



Spyhopper

ACS Newsletter
September 2011

The Trojan Horse

IWC 2011



ACS Executive Director, Cheryl McCormick, and Mark Simmonds of the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, UK, answer questions from the public following a screening of "A Life Among Whales" by Roger Payne.

by Cheryl McCormick

For ACS and other non-government organizations (NGOs), the 2011 IWC meeting in Jersey began as an all-out marathon of meetings, strategizing sessions, and information exchange. Last year's failed U.S.-led effort to legitimize commercial whaling was still fresh in our minds, and an air of mistrust underscored much of the preparations for the week's session between members of the U.S. Delegation and NGO representatives.

We cannot help but wonder if the U.S. will attempt to resuscitate the so-called "compromise plan" of 2010. Commissioner Monica Medina claims it will not, though NGOs remain highly skeptical of her statement, given the joint Resolution submitted by the U.S. and New Zealand advocating "reform" in the IWC. The American Cetacean Society and its fellow NGOs remain steadfast in its insistence that the U.S. Delegation officially close the "Chairman's Proposal

on the Future of the IWC," as the compromise plan is officially known, thereby proclaiming the death knell of the plan. Our request is met with a wall of silence, and the NGO community has given the joint Resolution the dubious nickname of "Trojan Horse." Superficially, the document appears innocuous, but we've seen this "bait and switch" before, and we are wary.

IWC Transparency: Clear as Mud

The Commission meeting got under way with the seemingly innocuous and boring heading of "Financial and Administrative Matters." Under consideration was UK's resolution, "On Improving the Effectiveness of Operations within the International Whaling Commission." The proposal included a number of reforms to align IWC procedures with best, if not standard, international practice, "based on the procedures applied in various international conventions, including multilateral environmental agreements."

IWC, cont.

The Commission had a golden opportunity to restore and elevate its integrity beyond reproach, beginning with the lowest-hanging fruit: prohibiting cash payments of IWC fees, and instead requiring bank transfers. This was a critical reform to adopt, not only for pragmatic purposes of financial transparency and accountability, but it was also important symbolically. The perception of IWC is that the organization is rife with corruption and plagued by vote-buying scandals. So what better way to address that issue head-on than by eliminating the cash option altogether? As one colleague so aptly stated, “*If you were a government employee, you wouldn’t pay a \$10,000 contract with a stack of cash in small bills, would you?*”

You may be thinking, “*That ought to be a snap; who wouldn’t want to improve the organization’s effectiveness?*”

But you would be wrong...

Issues of money – collecting it, paying it, transferring it, owing it, and using it to buy votes - all are very sensitive issues for the Commission. UK Commissioner Richard Pullen stated that the UK-proposed reforms related to conducting business at IWC were very modest – the bare minimum, actually – and ones we would expect to see practiced among other international organizations. He went on to state that the fact that proposals to reform the IWC generated such great attention among the delegation “says a lot about this organization.”

The first item for discussion and debate was a proposal requiring payments of IWC fees and dues arrears to be made exclusively by bank transfer – not cash, not check, not credit card – not even a banker’s draft. (What’s the difference? With a **bank transfer**, each party must be identified by the bank. It is difficult to send or get money anonymously, so it’s harder to pull off a scam with a bank wire transfer. In addition, payments are more certain – banks only send money if the sender has available funds, and it is difficult for the sender to pull the money back. In contrast, a **banker’s draft** is a type of check where the payment is guaranteed to be available by issuing bank (essentially, a certified check).

Perhaps not surprisingly, commissioners from Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Togo, Ghana, and Nauru immediately registered their objections to the proposal. *Can you believe it?* Of course you can, if you recognize these countries as being on the payroll of the Japanese Government. *Did I say that?* I meant, IWC contracting governments belonging to the “Sustainable Use Group.”

Commissioner Daven Joseph (St. Kitts and Nevis) implied that the proposal was “discriminatory.” Argentina, Germany, Sweden, Columbia, Brazil, New Zealand, Poland, Monaco, and Chile immediately lent their support for the proposal, reminding the Commission that the credibility of the organization was at stake.

Commissioner Tomas Heidar (Iceland) was next in line with an objection, not only insisting that there be “exceptions” to the requirement of bank transfers for payment of IWC fees, but that paying arrears might also be difficult for some IWC member nations. *Huh?* The total amount of back dues owed by defaulted nations is in excess of \$400,000. *Is Iceland suggesting that defaulted nations should continue the privilege of attending IWC and expect their voting rights to remain intact?*

In keeping with predictable principles of “mob mentality,” Commissioner Joseph rushed in with all the subtlety of a jackhammer stating, “*If we’re moving towards consensus, we will have to refrain from the pointed accusations that the UK is making! He is making a pointed accusation that with regards to developing countries, their votes are being bought. Refrain from these insinuations! St. Kitts will not be able to support this resolution.*”

Commissioner Il-Jeong Jeong (Korea) chimed in to agree that there should be exceptions to the requirement of payment by bank transfer – what if hackers infiltrate his bank account? Commissioner Heidar concurs, as does Commissioner Joanne Massiah (Antigua and Barbuda) who, suddenly very offended by the idea that anyone should question her integrity, proposes to add that payment by banker’s draft should be sufficient, since it “guarantees that funds are available.” To imply that there may not be available funds in her account is insulting. Apparently, the distinguished Commissioner from Antigua and Barbuda has missed the point entirely, which is to ensure a legitimate and legal source of funds, not simply that “sufficient funds are available.” Wait... no, she has not missed this point. In her “real” job, Massiah is a Senator and Minister of Legal Affairs; she is very sharp.

...she's just not, shall we say, entirely beyond reproach.

No matter, she can always rely on like-minded commissioners like Justin Rennie (Grenada) and Jarden Kephias (Nauru), who practically trip over themselves in a rush to associate with her comments.

By now, the situation is heating up – factions are digging in, voices are raised, and Commissioner Joseph becomes untethered from reality. He's from a developing country, as he so often reminds us, where absolutely anything might happen to foil his honest attempt to conduct a bank transfer. Not just hackers, but last minute finance ministers and even...*natural disasters!* His colleagues who enjoy vigorous economies just don't understand his plight.

Finally, Commissioner Ana Alban (Ecuador) weighs in with a much-needed reality check by pointing out that both St. Kitts and Nevis and Antigua and Barbuda enjoy economies that are thriving, relative to that of Ecuador, and yet her country has never experienced difficulties in paying their IWC fees using a public account and bank transfer.

Checkmate.

Having had quite enough nonsense and IWC filibustering, Commissioner Pullen drew a proverbial line in the sand by stating, *"This is non-negotiable for us, for our co-sponsors, and for many contracting governments in this room. It seems that we cannot reach consensus with regard to this point."*

What?...*no consensus?* That would require calling for a vote – the first such occurrence since 2008.

In a high-stakes game of "chicken," Commissioner Joseph cannot seem to help himself and states that he, too, finds the proposal for payment by bank transfer to be unacceptable – the IWC equivalent of "double-dog-dare."

By this time, it's 2:00 p.m. – everybody's getting cranky, tired, hungry, and frustrated. Iceland calls for a "three hour working lunch," during which commissioners could negotiate a mutually palatable proposal. The UK counters with one hour, maximum.

Typical of IWC adherence to time, sixty minutes turned into ninety, and Chair Herman Oosthuizen (South Africa) announced that the commissioners could not resolve their differences during that time, and were subsequently to meet in a Closed Commissioners Session in an attempt to reach consensus.

Four hours later...

... the commissioners returned, and the UK's proposal was passed by consensus, narrowly escaping what may have been the most important vote in IWC history since the establishment of the Moratorium in 1982.

Following the Chair's announcement, the commissioners applauded their efforts and one in particular indulged in a moment of public self-aggrandizement. Seemingly unable to prevent himself from speaking and keeping his comments to an inner monologue, Commissioner Joseph noted, *"I would like to congratulate myself for a very difficult compromise."*

Such humility from the distinguished commissioner from St. Kitts and Nevis.

And so, beginning in 2012, it will become increasingly difficult to veil the source of funds used by delegates and commissioners of IWC member nations to pay annual fees and arrears – one small –but extremely important step in restoring the integrity of the International Whaling Commission, increasing transparency and accountability of operations, and addressing allegations of corruption.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. – Lao Tzu

And what did the U.S. have to say on this most modest of efforts to disassociate the IWC from its stigma of corruption? Commissioner Monica Medina stated, *"We are glad that this organization has a diversity of nations; we support the Resolution on its efforts in this regard. We strongly support this effort to bring the IWC's payment system into the 21st Century, but there may be some issues associated with bank transfers and we should be patient and understanding of those for whom this is a problem."*

IWC, cont.

