

Sound News

Nominations

The Puget Sound Chapter will be holding our annual board elections in August. Joe Olson will be stepping down as president to spend more time with his cetacean research-related work. Although Joe will remain on the board in the position of Past President, we still need energetic, motivated people to serve as board members! If you are interested in running for president, or any board position, please contact our nominating committee chair Uko Gorter by 31 July at uko.susan@gte.net.

Wish List!!

- Slide projector and screen
- Tabletop display panel
- TV and VCR

If you are able to donate any (tax-deductible) items on our Wish List, please contact us at: info@acspugetsound.org

A73 Rehabilitation Fund

ACSPS and five other organizations have established a fund to support US and Canadian efforts to return A73 (Springer) to her pod in Johnstone Strait. For more details, visit: www.acspugetsound.org

*Donations can be sent to:
A73 Rehabilitation Fund
c/o Juanita Johns
Islanders Bank
P.O. Box 909
Friday Harbor, WA 98250*

Speaker Series 2002

Story of an Orphaned Orca: History and current status of Springer (A73)

Thursday, 27 June

Dr. David Bain and Bob Wood

Since January 2002, an orphaned northern resident orca calf has been living in the waters between West Seattle and Vashon Island. During most of the whale's time here, Bob Wood has been on the water observing, photographing, and videotaping her. Dr. David Bain has also spent several weeks observing her behavior and was very helpful in discovering who she was. Together our two speakers will share the scientific detective story that uncovered her identity and the process that is now taking place to return her to her natal pod in Johnstone Strait, British Columbia.

Bob Wood is a Puget Sound chapter board member and he also serves on the board of Project SeaWolf. Dr. Bain is a cetacean biologist with the University of Washington and the Whale Museum.

Phinney Neighborhood Center, Room 6 · 6532 Phinney Avenue N, Seattle
Just north of the Woodland Park Zoo

Free parking in the Center's parking lot and in the surrounding neighborhood

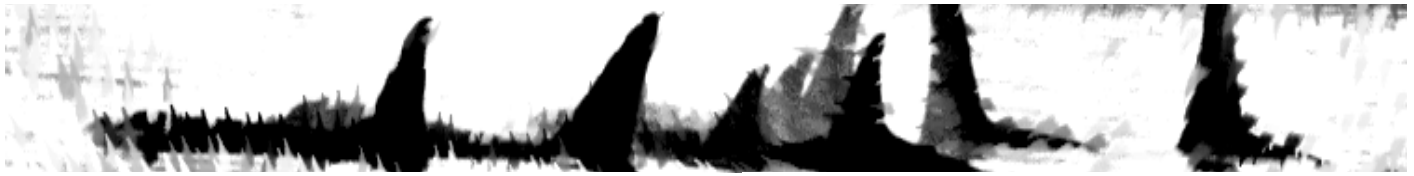
Doors open at 7:00 pm · Program begins at 7:30 pm

Admission is FREE

OrcaSing 2002

**June 22 at 8 PM
Lime Kiln Point State Park,
San Juan Island**

City Cantabile Choir, directed by Fred West, presents their 4th annual OrcaSing to be heard over and under the waves of Puget Sound. This year the choir will be joined by Kent Stevenson and the Urban Rhythms Gospel Choir.



IWC: Ban on Commercial Hunting, Divided over Aboriginal Whaling

By MICK CORLISS
Staff writer

SHIMONOSEKI, Yamaguchi Pref. -- The International Whaling Commission's weeklong annual plenary meeting ended Friday with a ban on commercial hunting in place for another year but nations bitterly divided over aboriginal whaling.

Observers said the meeting was the most divisive in years after Tokyo led a bloc of mainly Caribbean nations in defeating the renewal of an aboriginal whaling quota for northern natives in Alaska and northeastern Russia by a single vote.

"In 56 years of history in the IWC," said U.S. IWC Commissioner Rolland Schmitten, "that was the most unjust, unkind, unfair vote that was ever taken. That vote literally denied people (the ability) to feed their families."

U.S. officials said they are considering all their options and are willing to continue the debate as long as it takes to reach agreement.

"We will leave no stone unturned. It is so critical that we want to see if we can revive it today," a disappointed Schmitten said. "Governments can play games, but you can't play with families."

Japan and 10 other countries voted against the proposal to renew a bowhead take of 279 for Alaskan Inuits and to Russia's indigenous Chukotka people. Thirty-two delegates supported the request, which failed to get the necessary three-quarters majority. China and Panama abstained.

