

•Whale Adoption Project•

VOLUME 24  
NUMBER 1  
FEBRUARY 2006

# WHALE *watch*

Also inside:

What's news  
with whales  
page 2

Coral's Story  
page 3

What is  
your whale  
doing now?

Kids Corner  
page 6



## *Saving* THE WORLD'S WHALES AND DOLPHINS

Stop, Protect, Connect page 4

  
Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society

# what's news with WHALES



'WDCS HAS THE VISION OF WHY, HOW AND WHERE CETACEANS SHOULD BE PROTECTED ... THE FIRST HUGE HURDLE ... IS EDUCATION AND PROMOTION.'

MARGI PRIDEAUX,  
CEO WDCS AUSTRALASIA

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the New Year and your new Whalewatch newsletter look. We have sought to build on the success of previous editions of the Whalewatch newsletter and at the same time introduce you to the growing world of WDCS and our global fight to protect whales and dolphins. You will be pleased to know that despite the improvements we have made, we have kept production costs down and continue to print on recycled paper. This ensures that your money works hard to protect the cetaceans we all care so much about.

In this newsletter we wanted to further introduce WDCS and celebrate the fact that the Whale Adoption Project is now part of a worldwide campaign to conserve and protect these amazing animals. In this edition we present our three main themes for organizing our programs, campaigns and projects called 'Stop, Protect, Connect'.

I want to thank you again for this opportunity to share with you the Whale Adoption Project and invite you to enjoy this new newsletter look and the wonderful world of whales and dolphins. Together we can do more to protect these incredible creatures. The next step in our partnership for conservation begins here.

Best wishes,

Chris Butler-Stroud  
WDCS Chief Executive Officer



## JAPAN WHALING IN ANTARCTICA

The Antarctic whaling season has been underway since November last year and Japan is planning to kill up to 935 minke whales, more than double the number killed in previous hunts. Over the next two years Japan's whaling fleet is also targeting new species: the fin whale, classified as endangered by the World Conservation Union and the humpback whale, classified as vulnerable.

WDCS fight this injustice on all levels from advising governments and attending vital international meetings to defend the ban won commercial whaling.



## MIGRATORY SPECIES

At the Convention on Migratory Species meeting last November, WDCS experts campaigned for more protection for the endangered Mediterranean common dolphin. This species has since received the highest protection status possible and is now listed in Appendix I and II.

WDCS has also signed a partnership agreement to work with the CMS to increase conservation measures for whales, dolphins and porpoises worldwide.



## WITH WWW.WHALES.ORG

Have you seen our website's new look? Visit [www.whales.org](http://www.whales.org) and find out all you ever wanted to know about whales. With fascinating facts and up-to-the-minute whale and dolphin news from around the world, we want to inspire people to learn more and connect with these amazing creatures.

WDCS has the vision of why, how and where cetaceans should be protected. The first huge hurdle is education and promotion. It is only by building on our connections with individuals that we can bring about change. If you have any comments or questions about our website please contact us at [contact@whales.org](mailto:contact@whales.org), we'd love to hear from you.





# *Coral's* story

## A TWIST OF FATE FOR CORAL, THE HUMPBACK WHALE

By Regina Asmutis-Silvia,  
Whale Adoption Project Biologist

"They are an odd couple. A dying right whale, limping along with half a fluke and a healthy humpback swimming by her side... It looks like the end is near... In March, the right whale was hit by a 42-foot recreational vessel off Cumberland Island in Georgia... When she dies, it will deepen the tragedy that has evolved over the past 10 months in which 5 percent of all reproductively active female right whales have been killed, mostly by humans."

This real-life account, reported in the Cape Cod Times, tells the remarkable story of a humpback whale accompanying a dying right whale. Looking at the photograph, the sight of the sick right whale and her unlikely companion moved me, and my heart went out to them. I sensed something familiar about this humpback. At the Whale Adoption Project we track close to 400 humpback whales. Each whale is individual: the patterns on the underside of each humpback's tail and the serrated edge on the top of the fluke are unique. Scars too, provide additional identification. This humpback whale had a scar behind his blowhole. Suddenly, I recognized the whale as Coral – one of our whales!