Transparent and accountable payment seems only to be an obstacle for those nations on Japan's payroll. *That...* is the problem.

Walking Out on Whales (or, "The Velvet Glove Gives Whales the Velvet Finger")

If your impression of the International Whaling Commission is that of a hopelessly contentious, immature, Machiavellian theater of drama, then the final day of the General Commission of the 2011 International Whaling Commission would not disappoint.

The day began with a proposal by the Governments of Brazil and Argentina to establish the South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary, in accordance with Article (V)(1)(c) of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling ("Convention": <http://bit.ly/o9zK9G>).

Migratory whales don't generally care much for the political boundaries we've delineated to distinguish international and jurisdictional waters, or non-whaling from whaling nations. So it's possible that the whales you enjoy frolicking and breaching during holiday whale watching trips may be the same whales harpooned by whaling nations months later. This is why we should all care about sanctuaries for whales – the "out of sight, out of mind" principle does not apply to international whale protection.

The joint proposal was presented and debated on the plenary floor, invoking comments from commissioners representing 28 countries, setting the stage for a showdown and confirming - yet again - that the IWC is an utterly polarized and irreparably dysfunctional organization that cannot seem to get out of its own way.

By the end of the comment session, it was obvious that adopting the Proposal by consensus wasn't going to happen. Nevertheless, Chair Oosthuizen implored commissioners once again to set aside their differences and try to reach consensus. Palau's commissioner *only a day earlier* had boasted that "the Pacific way" of problem-solving was based on a solid foundation of consensus building. So it was more than a little frustrating when the distinguished commissioner from Palau responded to the Chair's request by stating that, (if there is a vote) "still we will vote 'no,' but will not stand in the way of consensus," sending a message to a nameless maestro that he awaited direction and was "on standby."

On cue, the Proposal's opponents made their collective stand. Commissioner Valentin Ilyashenko (Russian Federation), never one to dance around an issue, stated, "We said that this proposal was destroying the process of the 'Future of IWC.' We do not want to break the consensus, but we would not like to vote." Commissioner Heidar followed suite with all the subtlety of a bulldozer, making it

abundantly clear where Iceland stood on the issue, "We spoke clearly about our opinion. We will block efforts of consensus. We would prefer not to vote."

Commissioner Joseph must have exhausted himself from the previous day's histrionics. His astute observation on this important proposal was simply, "Our views are the same as Iceland's" – the IWC equivalent of "what he said." Cameroonian Commissioner Baba Malloum Ousman gave the North African countries their cue by adding, "We believe that this item should remain open and support Iceland's statement."

By now, the tension in the room brought on by this display of international brinksmanship was palatable. The strategy was calculated and clear; the stage was set and lines were drawn from the bottom of the pro-whaling ranks to the top. Up to this point, Japan made no opposing statements – it wasn't necessary; other pro-whaling nations were doing the heavy-lifting, and besides, that tactic would be too boorish; Japan's delegation is much too savvy and calculating to show its hand so early in the game.

But now the time had come...

In a calm, professional, and almost apologetic tone, Japan's Alternate Commissioner, Joji Morishita (now infamous for his appearance in "The Cove") made the statement that killed the rest of the day, and sunk a deal for whales in the South Atlantic.

"I ask for the floor not as a delegate of Japan, but I believe I am speaking on behalf of countries advocating the sustainable use of whales and explain our position, so that there will be no surprise and no complication. I would like to ask your indulgence if I take more than two minutes. We do understand the importance of the proposal in front of us and the significance of the proposal to the proponents because we have had the same situation in our small-type whaling program

for a long time. One thing different from their position is that we believe that voting will damage the very good atmosphere we have established, and might trigger a landslide of many votes for next year which might disrupt the progress we have made. But there are some votes that have significant histories and background. We see that if a vote takes place, there will be unfortunate, negative effects. We would like to avoid voting as much as possible. And, we don't like to take any hostile action, but the Sustainable Use Group is thinking about breaking the quorum if it's called for a vote. It's better not to vote. I understand that the quorum is a simple majority of the Commission. If my calculation is correct, when the Sustainable Use Group countries leave this room, the quorum will be broken. This is not a hostile act, just a way to avoid voting."

And with this, the always cool-under-duress Morishita slapped Brazil, Argentina, and other members of the "Buenos Aires Group" (*) with his velvet glove, and harpooned a safe haven for whales.

In response to Morishita's challenge, Brazilian Commissioner Marcus Henrique Paranaguá stated that, *"Brazil, and the entire Buenos Aires Group, feels strongly about this issue. I see no other way than to request a vote. If requesting a vote in an international forum is perceived as 'destroying the IWC,' then there is something seriously wrong with this process."*

Finally, somebody had the cheek to speak truth to power. Chair Oosthuizen ruled that consensus could not be reached and directed Secretary Simon Brockington to prepare for the Commission's first vote since 2008. And with that, the entire delegations of twenty-two countries voted with their feet and left the Commission floor, breaking the simple majority quorum required for a vote.

Which countries collected their toys and stomped off the playground?

Cambodia, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Iceland, Japan, Kiribati, Korea, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Nauru, Norway, Palau, the Russian Federation, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Togo, and Tuvalu.

And so began nine hours of waiting, while commissioners hunkered down behind closed doors in a Special Commissioners Meeting in an attempt to reach an acceptable compromise. It didn't happen.



Empty delegation seats following the walk-out of the 22 "Sustainable Use Group" nations when a vote was called for the establishment of the South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary, proposed by Argentina and Brazil.

When the Commission reconvened at 8:15 p.m. local time, the only definitive point that could be agreed upon was that the delegates "recognized the diversity of views within the Commission on the issue" – an understatement, to say the least. The Commission did, however, agree to continue discussing the proposal, and it is slated to be the first agenda item at next year's meeting.

I imagine this last item will result in more than a few sleepless nights for U.S. Commissioner

**The Buenos Aires Group is a coalition of 14 Latin American countries with "pro-whale" sentiments, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.*

IWC, cont.

Monica Medina, judging by a comment she made to a BBC reporter that the potential South Atlantic Sanctuary vote “put a hand-grenade” under next year’s meeting.” The bowhead whale quota for Alaskan Native American subsistence hunts, so vigorously defended by the U.S., is scheduled for renewal during the 2012 meeting, and in the past it has been low-hanging fruit for Japan and the “Sustainable Use Group,” which uses the occasion to gain concessions and hold the bowhead quota hostage by breaking consensus for passage. Now, there will be a second contentious, high-stakes issue on the table during next year’s meeting. The Buenos Aires Group commissioners may very well press the issue by squeezing the U.S. and other countries renewing Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) quotas from the other end of the voting spectrum – “*No Sanctuary, No Quota!*”

I am often asked by environmentally-conscious travelers about the most “cetacean-friendly” countries whose progressive marine conservation initiatives should be rewarded with tourists’ hard-earned holiday money. You can bet I’ll be printing small cards with the names of the twenty-two consensus-blocking nations as a means of raising awareness among travelers about where **NOT** to spend their tourist dollars. I hope you will join me in raising awareness about this important issue in international whale conservation.

Science? We Don’t Need No Stinkin’ Science!

I cringe when I hear people claim to know all about the IWC and its antics, because after all, they’ve seen “The Cove.” Though the film rightfully targets the lowest common denominator characters to illustrate the organization’s absurdity, the IWC is incredibly complex and nuanced, and yes... there is something good – actually exemplary – that comes out of the International Whaling Commission.

Without question, the General Commission is dysfunctional and gridlocked; but the reputation and work of the IWC Scientific Committee remains beyond reproach. Comprised of the world’s most highly-regarded marine biologists and scientists, the IWC-SC provides sound research and appropriate context to the politicians, policy makers, conservationists, and NGOs like ACS, who seek its objective counsel.

