.



## Chapters, cont.

### Diane Glim, Monterey Bay

Randy Puckett was elected ACS/MB President at the monthly meeting of the Monterey Bay Chapter in January, 2011. Dennis Long, Executive Director of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, delivered an informative talk about the Sanctuary's evolution. Dr. George Somero, Associate Director of Hopkins Marine Station, discussed "Climate Change and Antarctic Ecosystems - A Pole in Peril" at the February meeting.

Whales were celebrated at Whalefest 2011, held on Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey on Jan. 22. ACS/MB was well-represented among the two dozen or so conservation organizations supporting cetaceans. The following day was the Monterey Bay chapter's annual Gray Whale Watch, an annual fundraiser and an opportunity to invite elementary students from Salinas to view their first whales. Participants observed gray whales, Risso's dolphins and Pacific white-sided dolphins. The trip was provided by Monterey Whalewatching, and proceeds will help fund research grants or other cetacean conservation and education issues.

Past-presidents and members-at-large, Jerry Loomis and Diane Glim, and president Randy Puckett attended a productive two-day board retreat at the American Cetacean Society national headquarters in San Pedro. Diane Glim agreed to serve as national vice president of ACS following the resignation of long-time board member, Mason Weinrich.

### Beth Cataldo, San Francisco

The San Francisco Bay Area ACS continues with the 2011 speaker's series at the Bay Model Visitors Center on February 24 with Michael Stocker and his presentation "Marine Mammal Bio-acoustics and Ocean Noise"

Other events scheduled for 2011 include:

- March 24 - Mary Jane Schramm introduces the movie "The Whale that Ate Jaws"
- April 28 - Jonathan Stern presents "Minke Whales: Baleen of Death"
- May 26 - Manuel Maqueda presents "Plastic Planet: Truths about Plastic Pollution, Disposable Culture and Its Toxic Impacts"
- September 29 - Michael Reppy presents "Dolphin Spirit: Stop the killing, captivity, and trafficking of dolphins worldwide"

The ACS SF Bay Area is publishing a Blog called SF Whales, which will cover local events and news: <http://sfwhales.wordpress.com/>. As the weather improves, the Chapter looks forward to getting involved in outdoor events, lectures and hosting whale watches in the Bay and beyond.

For more information, visit us at:

<http://www.acs-sfbay.org/>

<http://www.facebook.com/SFACS>

## Kids In Action

### Taylor Shedd Brings It

Taylor Shedd, a senior at Columbus East High School in Indiana presented research at the American Cetacean Society Conference in Monterey Bay California that was collected and analyzed at the Whale Research Lab in the Lime Kiln Lighthouse on the west side of San Juan Island in the Haro Strait. During the 2010 summer, Taylor worked as an intern at the Whale Research Lab. The results suggest that boat traffic accompanying the Southern Resident Community (SRC) of Orca Whales has been decreasing in recent years. These data were collected in a one square mile study area off of the Lime Kiln Lighthouse when the SRC was present. When members of the SRC entered the study area, all possible surface behaviors of the whales were recorded. Also, all boat traffic accompanying the whales was collected. Boats were categorized in three



groups; sailboats, kayaks, and power boats. Over the past twenty two years, the total number of sailboats has remained constant. The number of kayaks peaked in the late 90s and has decreased since. Power boats increased and peaked in the late 90s and appear to have decreased ever since.

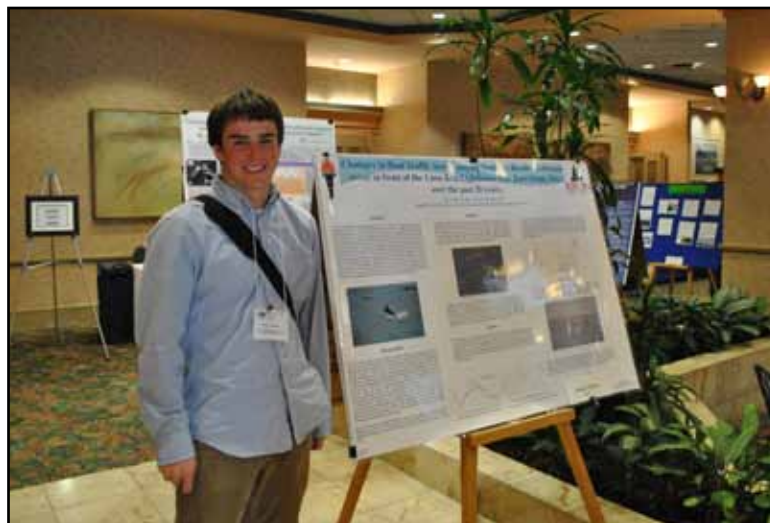
Boat traffic has been indicated as a possible threat to the SRC. The National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration's Southern Resident Community Recovery Report 2008 identified three main threats the SRC are facing; pollution, declining salmon population, and boat traffic. Data, presented by Shedd, show that boat traffic could be a decreasing threat without governmental intervention, and efforts could be directed elsewhere.