### I DON'T KNOW WHY SUCH A COMPANIONSHIP CAME ABOUT, BUT I AM GLAD IT DID

Over the years I've come to think of Coral as a survivor. He was born in 1988 to a whale named Silver, but tragedy struck early. In 1991 his mother was found dead on Long Island, apparently the victim of entanglement. But Coral grew up to become one of our most sociable whales, often seen with other Whale Adoption Project whales. In a way it was no surprise that Coral was the loyal companion of the dying whale. Sadly, the right whale has not been seen again.

When we heard that Coral had been seen entangled, we prayed he would escape the terrible fate of his mother. We were so relieved when he was spotted again by Whale Center of New England naturalists, socializing with other humpbacks – free of the entangling gear.



# STOP, PROTECT, CONNECT...

*saving the world's whales and dolphins!*



WHALES AND DOLPHINS ARE BEAUTIFUL,  
INTELLIGENT CREATURES, YET HUMAN ACTIVITY  
CONTINUES TO THREATEN THEIR SURVIVAL.  
WDCS BELIEVES PASSIONATELY THAT THEY ARE  
WORTH PROTECTING AND WITH YOUR HELP WE  
ARE COMMITTED TO FIGHTING FOR THEM.

## TAKING ACTION

WDCS aims to stop the threats that whales and dolphins face, to protect the places they live and to reach out and connect with as many people as possible. We work to make the world a better place for whales and dolphins through campaigning and lobbying, conservation projects, world-class science and educational initiatives. The enthusiasm of our supporters enables us to continue our vital work – so, thank you!



Driven from safety, hunted, blasted by noise and poisoned, whales and dolphins face increasing dangers. WDCS aims to stop these threats for good. We provide expert advice about conservation issues and have achieved remarkable results, often in the face of fierce opposition from those who prefer to exploit cetaceans.

## HUNTING AND TRADE

In spite of an international ban on commercial whaling, tens of thousands of dolphins and whales are slaughtered every year. In Japan's cruel drive hunts, dolphins and small whales are driven into shallow bays and butchered, or are taken alive for the captivity industry. Whale meat is found in supermarkets in Japan, Norway and Iceland or ends up in fertilizers and dog foods in Japan.

We fight this injustice on all levels and continue to raise awareness among the public.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

It's hard to imagine the impact noise has on the underwater world of whales and dolphins. Hearing is their most important sense and the effects of incessant, sudden or loud noise can be disastrous. Loud noise inhibits their ability to navigate and communicate and can lead to death. We're stepping up our campaign on noise pollution from industry, shipping and the military, to raise awareness of this largely unknown danger.



Photo: Ingrid N Visser

We also work hard to defend cetaceans against chemical pollution, prey depletion, climate change, vessel strikes and disturbance from industry and recreational activities.



WDCS protects individual whales and dolphins, safeguarding their communities for the benefit of whole species. We also defend their critical habitats – the places they use for feeding, breeding and raising their young.

**OUR TASK IS TO MAKE A PLACE FOR THEM IN THE SEA; TO ENSURE THAT WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY THEIRS IS WELL PROTECTED.**

Erich Hoyt, WDCS Senior Research Fellow

## ENDANGERED RIGHT WHALES

North Atlantic right whales are the most critically endangered of all large whales. The greatest known cause of mortality in the western North Atlantic is collision with ships. The death of a single right whale each year through unnatural causes could lead to the extinction of this species.

WDCS is working with other conservation groups to protect North Atlantic right whales from ship strikes and give them a chance for survival.



You make us what we are. Every time you add your voice to ours, by writing a letter, supporting a project, sending a donation, or adopting a whale, you help us to achieve our goals.

Our vision is a safe world for whales and dolphins and together we can bring about change. From building relationships with our supporters to establishing education centers, connecting directly with people is vital in securing the future of whales and dolphins.