For this reason, it was especially disappointing that, as a result of the Commission spending the final day killing

the South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary proposal, Chair Oosthuizen was forced to “bundle” several reports from the IWC-SC – including environmental and health issues; conservation management plans; whale watching, and the Conservation Committee – without a nanosecond of review or comment by the Commission – in the interest of time. No doubt, this was a calculated casualty on the part of pro-whaling nations to stave off discussion of whale conservation initiatives, needs assessments, and “non-consumptive use of whale resources.” Japan and its minions scored a victory for their efforts, and whales took one for the team...again.

But even this didn’t top the list of IWC 2011 low points.

No, that moment came when the Chair congratulated the Commission for its “stellar effort to bridge differences, negotiate in a spirit of goodwill, and ensuring a productive meeting.” The Commission then joined in a round of self-congratulatory applause and the meeting was adjourned. For all the hand-wringing and eye-rolling during the course of the day, one very good thing happened for cetaceans in the moments before the close of the 2011 meeting. Commissioners Jean-Phillipe Gavois (France) and Plinio Conte (Italy) announced that they would be contributing €15,000 and £25,000, respectively, to the Voluntary Fund for Small Cetacean Conservation Research, which will enable full funding of proposals selected this year and future research proposals to be brought forward. The Fund was £45,000 short of “full funding.” The American Cetacean Society was also officially recognized for its contribution to the Fund. I only lament that more IWC contracting governments didn’t offer to contribute to this critical resource.

Everything That Ever Happened, We Knew About in Panama

So everything that ever happened, we knew about in Panama. – Ruben Blades

The 2012 meeting of the International Whaling Commission will be held in Panama City, Panama, from June 15th through July 5th. Given what will be on the Commission’s agenda, it seems appropriate for the meeting to be in session on July 4th.

The American Cetacean Society will be there to provide

you with all of the highlights, low points, and insight to help you understand the “inner workings” of this complex, and at times frustrating, international organization. ACS believes that you have a right to information that helps you better understand the issues surrounding the safety, welfare, and threats to cetaceans and their habitats.

With knowledge, comes understanding – with understanding, comes care – with care, comes action – with action, comes change! Be. The. Change.

See you in Panama ... expect plenty of fireworks.



Cheryl McCormick
Executive Director
American Cetacean Society

For complete coverage of the 2011 meeting of the International Whaling Commission, please visit and subscribe to Cheryl's blog, IWC: The World is Watching, www.iwcblogger.wordpress.com.

The “Dash” That Made It Possible

by Silke Turner

On Wednesday, July 6, at the crack of dawn in Monterey, California, Cheryl McCormick started her epic 50-mile run to raise funds to attend the 63rd annual International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting in Saint Helier, Bailiwick of Jersey.

I was part of the support team that assembled the evening before to help Cheryl prepare. Kaye Reznick, ACS Business Manager, Cynthia Woo from the LA chapter, Kim Valentine from San Diego, me from Orange County, Diane Glim from Monterey, and photographer Bryant Austin made up her support team, dedicated to helping her in what seems to the average person like a mission impossible. That night, we took a quick drive along the route so that we would know exactly where Cheryl was running,



It's because of you! Donations from sponsors, members, and concerned individuals enabled Cheryl to ably represent the American Cetacean Society at the IWC meetings and communicate back to us a clear representation of the proceedings Cheryl and support team at the 50-mile mark! Left to right: Kaye Reznick, Kim Valentine, Cheryl McCormick, Silke Turner, Diane Glim, Cynthia Woo. Photo by Bryant Austin.

and plotted out where and when to assist her with her special food and drink. Carmel is Cheryl's hometown these days - she loves the cool mornings and the beautiful landscape as she trains for ultra-marathons (runs longer than 26.2 miles).

At 5:15 a.m. on Wednesday morning, after a few quick pictures and words of encouragement, Cheryl started her 50-mile run. It was a foggy, cold morning in Monterey - perfect for running. The team took off after Cheryl's “launch,” but in the comfort of a warm car. A short stop at Starbucks allowed us to get

Dolphin Dash, cont.

the first news out via Facebook, Twitter and Cheryl's Dolphin Dash blog (<http://acsdolphindash.blogspot.com>), primarily due to the technical talents of Cynthia Woo. Cheryl and the team knew that there were already people cheering for her online, in real time!

The team caught up at mile seven with Cheryl to cheer her with posters and the first fill-up of her "special" (and we hear pretty foul tasting) protein-based energy drink. It is important to refuel regularly so that the body is not getting the chance to run on reserves. The team also had salt tablets, glucose tablets, potato chips, chia seeds, some snacks and first aid supplies on hand.

It was a beautiful route. Starting at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Seaside, winding through Monterey at the coastline, by the wharf, into Pacific Grove and past the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and up a gruesome hill towards the famous 17-mile drive. At the entrance gate of 17-mile drive, the team was ready to meet her again. Even the guard at the gatehouse got sponsor "fever," called his wife who sent some encouraging words by phone, and donated \$50 towards the cause. Cheryl refueled and went off again running along the coast.

The next stop was the market at Pebble Beach at mile 15. Cheryl came in hurting a bit, "Guys, my drink is too weak and my muscles are starting to cramp up." After supplying a stronger mix, she went off with renewed energy and spirits. The run then took her along the beaches around the Monterey Peninsula, past the lonesome Pine, and into Carmel. Thanks to Diane, an area resident, the team was able to be always one step ahead.

We caught up with her again, far ahead of where we had predicted she would be, at mile 21. She was running at a steady pace with a smile on her face. I was amazed with her speed and that same steady pace both up and downhill.

At mile 25 it was her half-way turnaround point, with a lunch break and a little chill. But 20 minutes later she was back on her feet and running at the same steady pace! The weather had warmed up and the fog had cleared in some areas. We started to worry that it might get too hot. But back into the 17-mile drive the weather

turned to a cool fog again, shielding her from the heat for several more miles.

The support team continued to drive ahead to be ready for Cheryl to reach out for water or snacks so that she did not need to stop for refueling. And at the 11-hour mark, with two more miles to go, I put on my running shoes to accompany Cheryl to the finish. She surprised me by doing a sprint in the last half mile.

At 11.5 hours, Cheryl came through the finish line back at the Embassy Suites Hotel. Kaye, Cynthia and Kim were waiting with the ACS banner, cheers and hoorays to welcome her. What an accomplishment! We thank Cheryl for coming through for us, and we thank all who supported her in this important initiative for the American Cetacean Society.



*Map of the Monterey Peninsula (with highlighted route) gives you an idea of the enormity of a 50-mile run. The peninsula was well-traversed, twice!
Photo by Bryant Austin.*



Northern right-whale dolphins set their course, leaping at the top of a swell in Monterey Bay. Photo by Kate Cummings, Blue Ocean Whale Watch.

Thank You for Setting a New, Exciting Course for ACS's Future!

With each passing day, I become increasingly appreciative and aware of just how special, unique, and caring ACS's members are. In March, we reached out to the membership to vote on the passage of updated Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation, establishing a new governance and management paradigm for ACS.

In order to comply with existing bylaws and California nonprofit law, we needed a full 51% - a simple majority - of our entire membership to return their ballot on the initiative to ratify the documents. At the time, the task seemed daunting - my colleagues in other nonprofits and in the legal profession said it would be nearly impossible to meet this herculean goal.

But they didn't know what ACS members are capable of. Thanks to you, an unprecedented 61% of members cast their vote! The governance documents were approved by a landslide. And the nay-sayers? They have a new-found reverence for what ACS can and does achieve. We may not be the biggest organization in the cetacean-protection business, but we definitely have the most determination and an indomitable "can-do" attitude in the face of seemingly impossible odds.

So, what does the future hold for ACS? With your continued support, we are setting a course for unprecedented growth, efficiency in our operations, and unrivaled efficacy in carrying out our mission to protect cetaceans and their habitats.

I am very grateful to each of you – for caring about cetaceans, and for your unwavering support of ACS and its important mission. On behalf of whales, dolphins, and porpoises,

Cheryl M. McCormick
Executive Director
American Cetacean Society



Special Book Preview!

Excerpt from *The Sounding of the Whale: Science and Cetaceans in the Twentieth Century* – by D. Graham Burnett

“Like the boy on the burning deck the little Herr Professor (as he came to be called) stood on the flensing stage....Between his boots and the planking there existed a layer of viscous yellowish grease: whence, doubtless, the apprehension betrayed at his bearded lips, the awkward stiffness of his bodily attitude. But his eyes, under beaded brows, were brightly alert, for the spirit was gaining mastery over the flesh, as it so often does when Science is goddess.”