*Working at the Whale Research Lab.*

Ripon College in Wisconsin, has been running the Whale Research Lab for twenty two years. Otis heard about Shedd and offered him the internship for the 2010 summer. Shedd gladly accepted, being the youngest of only three high school students ever to intern at the research lab.

Taylor says, "I feel that this amazing experience has strengthened my passion for whales. I feel very honored and humbled for this great opportunity to attend and present at the ACS conference and thanks all that were involved." He plans to study marine biology in college and ultimately earn a doctoral degree to research whales. Shedd has been accepted to all the colleges to which he has applied but has not made his final decision on where he will attend.



*Taylor stands by his successful poster contest entry at the ACS 2010 Conference*

For this poster presentation, Taylor received Honorable Mention in the student poster session. Shedd is the youngest student at the age of 17 ever to present at an ACS conference. This was Taylor's first conference, and he tells us he tried to attend every presentation, and felt that he learned more than he ever had in two days. One of his favorite presentations was the talk about the documentary "The Cove" by Louie Psihoyos.

Taylor first became interested in whales as a young kid, reading all he could about whales and watching every documentary he could get his hands on. On a family vacation to the San Juan Islands, Shedd befriended owners of Orcas Island Eclipse Charters, Dan and Denise Wilk. Having traveled to the islands annually for the past nine summers, he has been on more than 80 whale watches with the Wilks working as a crew member and naturalist. He has learned as much as he could from the other naturalists and observed SRC with the intent of learning everything he could about them. Dr. Robert Otis, professor emeritus of psychology at

Dear ACS members,

The ACS National Board of Directors met during the weekend of January 22nd, 2011 at our Headquarters in San Pedro, CA, NV to review the results of 2010, the plans for next year and the 2011 budget. 2010 was a successful year for ACS, with progress made on many fronts in our efforts to protect cetaceans, particularly on international policy issues, IWC affairs, forming productive partnerships with other NGOs, implementing a successful conference, new chapter formation, and important programs. In 2011, expect ACS to be doing even more than ever – we've been working hard on your behalf, and already the fruits of those labors are evident between the pages of this issue of the *Spyhopper*. In addition, we'll be enhancing the website, streamlining our operations, reaching out to young people, developing more programs, and forming new and strategic partnerships to ensure that ACS remains a leader in cetacean conservation – in the US and abroad.

The challenge of saving whales keeps us awake at night – but it's not the only thing. We are also faced with rising costs in insurance rates, airfare, general operating expenses, postage, utilities, printing, professional services, etc. We planned the budget so that the costs of providing services to members, running programs, and publishing the *Spyhopper* and *Whalewatcher* are covered by membership dues, whale watching trip revenue, and periodic fundraising events. We provide research support with funding from ACS, our own fundraising efforts, and sponsorships, when available. With the exception of the Lifetime Membership increase in 2009, basic membership rates have not changed in more than ten (10) years.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Board of Directors approved annual membership rate increases, effective April 1, 2011. We *do* understand that no one likes to see an increase, but we are faced with either drastically cutting services or increasing rates. We settled on rate increases of \$10 for all annual memberships, up to the Contributing membership level.

The new rates are listed on the updated membership form shown here. They are effective April 1, 2011 in order to give members an opportunity to renew early at the current rates.

### **How Do ACS Membership Dues Compare?**

In considering the rate increase, the Board reviewed membership fees for over 20 similar conservation and/or cetacean-related nonprofit organizations. Compared to *all* other organizations – most of which offered few if any member benefits - membership in the American Cetacean Society remains a solid value for our members, especially when you considering the breadth of the programs, service, publications and support that the ACS provides.