## DOLPHIN SMART

Whale watching is a fantastic way to connect with whales and dolphins, but they are sensitive to boat disturbance.

In Southeast Florida, WDCS is working to promote safe dolphin watching and to minimize potential disturbance from dolphin tour operators and their boats. WDCS Policy Officer, Courtney Vail is developing a training, accreditation and monitoring program for boat operators called Dolphin Smart.

## SEE A SPOUT

We have also developed an outreach program for recreational boaters in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary to increase awareness of how to safely operate vessels in the vicinity of wildlife. WDCS is currently collaborating with the National Marine Fisheries Service to increase the scope of this program with educational presentations.





**DID YOU KNOW MALE HUMPBACK WHALES SING THE LONGEST AND MOST COMPLEX SONGS IN THE ANIMAL KINGDOM?**



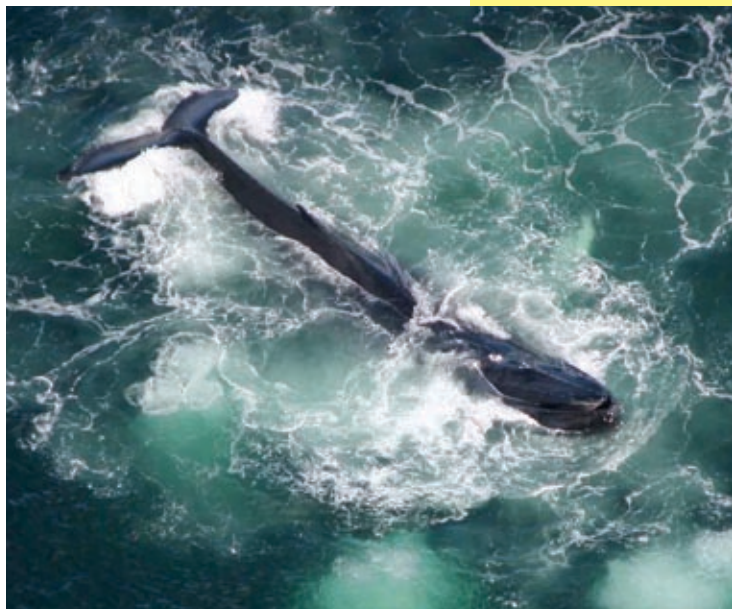
Humpback whales migrate each year from their feeding grounds in polar regions to breeding areas in the warm waters around the Equator. As it is winter now, the Whale Adoption Project humpback whales are in the middle of their very active breeding season.

The East Coast Humpback whales of the Whale Adoption Project are born during the winter in the warm waters of the West Indies and Caribbean, many on Silver Bank off the Dominican Republic.

In the summer they head north to the rich, cold-water feeding grounds off the coasts of the northeastern United States and Canada. They need to eat plenty in summer because most humpback populations eat very little when on their breeding grounds and during much of the time they are migrating.

On the west coast, the Whale Adoption Project whales have also headed to warmer tropical waters. Perhaps they have gone to Hawaii, maybe to Baja, Mexico or possibly even to Japan.

**CORAL THE HUMPBACK WHALE BUBBLE NETTING.**



## Feeding

During the summer feeding season, male and female humpback whales both spend their time looking for food. They need to gorge on a ton of food a day to gain the extra four to seven tons they'll need to sustain them during the breeding season - a time when food is scarce and activity and energy needs are high.

Instead of teeth, humpback whales have comb-like plates called baleen that hang from their upper jaws. They feed by straining small fish, krill and other crustaceans out of the water with their baleen plates. Humpback whales catch fish with a 'Bubble Net' where they swim around under a shoal of fish and breathe out air in a spiral of bubbles to create a kind of fishing net. The fish cluster tightly inside these 'nets' and all the whales have to do to eat them is to swim through the 'net' with their mouths open!