J.J. Bell, *The Whalers*, 1914¹

“During these months at sea, I have watched the sperm whales, looking for keys to an understanding. I have found it impossible to function simply as an impassive machine, turning the actions of the whales into scientific truths....I lower the hydrophone, and hear the whales: ‘Click...click...click...’”

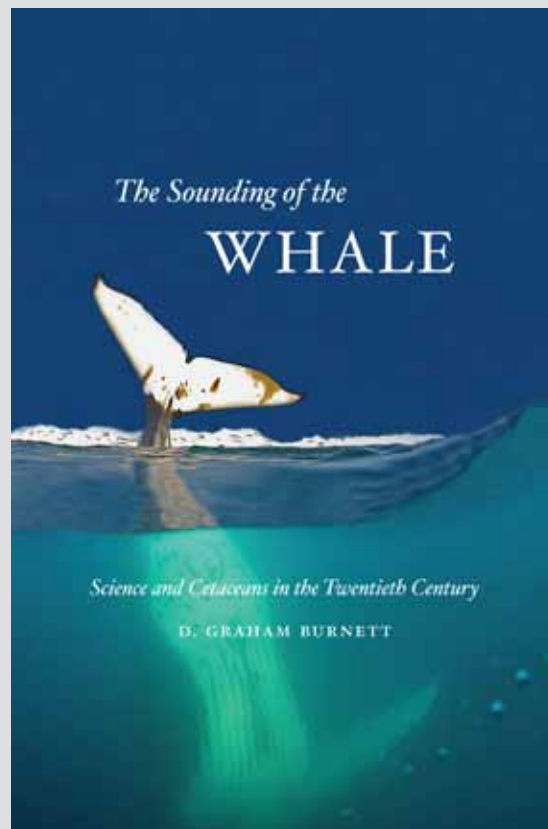
Hal Whitehead, *Voyage to the Whales*, 1990²

Science and the Whales

This is a book about whales, but there are relatively few whales in it. Indeed, let’s start with a very basic truth: there is not a single cetacean of any sort in these pages. You knew that, of course, since even the very smallest dolphin needs much more room than the largest trim size of the most voluminous scholarly tome. And though they breath air, cetaceans basically like being in the water, while books are mostly written on paper, a substance that fares poorly when submerged. In this sense books and whales are, in an important way, immiscible. I tried to keep this in mind as I wrote, and it will be good to keep it in mind as you read.

So let me start again: this is a book about knowledge of whales. And to be still more precise, it is a book about the knowledge of whales garnered and mobilized by experts over the course of the twentieth century. Experts like the two men who appear in the epigrams for this introduction, two whale scientists (a tribe sometimes known by the Melvillian moniker “cetologist,” sometimes by the more sedate professional designation “marine mammal biologist”) whose labors—one slogging through the gruesome residue of a whaling station with knife and notebook, the other bronzing himself on the bow of a hydrophone-equipped sailboat in the Indian Ocean—mark out the chronological (and

D. Graham Burnett is Professor of History at Princeton University, where he directs graduate studies in the Program in History of Science. His *Trying Leviathan* (2007) took up the age-old question of whether whales should be considered “fish,” and used it to open a set of larger historical questions concerning changing ideas about natural order since Linnaeus. Later this year University of Chicago Press will publish his new book, *The Sounding of the Whale: Science and Cetaceans in the Twentieth Century*, a massive and intensively-researched study of marine mammal science and its implications over the last hundred years. This excerpt is adapted from the text. The full book is available in bookstores December, 2011.



¹ J.J. Bell, *The Whalers* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), p. 241.

² Hal Whitehead, *Voyage to the Whales* (Post Mills, VT: Chelsea Green, 1990), p. 175.

perhaps also the spiritual) endpoints of this book as a whole. Two whale scientists pursuing knowledge of whales in different ways, at different times, for different purposes. Their work and its effects – this is my subject.

Knowledge is a funny thing. It is hard to explain what it is, hard to explain how we get it, hard to explain how it works in the world. It is characteristic of knowledge that it takes different forms than the thing known, and this means that the known thing is consistently absent from knowledge of it. One feels this, sometimes, even painfully. This book is interested in all these problems, and it frets about them, even as it recapitulates and reenacts them. In this sense, at least, the writing of whale books and the doing of whale science are more alike than different. Both go into the world absent their whales. If it is the whale you want, you will have to go to sea, where, because of the events I recount in this book, you are likely to have a considerable wait. Bring a book. You might bring this book, since it is long.

Like knowledge, whales are also funny, and a little hard to pin down. It would be difficult to pick a set of creatures that have been subject to a more dramatic re-imagining over the course of the last century: from monstrous dwellers in the abysmal depths, shelled with explosives, melted for industrial commodities, and gunned as target practice by gleeful flyboys, these peculiar beasts eventually came to be understood by many as soulful, musical friends of humanity, symbols of ecological holism, bellwethers of environmental welfare, and even totems of a movement to transform the world and our attitude toward it. How did this happen? This book offers an answer to this question, and in sifting that answer it traces almost a hundred years of human efforts to understand these fugitive and mysterious animals. At the beginning of the chronology of this book the most significant scientific publication in the world, *Nature*, could prominently and grossly mis-identify the species of a whale depicted in its pages—and go uncorrected. Such was the extent of general scientific ignorance of these animals.³ By the end of the period surveyed below, there was hardly a schoolchild in North America who had not been obliged to write up a whale report for science class. Because these superlatives of organic organization have taken up a great deal of space in the collective imagination, and because of the remarkable trajectory of their re-conception since 1900 (a process in which the sciences played a significant role), I contend that a history of whale science can shed considerable light on the changing understanding of nature in the twentieth century. That is my claim, and the pages that follow represent my best effort to deliver thereupon.

³ See Roy Chapman Andrews, “What Shore Whaling is Doing for Science,” *Nature* 88, no. 2200 (28 December 1911): 280-282, at p. 281, where the caption on figure 3 reads “‘Cutting in’: a Right Whale,” but the animal in the photograph is clearly a rorqual. A year later, Theodore Salvesen, lecturing on the explosive growth of the modern whaling industry at the Royal Society of Arts, in London, could be met by a pressing question from the chairman Lord Sanderson, “whether a whale was really a fish?” See: Salvesen, “The Whaling Industry of Today,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 60, no. 3097 (29 March, 1912): 515-523, at p. 523.



D. Graham Burnett in the belly of the whale (at the Bahia de los Angeles field station, Baja, Mexico). Photo by Veronica Volny.

Friends, Hold my Arms

So much for the scope of this book, and its intentions. Before I embark, though, allow me a few whale confessions. First, I’ll come clean: I’ve eaten a wee bit of whale meat. Not much, but a taste. This was in Norway, in the company of a particularly blood-thirsty spokesman for the industry who tried, as we chewed, to sell me on the idea that every species that has any sense kills other species by way of enlarging the ambit of its own vitality. He seemed, pressing this point, to deem whale conservation a kind of race-suicide, which was a very disorienting theory to be offered by a heavily accented German wielding a steak knife. But he was such a companionable fellow, gregarious, and enormously likeable in other respects – not

Sounding of the Whale, cont.

to mention abundantly knowledgeable about whale-matters. So, thinking of Ishmael (“Not ignoring what is good, I am quick to perceive a horror, and could still be sociable with it – would they let me – since it is but well to be on friendly terms with all the inmates of the place one lodges in”), I raised my glass to human fellowship, and we drank a long draught in the beery twinkle of an endless Scandinavian summer’s eve.