### **If it's Difficult... We Want to Know**

We recognize that a dues increase may be financially difficult for some members. Any member who feels that a \$10 increase would pose a personal hardship to the extent that they would not renew their membership should contact ACS Headquarters directly so that we can work with you to keep your membership at 2010 rates.

As an additional incentive — and to help promote new memberships — members can qualify for 2011 membership benefits at 2010 rates if they recruit a new member and submit the completed application with their renewal form prior to April 1, 2011. The new member also will be able to join at the 2010 rate. Imagine how many new members we could recruit and retain if a significant number of our loyal members took advantage of this offer!

### **A Challenging Financial Landscape**

The challenge of being a small but influential organization in a very challenging economic landscape is a reality that ACS can weather, with your help. You can count on ACS to continue to be excellent financial stewards and to use our limited resources in the most prudent way possible, and to aggressively seek outside funding whenever possible to continue – and expand - our top-flight programs and services without interruption and to increase our footprint of influence.

These increases will allow us to move forward into a new century and face the challenges before us in a more consistent and reliable way.

Thank you very much for your understanding, and for giving the staff and National Board of ACS the opportunity to pursue our life's work on your behalf.

On behalf of whales, dolphins, and porpoises,



## Membership in ACS Puts You in Good Company



Photo ©Michael Ho, <http://MichaelDanielHo.com>

The American Cetacean Society (ACS) protects whales, dolphins, porpoises, and their habitats through public education, research grants, and conservation actions. Founded in 1967, ACS was the first whale conservation organization in the world.

ACS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation with national headquarters based in San Pedro, California. We have active chapters in Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange County, Monterey, San Francisco, and Puget Sound, plus a new, energetic Student Coalition chapter made up of college students from all locations. Our members live throughout the United States and in more than a dozen countries.

Join us in our mission, and help us spread the word! You will find many opportunities in 2011 for education and involvement.

You can join/renew by using the form below, or go to [www.acsonline.org](http://www.acsonline.org) and enroll using PayPal. We hope to see you on the active rolls, and would love to have you share in our upcoming *Whalewatcher* journals and online *Spyhopper* newsletters.

Thank you,  
Your friends at ACS



### Please join or renew your membership!

Select your one-year membership category:

- |                                                               |                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$45 Individual                      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$85 Supporting    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Senior (62 plus)                | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Contributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Student or Teacher (circle one) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Patron       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$55 Family                          | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Life        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$55 International                   |                                             |

Choose a chapter:

- |                                        |                                      |                                       |                                            |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> At Large      | <input type="checkbox"/> Los Angeles | <input type="checkbox"/> Monterey Bay | <input type="checkbox"/> San Francisco     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orange County | <input type="checkbox"/> Puget Sound | <input type="checkbox"/> San Diego    | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Coalition |

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

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

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

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment:

- Check (payable to ACS enclosed)
- Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express  
Card # \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: ACS

P.O. Box 1391,  
San Pedro, CA 90733-1391

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# A Legacy of Conservation

The legacy of ACS will be the pivotal role it has played for over 40 years in protecting the world's "ambassadors of the seas." Part of your legacy can be in the support you provide toward this cause. You don't need to be wealthy to make a gift that will have an impact on the future of whales, dolphins, and porpoises and their habitats. A charitable bequest to ACS in your will or living trust will serve as a powerful testimony to your conviction that this work is important to the health and biodiversity of our marine ecosystem.

I hope you'll join me in including ACS in your estate planning. I can't think of a better gift for our children and grandchildren.



**All information about charitable bequests is held in the strictest confidence.**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please send more information about.....

- How IRAs can be used for charitable gifts
- Charitable gift annuities
- Charitable lead and remainder trusts
- Remembering ACS in my will

*The American Cetacean Society welcomes gifts of stocks and securities. To arrange transfers, please contact your personal financial planner.*

Please indicate if you have already made bequest arrangements to ACS:

- I have established a charitable bequest to the American Cetacean Society. Please add my (our) name(s) to the Legacy of Conservation Display at ACS Headquarters and in the *Spyhopper* publications.

**Thank you for supporting ACS and our mission.**

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AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY 

## On Behalf of Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises...

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**Read more about our chapters and Board members at [www.acsonline.org](http://www.acsonline.org)**