Photo: Gordon Liddle www.gldiddle.com



### **If you adopted a male whale...**

He is sure to be singing! Male humpback whales sing the longest and most complex songs in the animal kingdom. These 'songs' are a series of whistles, squeals and grunts which are sung in a specific order and may last for as long as half an hour. Different populations sing different songs, which sound both beautiful and haunting. Males in the same area sing the same songs that may change slightly over time.

It is believed that song is one of the ways that males compete for or possibly attract females: the best singer could be the best mate. Female humpback whales do not sing but do vocalize to communicate with their calves.

**TO HEAR MALE AND FEMALE HUMPBACK SOUNDS VISIT OUR ABOUT WHALES SECTION ON [WWW.WHALES.ORG/HMPBK.ASP](http://WWW.WHALES.ORG/HMPBK.ASP) AND CLICK ON THE WHALES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HUMPBACK WHALES PAGE.**

### **If you adopted a female whale...**

She is having young. At this time of year female humpback whales will most likely be pregnant or looking after their calves. Like all whales, the humpback is a mammal. This means they give birth to live young, which are nursed with milk from the mother's mammary glands.

Once a female has conceived, she is pregnant for nearly 12 months and then she feeds the calf with very fatty milk for about 10 months. When the calf is born it weighs up to 3000 pounds and can gain 100 pounds each day nursing on its mother's rich milk. After a year the calf has learned to eat fish and is self-reliant, so is able to leave its mother's side.



# WHAT IS

# YOUR WHALE DOING NOW?



# Other ways to HELP WHALES

## APPLY FOR A WHALE TAIL VISA CARD AND GET YOUR NEXT ADOPTION **FREE!**

That's right FREE! Our partner, US Bank, is giving away a year's adoption with every approved credit card.

Simply call US Bank directly at 1-800-853-5576 ext. 8710 or to receive an application via fax or mail contact our office at 1-888-MyWhale (1-888-699-4253).



The first time you use your credit card, US Bank will donate \$55.00 to WDCS and the Whale Adoption Project. In addition, each time you use your card, WDCS receives an additional \$0.50 for each \$100.00 spent. Just imagine how this adds up when all our credit card holders use their cards and what a fantastic difference this makes to whales and dolphins. Every time you use your card you will literally be helping to secure a safer future for these incredible animals.

Limit: one year adoption per new card holder. You must call within two months of receiving your new card.

## WDCS 2007 CALENDAR!

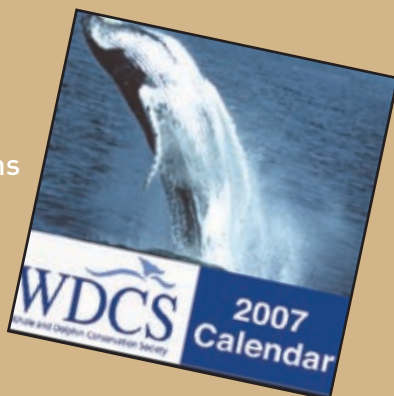
HELP SUPPORT OUR LIFE-SAVING WORK.  
ORDER TODAY.

A portion of all calendar sales will go to WDCS work to protect whales, dolphins and their environment.

Order your beautiful 14 x 11-inch wall calendar with stunning full-color photographs of whales from around the world.

To Order: Call Toll-Free 1-800-788-3350  
Or go Online: [www.wdcscalendar.com](http://www.wdcscalendar.com)

Deadline to order: March 30, 2006.



Cover photo: Ingrid N. Visser

Whalewatch is published for Whale Adoption Project Members by WDCS (NA), Inc, the Whale & Dolphin Conservation Society. WDCS is the global voice for the protection of whales, dolphins and their environment.

### Editors:

Elaine Teixeira, Loralynn Teixeira & Emma Davis

### Published by

WDCS (NA), Inc.  
70 East Falmouth Highway,  
East Falmouth  
MA 02536

Tel: (1)508.548.8328

TOLL FREE - 1.888.MYWHALE  
(1.888.699.4253)

Fax: (1)508.457.1988

[contact@whales.org](mailto:contact@whales.org)

Printed on recycled paper