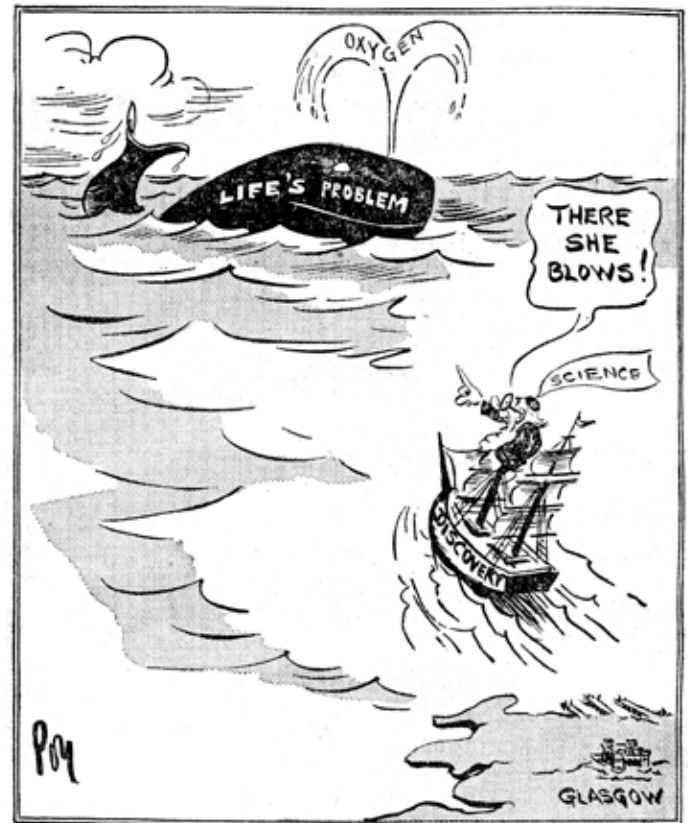
By contrast, I have also wept in the presence of a living whale. This was in Baja California, in the Sea of Cortez, when our sputtering panga suddenly found itself in the middle of a boiling cauldron of crazed skipjack and terrified pilchards. Interesting enough. We cut the engine to watch. And then, some forty feet from the boat, without warning, up rose the towering bulk of a healthy young Bryde’s whale, which launched itself skyward, mouth gulping in a colossal up-rushing swallow, and seemed to continue rising for a ten-count before falling back into the cold blue, now pin-drop silent. For those suspended moments I had seen clearly the loose folds of striated skin that made up the expandable gape of that giant mouth, and their jowley openness had been touched with the faintest fresh pink. And seen from that side, suspended at the apex of its bolting leap, the creature reminded me of nothing so much as some fantastic and gargantuan frog, puffing its huge belly to the sky in a mad frolic of power and joy. In “*Converse at Night in Copenhagen*,” Isaac Dinesen writes of three kinds of perfect happiness, and the first is “to feel in oneself an excess of strength.” There was some of that in this apparition, and that may be why I cried. I cannot say. The whole thing was simply too much to bear.

More whale moments? Most of them are in Mexico. I have the very clearest memory of picking my way over a rocky stretch of island shore to investigate the extremely rotten carcass of a bull sperm whale, whose slow blasting under a tropical sun had left a slick of stench half a mile out to sea. The slightest shift in the wind meant strangled gags; sea-lice in obscene hoards swarmed the strand, and the blowflies tormented the bold vultures that picked at strips of leathery yellow fat. Even broken by surf and decay the animal’s head was thicker than I am tall. Rolling on its side, it towered over me.

And then, of course, there was that silent and moonless night in a small kayak, paddling about in terrified awe as, somewhere impossibly near, one of those giants—a fin, presumably—sucked up sudden, room-sized breaths, and expelled them in deep and explosive gusts. I felt (alone in the inky dark, bobbing far from land) something of the basic, unmitigated, almost suicidal fear that one does well to recall while waxing eloquent about the beauties of untrammelled nature.

The field station in Bahia where I was staying had been used by generations of itinerant naturalists and students of the things that live in the sea. Some years back, on the occasion of the stranding of a small fin whale in the bay, a group of them had taken on the daunting task of recovering, preparing, and articulating the thirty-five foot skeleton. In the end, the project took

A LARGE SUBJECT.



Sighted—But Not Yet Caught.

Science in pursuit of the whales: Cartoon from the late 1920s, depicting an Ahab-like “cetologist” setting out after his quarry; the entanglements of whaling and whale science run deep (though popular knowledge of whales has always been iffy...note that this creature is depicted spouting “oxygen”—as if it were some giant plant!). Image courtesy of the National Oceanographic Library, Southampton; Discovery Investigations Collection.

years, but the fruit of the labor still stood when I visited, bleached to a crumbly lightness, strung out on a rusted armature of pipe, the beast's nose pointing due east out over the sea, to where the sun rose every morning. Awakening at dawn on a cot perched below this looming scaffold of bone, it was impossible not to think of the "Bower in the Arascides," the temple-skeleton of a whale Ishmael writes of having explored on the island of Tranque, and which affords him so rare an access to the measure of his prey: diligently he had its dimensions tattooed on the skin of his right arm in order to preserve these data for the world of learning, though he elected to omit the odd inches in order to save space on his flesh for a poem upon which he was then at work. A good idea, that. One must not let whale knowledge take over everything...

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Jaw-Dropping Photos

ACS National Board member, Flip Nicklin, generously shares recent photos of humpbacks feeding near Auke Bay, Alaska. Be sure to get your hands on Flip's new book, now available, "*Among Giants, a Life With Whales.*"

There is a great opportunity now to see an exhibit of Flip's work at the San Diego Natural History Museum's Ordovery Gallery, August 23 to December 31, 2011. To learn more, go to: <http://www.ordovergallery.com/exhibits/balboa/exhibits.html>.



Iceland Certified for Renegade Whaling



You may recall that in the March 2011 issue of *Spyhopper*, ACS issued an “Action Alert” regarding Iceland’s escalating whaling operations. The Alert was also posted on our website, social media sources, and was sent to ACS members and supporters as an “e-blast” over the course of the campaign’s duration.

We asked that concerned citizens send an e-mail directly to Secretaries Ken Salazar (Interior) and Gary Locke (Commerce), requesting that the Obama Administration “certify” Iceland for its escalating whaling under the Pelly Amendment of the Fishermen’s Protective Act of 1967, in defiance of the international moratorium on commercial whaling.

Over the course of almost four months, ACS and NGOs from the *Whales Need US* coalition were responsible for over 82,000 e-mails sent to the Departments of Interior and Commerce. In addition, we continued to meet by phone regularly with Monica Medina (NOAA Under Secretary and IWC Commissioner) and other NOAA administrators to monitor our progress. We were encouraged to keep the e-mails coming.

Interior was on board relatively quickly, but Commerce needed to clear hurdles with the World Trade Organization (WTO), in the event that U.S. certification resulted in trade sanctions. This, as we would learn, is a slow process. During the recent IWC meeting in St. Helier, Jersey, we met with Medina and the U.S. Delegation daily to discuss last-minute modifications to suggestions to the President, so we knew a decision in our favor and subsequent action by Secretary Locke was eminent.

I am pleased to announce that as a result of our efforts, Secretary Locke officially certified Iceland for its renegade whaling operations and for undermining the ban on commercial whaling, on July 20th.

NOAA Press Release: www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2011/20110720_pellyiceland.html

President Obama now has 60 days (until September 18th) to report to Congress what, if any, of the recommended six actions put forth by Secretary Locke, he and his Cabinet will take against Iceland for its renegade whaling operations, up to and including, trade sanctions.

Iceland was certified by the U.S. in 2004 and 2006 for its whaling activities. Unfortunately, President Bush recommended only “non-trade actions” be taken. This time around, particularly during a time when Obama could use a boost to his approval ratings, we hope to see a more robust and meaningful response from the White House.

Below you will find a letter to President Obama from ACS urging him to take swift and decisive action against Iceland, including trade sanctions directed toward commercial fishing operations with links to Iceland’s whaling operations outside of IWC control.

You care deeply about whales and their safety. So I urge you to take a few minutes out of your busy day to send a brief message to President Obama to tell him that you want him to demonstrate strong and uncompromising leadership in protecting whales by enacting trade sanctions against Iceland.

White House “Contact Us” site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>.

Thank you very much for telling President Obama that Americans care about this issue. And thank you for caring about whales, dolphins, and porpoises... wherever they face threats to their safety and welfare.

ACS Letter to President Obama



August 3, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

On July 20th, U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke certified under the Pelly Amendment to the U.S. Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967 that Iceland's commercial whaling and international trade in whale products has significantly diminishing the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), and urged the Government of Iceland to cease permitting commercial whaling. The IWC established a global moratorium on commercial whaling in 1982.

It is now within your purview to decide what actions you will recommend to your Cabinet secretaries. I strongly urge you to take swift and decisive action on the recommendations proposed by Secretary Locke, up to and including trade sanctions directed toward commercial fishing operations with links to Iceland's whaling operations outside of IWC control.