A dejected George Ahmaogak, an Inuit, whaling captain and mayor of a small municipality and resident of Barrow, Alaska, worried that the decision will have serious implications for Inuit.

"We have worked so hard to meet the mandates and the requirements of the IWC (for 25 years) and we are very disappointed."

Ahmaogak, a member of the U.S. delegation who has attended IWC meetings since 1977, said that just under 10,000 people in 10 coastal villages rely on whale meat for 80 percent of their diet.

"We live in a very harsh cold environment," Ahmaogak

said. "The blubber is the key element of our diet (that allows us) to take on the hard, cold weather.

"When it gets to 70 or 80 (degrees) below, the blubber of that whale thickens the blood to withstand the environment. We lose that, we have a really serious problem."

Japan objected to putting the proposal to vote Friday.

"This proposal is virtually the same as that we voted down yesterday," Masayuki Komatsu told the plenary before the vote. "Procedurally, taking this up is a problem."

Prior to the vote, Japan proposed a last-ditch compromise by amending the bowhead quota proposal to also allow Japan a commercial catch of 25 minke whales for what it calls four whaling villages.

However, the chairman ruled against it, and commission members voted the amendment down because it addressed commercial whaling, not aboriginal subsistence whaling.

The difference, the U.S. delegation said, is the difference between meat for supermarkets and meat for family dinner tables. Japan's delegation, however, sees it in terms of need and says the needs of aborigines and those of commercial whaling towns is the same.

"We requested (a catch of Northern Pacific minke whales) for our people based on science, based on needs," Komatsu told a mob of journalists after the vote. "And there is the issue of their livelihoods very much almost the same as aboriginal subsistence whaling. So what the U.S. is saying is completely inappropriate."

It was the first year, ironically, that no resolution was endorsed condemning Japan's scientific whaling program. The commission ran out of time, largely due to days of bickering between Japan and the U.S. over the bowhead issue.

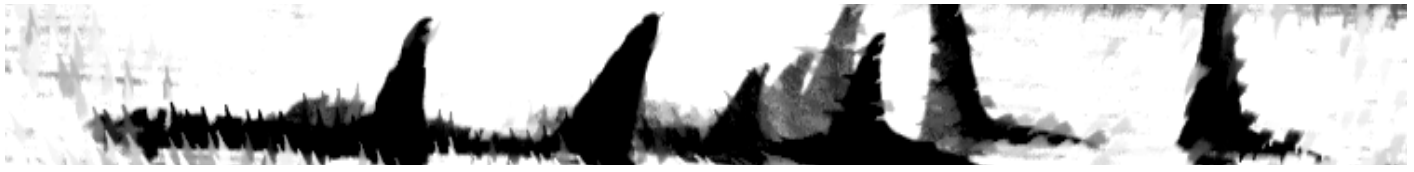
Some IWC veterans called it the least productive meeting they had attended in more than three decades. Criticism and concern over the future and functionality of the IWC abounded as the curtain closed on the annual gathering. "What has happened over the last few days has nothing to do with aboriginal subsistence whaling and everything to do with dirty politics," Mexican IWC Commissioner Andres Rozental said. "This will undoubtedly come back to haunt us in the future."

The Japan Times: May 25, 2002

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ACS/PS Scientific Advisors

Dr. David Bain, Dr. Robin Baird, John Calambokidis, Dr. Marilyn Dahlheim, Dr. John Ford,
Dr. Richard Osborne, Dr. Adam Pack, and Dr. Peter Ross



Cetacean Fun Facts!

by Laurie Mollo-McLain

The Gray Whale



A LITTLE BIT OF CLASSIFICATION

Scientifically known as *Eschrichtius robustus*, the gray whale was named after Danish zoologist Daniel Eschrichtius. The most primitive of the living baleens, this whale is classified into the suborder Mysticeti and is the only genus and species of the family Eschrichtiidae.

FEATURES

These stocky yet streamlined whales vary in color from charcoal to light gray with patches and swirls of lighter gray and white. Encrusted barnacles, which can weigh up to 200 pounds, and orange whale lice contribute to the mottled discoloration. The variation of these patterns is extremely useful in helping scientists identify individual whales.