In 2004 and 2006, Iceland was certified by then-Commerce Secretaries Donald Evans and Carlos Gutierrez, respectively, for its commercial whaling. Regrettably, President Bush recommended only "non-trade actions" to address Iceland's renegade whaling in defiance of the IWC Moratorium.

Mr. President, international whale protection is of great importance to American citizens, who expect the United States to serve as a global leader on this issue. As candidate for President, you made a promise to the American people to strengthen the moratorium on commercial whaling. Your strong action now on this critical issue will fulfill that promise.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,



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

ACS-LA Gray Whale Census Summary - Counts Up!

by Alisa Schulman-Janiger, Census Project Director/Coordinator

Gray whale counts – including calves – rose substantially, despite a huge mid-migration sightings gap during the 2010/2011 ACS/LA Gray Whale Census and Behavior Project. This is the 31st year (28th consecutive season) that the American Cetacean Society’s Los Angeles Chapter has sponsored a gray whale census project from the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Our cliff side post is on the patio of the Point Vicente Interpretive Center (PVIC), 125 feet above kelp beds and rocky shoreline, with a seafloor that drops off abruptly nearshore. Seventy trained volunteers collected data on gray whales and other cetaceans (identifications, counts, and behaviors). All participants use binoculars; several use spotting scopes to confirm and detail sightings. Weather data (visibility and sea conditions) is recorded at least twice hourly.

COVERAGE: December 1, 2010 - May 15, 2011, 1943 hours over 166 days, averaging nearly 12 hours/day

- 70 volunteers contributed 7979 effort hours; many have over 10 years of experience. Experienced observers anchor all shifts (observer experience affects whale counts). Eleven core volunteers donated over 200 hours each, totaling over 43% of our effort hours. Nineteen additional volunteers donated at least 100 hours each.

GRAY WHALE COUNTS ROSE: Southbound and northbound

- 447 southbound (312 last season); Southbound range: 301-1291
- 710 northbound (521 last season); Northbound range: 521-3412
- Gray whale counts fluctuate annually:

Variable feeding ground conditions (especially ice coverage) affect migratory timing and corridors, Less fog this season (weather conditions impact counts)

Locally, most southbound gray whales prefer offshore corridors; many northbound whales shift nearshore

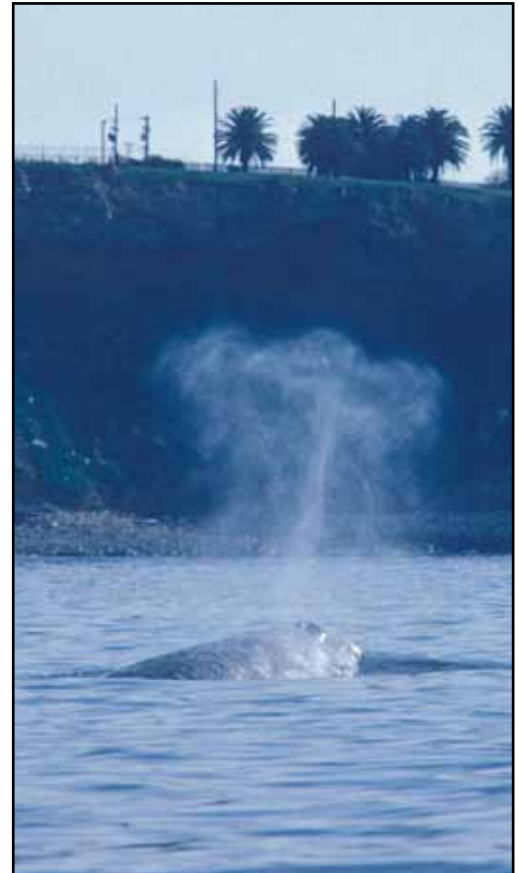
Wild populations fluctuate, as do the number of whales that complete the migration

NMFS (National Marine Fisheries Service) estimated the gray whale population at 20,110 in 2007

Gray whales were removed from the endangered species list in 1994

PEAKS AND TURNAROUND DATES:

- Southbound - Peak southbound count: 38 gray whales on January 7 (previous peak day range = 15-98), 123 southbound whales during the peak southbound week of January 5 - January 11 (68 last season). Southbound migration started earlier, dropped off earlier than usual
- Turn-around - Official turn-around date: February 17 (daily northbound whales exceed southbound whales). Huge gap between migrations, with few whales sighted. We spotted 13 northbound whales during the “southbound migration.” We spotted 31 southbound whales during the “northbound migration.”



- Northbound - Peak northbound count: 64 gray whales on March 21 (previous peak range: 20-152). Highest northbound count since March 1998 (81). 164 gray whales during the peak northbound week of March 21 – March 27 (Only 81* last season). Northbound migration started late, ran much later than usual.

CALF COUNTS ROSE:

- Southbound calves: 26 southbound calves (5.8% of southbound migrants) from January 7 - February 12. (Last season we saw 17 newborn calves: 5.4% of the southbound migrants.) 7th highest newborn calf percentage; (1997-1998=record season: 106 calves = 8.6% of southbound migrants). Previous southbound calf counts ranged from 3-60 (0.5%-8.9% of southbound migrants)
- Northbound calves: 110 (15.5% of northbound migrants), from March 6 - May 14. (Last season we counted 41 northbound cow/calf pairs: 7.9% of northbound migrants.) 6th highest calf count; (1996-1997 = record calf count season: 222 calves = 13.8% of northbound migrants. 2nd highest calf percentage: Cows and calves comprised 31% of the northbound nearshore migration. Previous calf counts have ranged from 11-196 (0.9%-18.5% of northbound migrants). 2 more probable cow/calf pairs.

BEHAVIORS, HUMAN INTERACTIONS, INJURED/DEFORMED WHALES:

- Many behaviors: mill, roll, lunge, breach, spyhop (especially calves), bubble blast, mate, and nurse calves.
- Calves played: several calves played in the kelp, rolled on their moms, or rode on their moms' backs.
- Pods sizes changed: some pods separated or merged.
- Near-collisions with boats: eight days of near-collisions as private boats closely approached gray whales.
- Whale reactions to boats: a few changed direction and headed offshore, while a few others disappeared.
- Cow/calf approached diver: briefly approached diver in kelp bed, who tried to approach the departing whales.
- Injured whales: two injured northbound cows that each displayed a large cut in the knuckles of her back.
- Deformed northbound cow: had a large (4 foot) round protuberance on her back.

OTHER SPECIES SIGHTED (comparing this season to last season)

12 other marine mammal species

Highlight: Our first sighting of an extremely rare Steller (northern) sea lion on May 6

common dolphin on 150 days (150)	minke whales on 7-12 days (7-15)
bottlenose dolphin on 136 days (145)	humpback whales on 5-7 days (23-24)
Risso's dolphin on 37 days (15-17)	KILLER WHALES*: 10-12 on January 12 (1)
fin whales on at least 35 days (131)	unidentified whales on 16 days – likely fin whales (27)
Pacific white-sided dolphin on 31 days (64-70)	California sea lions on 154 days (139)
blue whales on at least 12 days (20)	harbor seals on 85 days (31)

Osprey, peregrine falcon: Two and five days respectively; their species are recovering from DDT contamination

KILLER WHALES*: Please contribute to our California Killer Whale Project! Send photos, sighting data to: janiger@cox.net; we will match images to our catalog, and notify you with results.

JOIN US! Census volunteers needed: Dec. 1 - May 15. Contact Alisa Schulman-Janiger at: janiger@cox.net. No experience necessary: on-site training in November and December. Whalewatch Naturalist Training Class: Highly recommended. Meets on Tuesdays, October-March, at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (CMA) [(310) 548-7563; www.cabrilloaq.org], co-sponsored by CMA and ACS/LA . ACS/LA free lectures: Invited specialists, last Tuesday of each month - Cabrillo Marine Aquarium

Photo by Alisa Schulman-Janiger. This data is copyright-protected, please contact Alisa Schulman-Janiger for permission to use.

ACS Will Soon Unveil New Website

In November, ACS will celebrate its 44th birthday, and we felt it was time that our website grew up a bit too, not just aesthetically but also in terms of content, functionality, and visitor engagement. A website is an organization's "portal to the world," and it's important to us remain at the forefront of cetacean research, conservation, and education, as well as engage you – our members – in our activities and campaigns.