Common to baleen whales, the females, averaging 43 feet, are slightly larger than males, averaging 40 feet. The posterior is characterized by the absence of a dorsal fin and 6–12 small ridges, known as “knuckles,” which extend beyond the dorsal ridge to the fluke.

One of the many unique features of the gray whale is that it inhabits extremely coastal waters above the continental shelf and has been observed in waist-level water. Scientists believe that what appears to be playful behavior in the shallow surf may be associated with feeding. They have also been reported rolling in the sand and on pebble beaches, which may be behavior associated with attempting to relieve themselves of barnacles.

DIET AND FEEDING

Unlike other baleen whales, the grays are primarily benthic (bottom) feeders, although they do surface feed on floating organisms. The varied diet consists mainly of amphipod crustaceans, such as ghost shrimp, and other organisms found on the ocean floor, such as crab larvae, worms, and small fish. This feeding method is characterized by tilting to the right, siphoning mud sediment into their mouths, and then compressing it back out through the baleen filters, thereby capturing organisms behind the baleen plates. Mud plumes and part of the fluke and pectoral fins can sometimes be seen on the surface while grays feed in the sediment below.

DISTRIBUTION AND MIGRATION

There were once three populations of gray whales—the north Atlantic, the western Pacific, and the eastern Pacific. The north Atlantic stock was depleted in the 1700s, leaving the two remaining eastern and western Pacific stocks.

The western Pacific population (Korean or Asian stock) ranges along the Asian coast and is considered one of the most critically endangered populations of whales. These whales, estimated at less than 100 individuals, are currently facing severe threats from major oil companies.

The eastern Pacific population is most abundant currently estimated at 17,500. It includes a sub-population of 200–250 individual whales, known as the seasonal or summer residents whales, that range from Northern California to British Columbia.

Beginning in February with last departures in early June, the eastern Pacific herd makes a northbound migration toward their prime feeding destination in the Bering and Chukchi Seas from their mating and birthing lagoon in Baja California, Mexico. The whales are known to make a more casual journey northbound and have been observed frolicking and foraging along the shoreline. They can be seen from the coasts of California and Oregon, with peak sightings along the Washington coast in late March to early April, followed by a second sighting of cows and calves in May to early June. The more expedient return southbound begins late October to mid-January, with pregnant females and cows leading the way. The total journey both north and southbound is speculated to average from 7,000 to 11,000 miles, which makes it one of the longest known migrations in the animal kingdom.

COMMUNICATION

Gray whales communicate by producing audible low frequency clicks, squeaks, moans, and grunts.

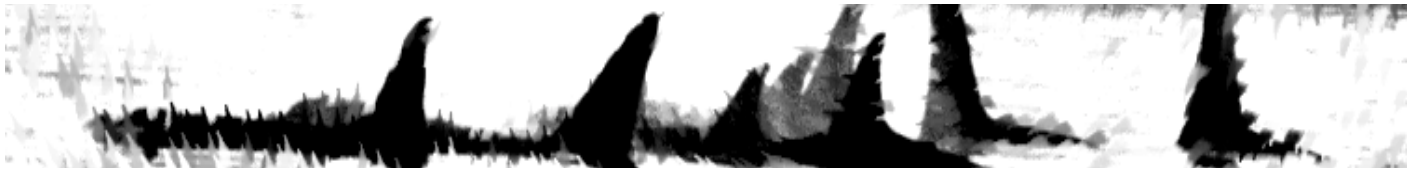
Known as friendly whales, grays communicate with the human race by swimming alongside boats and allowing people to touch and interact with them.

SOCIAL GROUPS

These often-solitary feeders have been observed feeding in transitory groups consisting of a few individuals. Scientists speculate that there do not appear to be long-term social bonds between grays, excepting mothers with calves. Mothers form close and protective bonds with calves and become fiercely aggressive if their young become threatened or are in danger.

*A special thanks to John Calambokidis of Cascadia Research for his scientific contribution.

Questions or comments? Please contact the author at: cetacea@marine-mammals.org



KID'S QUEST



Classifying Cetaceans

Whales, dolphins, and porpoises are marine mammals (cetaceans) classified as cetacea in the taxonomic category order. They are then separated into a suborder—mysticeti (baleen whales), like the gray, or odontoceti (toothed whales). They are then further classified into a taxonomic category Family. Finally, they are classified into a genus and species in which they are given a binomial (two-part) name, such as *Eschrichtius robustus* (gray whale).

What is taxonomy and classification?

Taxonomy is the branch of science that uses categories to classify organisms such as plants and animals. Scientists use classification to name, identify, and organize these organisms into their taxonomic categories. We will use the gray whale in an example below.

Kingdom	Animalia	Produce eggs, have many cells, ingest food
Phylum	Chordata	Animals that have a spinal cord (vertebrates) and gill pouches
Class	Mammalia	Warm-blooded animals that nurse their young (have mammary glands)
Order	Cetacea	Warm-blooded animals that live strictly in water
Suborder	Mysticeti	Whales with baleen
Family	Eschrichtiidae	A group of animals that share common features (the gray is on its own)
Genus	Eschrichtius	A group of closely related species
Species	robustus	Individuals that successfully interbreed

ACROSS

1 Taxonomic category for *chordata*

3 Species name for the gray whale

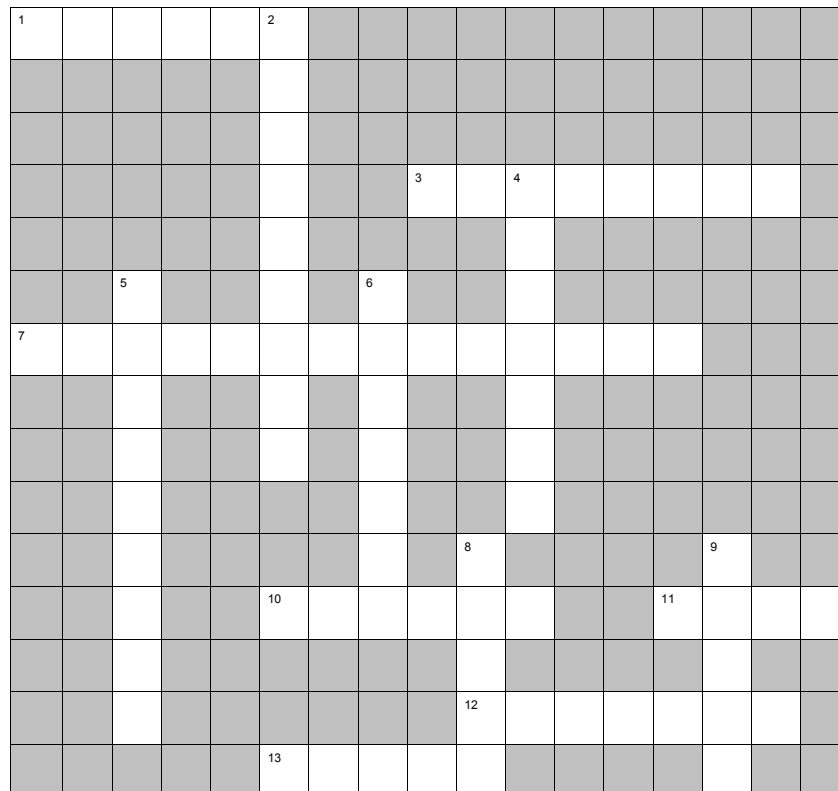
7 System of naming things

10 The gray whale is the only member of the _____
Eschrichtius

11 Common name for *Eschrichtius robustus*

12 *Robustus* is classified into which taxonomic category?

13 *Eschrichtius* is which part of the binomial name?



DOWN

2 When gray whales travel long distances, it's called _____.

4 Bottom feeder

5 Heavy parasites

6 Class for animals

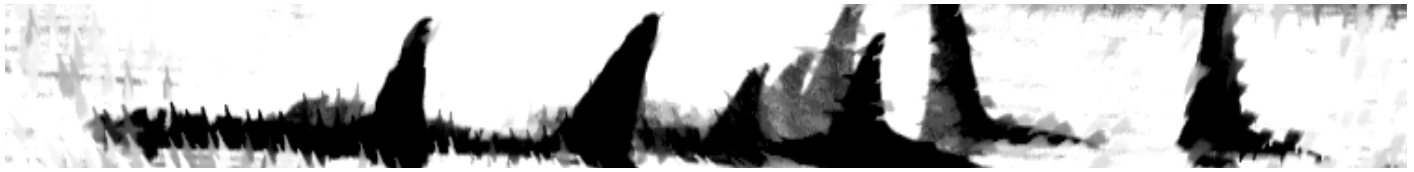
8 *Mammalia* belongs in which category?