To improve upon the past, we have morphed our blog into a hybrid stream including both editorial content and an aggregated view of our social media activity including content from Facebook, Twitter and blogs. ACS is leading our peers in the social media conversation and we hope that you will engage in discussion with our dynamic community!

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, the new version of our website puts the American Cetacean Society team front and center. We want you to know who we are, what we do, and what propels our passion for cetacean protection. We love what we do, we are very active in the industry, and we believe in our work on behalf of whales, dolphins, and porpoises. Get to know us so that we can get to know you.

Part of growing is being accountable, learning, and improving. We know that our website still isn't perfect, but we believe it is a huge step in the right direction. It's something we have worked very hard to bring to fruition as a team and we hope that you will enjoy it. Thank you so much for your continued support of ACS!



Visit ACS-National on Facebook:
[www.facebook.com/
AmericanCetaceanSociety](http://www.facebook.com/AmericanCetaceanSociety)

Visit ACS-National on Twitter:
<http://twitter.com/CetaceanSociety>

Join the dialog – See you there!



Chapters In Action

Diane Alps, Los Angeles

The Los Angeles Chapter of ACS wrapped up our 2010-2011 Speaker Series with two great speakers: Dr. Tom Jefferson's talk: "¡Viva Vaquita!: Can We Save the World's Most Endangered Species of Marine Mammal?" was outstanding. He brought everyone up-to-date on the status of the smallest and most endangered cetacean in the world. Tom is with Southwest Fisheries Science Center and his multi-media presentation included Vicky the Vaquita, a life-size model of this 5' porpoise. Our final presentation of the season, "Surprise! There are sea turtles in your backyard, dude!" by Dan Lawson, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, alerted everyone to the green sea turtles that are regularly being sighted in the San Gabriel River. His hopes are to set up a local study to learn more about this unexpected population.

The 2011-2012 Speaker Series will begin on the last Tuesday in September with Brian Segee of the Environmental Defense Center to discuss Ship Strikes and the Policies Behind Mitigation Effort. Watch for updates and find out more about our free monthly lectures held at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium on our website: www.acs-la.org.

July 30th brought a full and exciting day of whale watching to a full boat of passengers for the ACS/LA "Summertime Blues (and Humpbacks!) Whale Watch Adventure." The trip started out cold, windy and a little bumpy, and the whales were a bit further out than expected, BUT...once we found them, boy! Did we find them! We followed the southern ridge of the deep, underwater canyon for over 15 miles, from the east end of Santa Rosa to San Miguel Island. In all, we counted at least 24 humpback whales, including a pod of 7 friendly whales, 19 blue whales, including several cow/calf pairs, and well over 3,500 common dolphins (with many more, uncounted whales in the distance!) One of the highlights of the day was a very close, spectacular humpback breach, which was met with hundreds of shutter-clicks, loads of applause and shouts of "Hana Hou!" (Hawaiian for "Do it again!!")

The time to volunteer is coming! The Cabrillo Whalewatch Naturalist Program is a long-standing partnership between ACS/LA and Cabrillo Marine Aquarium. We reach close to 15,000 school children, families and friends during the gray whale season. Training for the 2011-2012 season will begin October 4 at 7:00 p.m. at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro. No reservations or experience necessary – come on down!

To find out more about volunteering and great monthly speakers visit our website: www.acs-la.org, and be sure to follow us on Facebook: [acs.lachapter](https://www.facebook.com/acs.lachapter)

Kim Valentine, San Diego

ACS San Diego has continued to host excellent speakers through the summer months. We were honored to have Lei Lani Stelle, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biology, University of Redlands, join us in June to address "Gray whale energetics and anthropogenic impacts." Our speaker series will begin again on September 17 with Michael Fishbach. Michael has been studying blue whales for years, and has recently posted a video of his humpback whale rescue in the Sea of Cortez. This rescue is posted on YouTube: *Saving Valentina*. We plan to combine this talk with a whale watch. We are still arranging the details regarding the whale watch and speaker venue – keep posted on progress from our website at www.acssd.org or e-mail us at acssd@yahoo.com.

On July 23rd we co-hosted a booth with Viva Vaquita at the Cabrillo National Monument's Parks and Open Spaces Day.

We have a couple of whale watch companies that have offered discounts to ACS members. You can learn about the dates and times of these trips on H&MLanding.com and sdwhalewatch.com. Please e-mail us at acssd@yahoo.com or visit our website at www.acssd.org if you are interested in learning more about discounts for these trips.

Uko Gorter, Puget Sound

As a way to stimulate and encourage student participation at the Society for Marine Mammalogy's 19th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals in Tampa, Florida (November 27- December 2, 2011), the ACS-Puget Sound Chapter awarded two travel grants of \$500 (each) for an accepted oral or poster presentation. To qualify, student applicants had to be enrolled in a recognized academic institution and reside in the U. S. Pacific Northwest or Canada. Two recipients were chosen by lottery on August 5. We congratulate Juliana Houghton, of the University of Washington, and Frances Robertson, of the University of British Columbia – the winners of our 2011, student travel grants. Here are their accepted abstracts:

Spatial use, occurrence, and group size of mammal-eating killer whales in the Salish Sea: studies in southern British Columbia and Washington state from 1986 – 2010 - Juliana Houghton, Robin W. Baird, Candice K. Emmons, M. Bradley Hanson

The primary prey of mammal-eating killer whales in the Salish Sea, seals, sea lions, and porpoises, have undergone dramatic changes in population sizes in the last 40 years. Whether such changes in prey abundance have resulted in changes in predator behavior is unknown. We hypothesize that changes in prey abundance over time will result in changes in predator spatial use, occurrence and group size. Focused studies of mammal-eating killer whale behavior in the area were undertaken from 1986-1993, and an extensive record of sightings with confirmed identifications is available from 2000-2010. Changes in occurrence across years, months, and subareas of the Salish Sea were examined as well as changes in group size, and in the groups using the area. Occurrence of mammal-eating whales had an increasing trend from 2000-2010 with seasonal peaks in April-May and August-September. From 1986-1993, there was one seasonal peak in occurrence in August-September. More encounters occurred in the Strait of Juan de Fuca than other subareas, consistent with findings for 1986-1993. The most often observed group size was four whales for 2000-2010, although changes in group size also occurred by month. This group size is larger than the size most often observed from 1986-1993, and group size also seems to be increasing over time from 2000-2010. We suggest the whales are increasing use of the area due to increasing prey abundance. Changes in seasonal patterns of occurrence and the increase in group size between the two periods could be due to increased prey diversity as prey species occurrence varies seasonally and optimum foraging group size changes by prey species. Increased prey abundance could also relax the need to forage in the optimum group size and increase whale reproduction, leading to larger groups. These findings will provide greater insight into predator-prey relationships in the Salish Sea.

Exposure to seismic operations affects bowhead behavior and sightability in the Alaskan Arctic - Francis Robertson, W.R. Koski, T. A. Thomas, W.J. Richardson, B. Würsig, A.W. Trites

Effects of oil and gas exploration on the distribution of bowhead whales (*Balaena mysticetus*) are monitored through aerial surveys of the Beaufort Sea in late summer and early fall. Earlier analyses showed that bowhead whales exposed to seismic survey activities in the Beaufort Sea exhibited localized displacement and altered surface-respiration-dive (SRD) behaviors. The objective of our study was to quantify how changes in SRD behavior associated with exposure to seismic surveys influence the detectability of whales during aerial surveys. Reduced detectability resulting from these changes in diving behavior could lead to underestimates of the numbers of whales present and lead to incorrect conclusions about their distribution relative to seismic operations. Current mitigation strategies for seismic operations in the Beaufort Sea will benefit from using appropriate sightability correction factors. We applied Generalized Linear Models to behavioral data collected by government and industry aerial survey programs from 1980 to 2000 to investigate the effects of seismic disturbance on SRD behavior (i.e. mean surface and dive durations). We assessed the influence of seismic operations on whales according to reproductive state, activity, and season. Our results confirm that exposure to seismic operations affects bowhead SRD behavior and whale detectability; surfacing times and the number of blows per surfacing significantly decreased when whales were exposed to seismic disturbance. The SRD behavior of whales without calves was most affected, particularly while traveling. Consequently, sightability correction factors appropriate to the sound exposure situation, whale status, and whale activity should be applied when assessing whale distribution in relation to human activities. In addition, our results improve understanding of bowhead reactions to seismic operations. Our study also shows the need to apply similar analyses for other regions of the world where there is interest in estimating cetacean abundance via sighting surveys in areas where seismic surveys occur.