9 *Cetacea* is the _____ of marine mammals

DID YOU KNOW?...that the word **cetacean** comes from the Greek word *cetus* which means "whale" and is also a constellation in the Southern Hemisphere!



Created by Laurie Mollo-McLain



Marine Mammal Book Reviews

By Uko Gorter

Two new books on marine mammals have recently been published. They couldn't be more different in size and scope. The first—a lighter weight, easily accessible, and visually rich field guide; the other—an extremely heavy, technical, comprehensive work. These books may each appeal to different audiences and budgets.

Looking at an astounding glut of field guides for birds, one is painfully aware of the shortage of (good) field guides for marine mammals. Other than the well-known, two-part *Sierra Club Handbook of Whales and Dolphins* (1983) and *Sierra Club Handbook of Seals and Sirenians* (1992), *DK Handbook: Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises* (1995), and a handful of regional guides, not much of quality had been produced.

Now, finally, a new field guide has arrived. The *National Audubon Society Field Guide to Marine Mammals of the World* is edited by Randall R. Reeves and is wonderfully illustrated by none other than Pieter A. Folkens. Both have worked on the Sierra Club's handbooks.

This guide describes all marine mammal species—whales and dolphins (cetaceans), seals and sea lions (pinnipeds), dugongs and manatees (sirenians), sea otters and polar bear. It gives facts, figures, and distribution maps, and even compares similar species that may be confused with each other. Being an illustrator myself, I really enjoy Folkens renderings. Not only is every species accurately illustrated, but in some cases female and calf, or even color variations, are depicted. This book also contains some beautiful and rare photographs of elusive creatures, such as the Heaviside's dolphin and beaked whales. Finally, an illustrated glossary of terms makes this work accessible to the layperson.

Apart from being a valuable field guide, it is a synopsis of what is currently known of the living marine mammals. Having all of them treated in one easy and concise volume makes this a must-have for all serious, or not so serious, whale watchers. The list price of \$26.95 (\$18.87 at

Amazon.com) seems justified.

The *Encyclopedia of Marine Mammals* is definitely not, and I repeat NOT, a field guide. It is way too heavy and cumbersome to haul on board, which is, of course, not its intended purpose. It is, however, a large, comprehensive reference work, something that has not been done before on this scale.

Articles are arranged alphabetically and contain topics dealing with every aspect of marine mammals, such as behavior, captivity, health, noise, whaling, and whale watching. In addition, almost every species is described in detail. Written by a pod of contributing scientists and experts from all over the world, these articles are very thorough and peer reviewed. The encyclopedia is edited by William F. Perrin, Bernd Würsig, and J.G.M. Thewissen, all well-known scientists in the field of marine mammal research.

Here, too, we find some illustrations of Pieter A. Folkens, in addition to graphs and photos, although the photos are not always of the highest quality. Like the aforementioned field guide, it also has a glossary, which, because of this book's size and scope, is very extensive.

This book is a valuable asset to anyone seriously interested in marine mammals and willing to fork over \$139.95 plus tax. It is still a lot cheaper than trying to purchase the 6 volumes of the *Handbook of Marine Mammals* by Ridgeway and Harrison.

National Audubon Society Field Guide to Marine Mammals of the World

Illustrated by Pieter Ahrens Folkens; written by Randall R. Reeves
A Chanticleer Press edition, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, April 2002

Hardcover 528 pages
ISBN 0375411410

Encyclopedia of Marine Mammals

William F. Perrin, Bernd Würsig, J.G.M. Thewissen, editors
Academic Press, San Diego, January 2002

Hardcover 1414 pages
ISBN 0125513402

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LABEL

The American Cetacean Society presents its 8th International Conference:

The Culture of Whales: The Animals, The People, The Connections

The American Cetacean Society's 8th International Conference will take place 4-6 October 2002 at Town Hall, in downtown Seattle. Our presenters and panelists are among the world's leading marine biologists and mammalogists, environmental writers and artists, government officials, and ocean explorers.

For more information about the conference: www.acsonline.org

To volunteer: cetacean.ed@orcasonline.com

To receive conference registration information via email: acs@pobox.com

YES! ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE PUGET SOUND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY!

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES: (check one)

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<input type="checkbox"/>	\$500	Patron
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$250	Contributing
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<input type="checkbox"/>	\$45	Family
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$35	Active
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Make check payable to ACS and mail to: ACS/Puget Sound Chapter, P.O. Box 17136, Seattle, WA 98107-0836