Beth Cataldo, San Francisco

Lynette Kofinow, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter Vice President, continues to book engaging speakers at the Bay Model Visitor Center. On September 29, after just returning from Taiji on September 1 for the opening of the next whale hunting season, Mark Palmer will talk about Earth Island Institute's campaign to end the slaughter of dolphin in Japan.

Bay Area residents won't want to miss the special book signing for *Among Giants: A Life with Whales*, with whale photographer Flip Nicklin. Widely regarded as the leading whale photographer in the world, Flip Nicklin, a National Geographic contributing photographer, has more than 5,500 dives under his belt. His ability to free dive to depths of up to 90 feet allows him to swim near enough to record whale behavior without interrupting it. Join us on Wednesday, October 26 with Jonathan Stern and Flip Nicklin at Fish Restaurant in Sausalito.

Join SFACS and Point Reyes Field Seminars on a trip out to the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary waters. Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary is an offshore oasis for wildlife. Located 20 miles west of the Point Reyes Lighthouse, this granitic bank is a lush feeding ground for blue, gray and humpback whales, porpoises, sea lions and all sorts of seabirds such as albatross, shearwaters, fulmars, murre and auklets. The boat trip leaves from Bodega Bay on Sunday, September 18 at 7 am. The trip includes a free classroom seminar on Saturday, September 17 in Point Reyes.

Join SFACS and the Oceanic Society on a trip out to the Farallon Islands on August 28, September 4, or September 11. Proceeds from these trips will benefit the Whale Science in the Classroom program.

For more information, visit us at: <http://www.acs-sfbay.org>. You will also find us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SFACS>.

Wellington Rogers, Orange County

Blue whales have been sighted off Newport! Some of our members used the whale checks given out at our sunset whale watch (which was cancelled) to go out and view the blue whales.

During July we had the *Day of the Dolphin* orientation at the Costa Mesa Neighborhood Community Center. ACS-OC Vice President Bert Vogler led the orientation, coordinated volunteers for the count, and collected all the data afterward. The actual count took place on Saturday, July 30th. Once known as "Mass Sighting Day," this census was initiated in 1987 by Professor Dennis Kelly of Orange Coast College. Presently, using 14 shore-based stations placed at roughly 2-mile intervals along the Orange County coast, the DOD has helped document the abundance, behavior, mortality, and general health of Orange County's resident coastal bottlenose dolphin population. The DOD's counts are taken in January, April, July, and October. Participants are assigned a station along the Orange County shoreline, and spend the day scanning the water for dolphins, recording their numbers and activity. Nice gig, huh?



Day of the Dolphin is a long-term project by the ACS-OC chapter. Photo by Sergeant John Hollenbeck, Newport Harbor Patrol.

A memorial was held Wednesday July 27, for former Orange County chapter Vice President and Conservation Chair, Walt Glowski, who passed July 19, 2011.

August activities begin with speaker Robb Mead, Orange County Chapter President of the Sea Shepherd. His topics include the campaigns and new developments. He will be providing information about the La Jolla seal rookery and an update of the current situation. The meeting will be held at the Costa Mesa Neighborhood Community Center, Thursday August 25, at 7:30 p.m.

Refer a New Member to ACS!

Members of the American Cetacean Society make us the most highly-regarded whale protection organization in the U.S. The more members we have, the more effectively we can advocate for the whales, dolphins, and porpoises you care about. Therefore, we'd like to offer you an opportunity to put your connections to work. Knowing that word-of-mouth is the best way to grow our organization, we'd like to reward you for spreading the word about ACS benefits to your friends, family, and colleagues.

Refer One New Member - When your referred colleague or friend joins ACS and mentions your name, you will receive a heavy glazed ceramic mug featuring beautiful cetacean photos by wildlife photographer Michael Daniel Ho, FREE!

Refer Three New Members Within a Membership Year - Refer three new members who mention your name between your renewal dates in a membership year and we will bump your membership renewal date ahead a year from the next upcoming renewal date, giving you a free year of membership!

Tell your friends about ACS and the benefits you gain as a member:

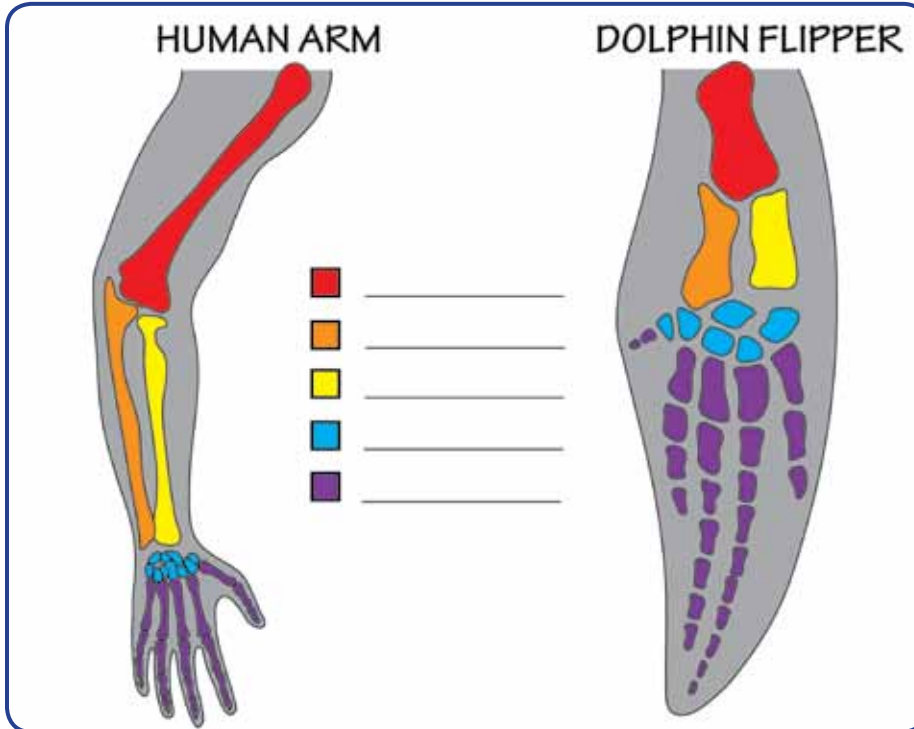
- **The Latest Information and Alerts:** ACS gives you a ready resource for cetacean information and current issues.
- **Opportunities to Connect:** Meet others in your area who care about whales, dolphins, and porpoises through monthly meetings of ACS local chapters. You'll always learn something new and exciting, and you'll meet a lot of enthusiastic cetacean-loving locals in your area. To find a chapter near you, visit our website: www.acsonline.org.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Actively involve yourself and your friends in ACS activities and committees by volunteering your time, resources, or facility space.
- **Robust Website:** Visit our website to view action alerts, learn about the latest trips, current events, download fact sheets and cetacean curriculum, donate and join, read *Spyhopper*, our online quarterly newsletter, and learn about the latest information about cetaceans and their habitats.
- **Member Discounts:** As an ACS member, you will enjoy discounts on whale watching trips, whale festivals, merchandise, event registration, and more!
- **Whalewatcher:** The *Whalewatcher* is ACS's biannual journal featuring articles by the world's most preeminent researchers, conservationists, and policy makers in the field of marine mammalogy, written for the general public. This unique, robust, all-color publication is an exclusive benefit of membership and is highly-treasured by ACS members.

Our members are our best ambassadors, and the information we provide gives you the tools to help ACS educate the lay community about cetaceans and the challenges they face today. Bringing in new members is one more way that you can actively participate in our mission to protect cetaceans and their habitats through public education, research grants, and conservation actions. Thank you for being a part of ACS!



ACS National Secretary, Patty Geary, captured this humpback hitcher off of Cape Cod this summer.

For Kids Who Love Cetaceans



HUMAN ARM AND DOLPHIN FLIPPER: So different, yet so alike!

Early whale and dolphin researchers often compared bones to find out how animals were related to one another. This is called, "COMPARATIVE ANATOMY." Can you do some research on your own and match the bones with their names? The bones have been given a color to make it a little easier.

ANSWERS: red=humerus, orange=ulna, yellow=radius, blue=carpels, purple=phalanges

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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 or make a donation by using the form below, or go to www.acsonline.org and enroll or donate 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



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