

•Whale Adoption Project•

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WHALE *watch*

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WDCS
Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society



Cover Photo: Dave Willey

what's news with WHALES

**'WDCS IS WORKING
TO SAVE THE
NORTH ATLANTIC
RIGHT WHALE
FROM EXTINCTION.
OUR GOAL IS TO
ENHANCE HABITAT
PROTECTION FOR
RIGHT WHALES...AND
REDUCE THE RISK
OF SHIP STRIKES TO
THIS ENDANGERED
SPECIES.'**

**REGINA ASMUTIS-SILVIA,
SENIOR BIOLOGIST**

Dear Friends,

Each year after the spring has warmed up the wintery waters of the Gulf of Maine, we eagerly await the return of our humpback whales. You can read about their incredible journey and the danger they face along the way on page 4. We hope that many female humpbacks come back from the tropics with new calves to strengthen both the east and west coast populations.

In 2005 we saw 52 new calves added to the east coast population and for every new humpback whale arrival, we need to find a new name (see page 5). The 2006 Spring whale naming party was heralded by our first official whale sighting of the season on April 2nd at Race point, at the tip of Cape Cod.

The return of the whales reminds us to be on alert. Sadly, we already have two reports of entangled whales. One whale was seen by whale-watchers in the Bay of Fundy, in Canadian waters and the other was successfully disentangled off the coast of Florida. Preliminary identification of the first whale indicates it may be Quarternote, Buckshot's 2001 calf. Fortunately its entanglement does not appear to be life threatening as the whale seems to be in good health. We'll continue to keep you posted with Quarternote's status and sightings of all of our humpbacks.

Sincerely,

Regina Asmutis-Silvia
Senior Biologist

PS. Thanks to all of you who returned your questionnaire from the last newsletter. We really appreciate your feedback and we have included as many of your ideas as we could with this issue- we hope you'll love it even more.



DRIVE HUNTS

WDCS is calling for an end to drive hunts, in which dolphins and small whales are rounded up out at sea and driven towards the shore, to be slaughtered. We believe these hunts are unnecessarily cruel and present a serious threat to the conservation and welfare of whales and dolphins.

WDCS has exposed the involvement of dolphinariums that source live dolphins from these brutal hunts. We have also encouraged and supported a statement from the U.S. Congress to oppose the drive hunts.



THE NORTHERN RIGHT WHALE

WDCS is working to save the North Atlantic right whale from extinction. As a conservation member of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team, WDCS's goal is to enhance habitat protection for right whales. We are calling for federal measures to reduce the speed of vessels transiting through right whale habitat. This will reduce the risk of ship strikes to these endangered whales.



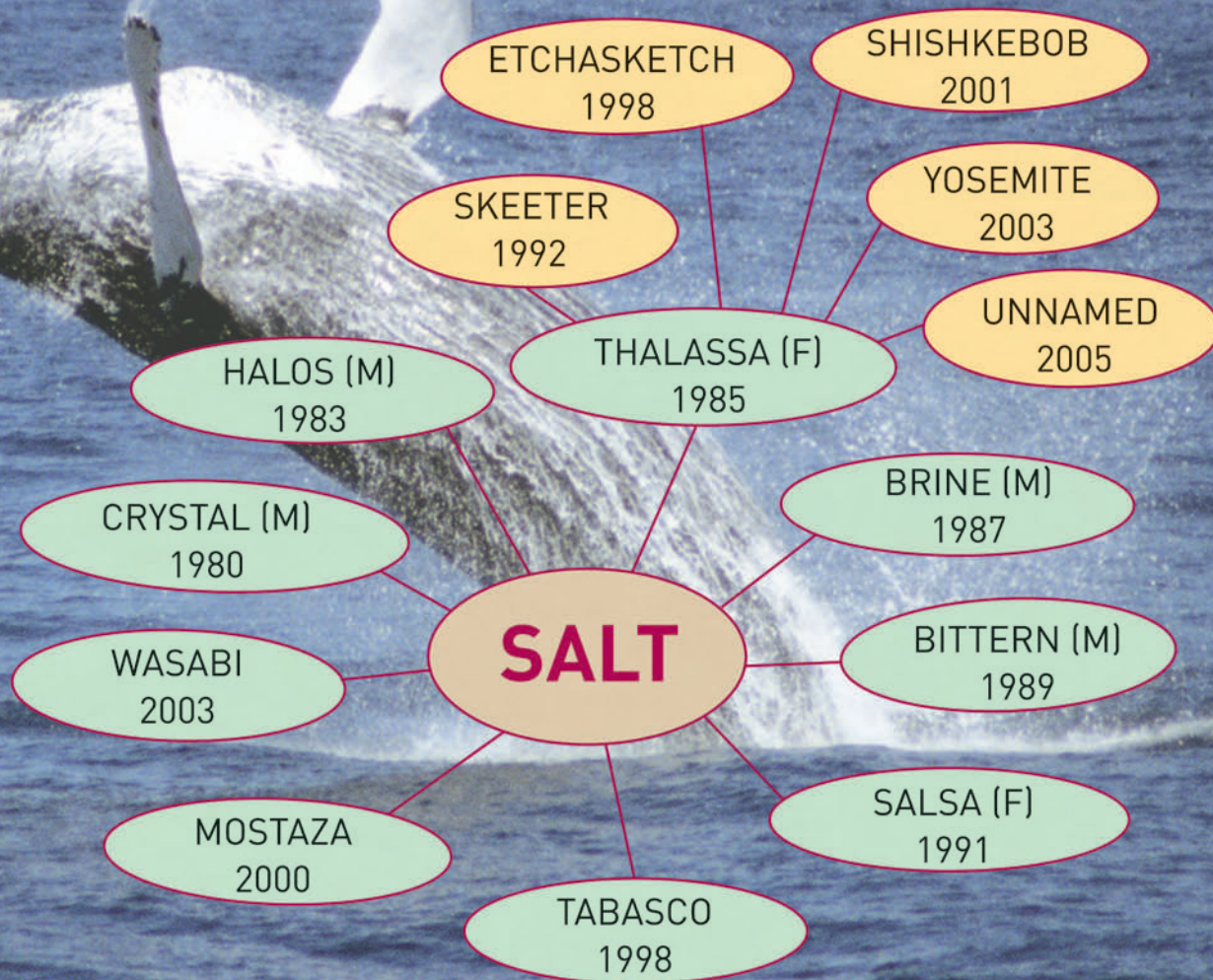
THE WHALE TRAIL

The whales have landed! And these are no ordinary whales; they are whales you can watch without a boat. Made of fiberglass, some are decorated with mosaic tiles, stained glass, paint and even beans!

You can see them this summer on Cape Cod on the Whale Trail, a marine education, fundraising and public arts event unveiled on May 22. Check out our fantastic WDCS whale on Nantucket created by artist Coco Lorann.

For more information about this exciting event, visit our website www.whales.org.

Salt's family tree



Salt Photos: Regina Asmutis-Silvia

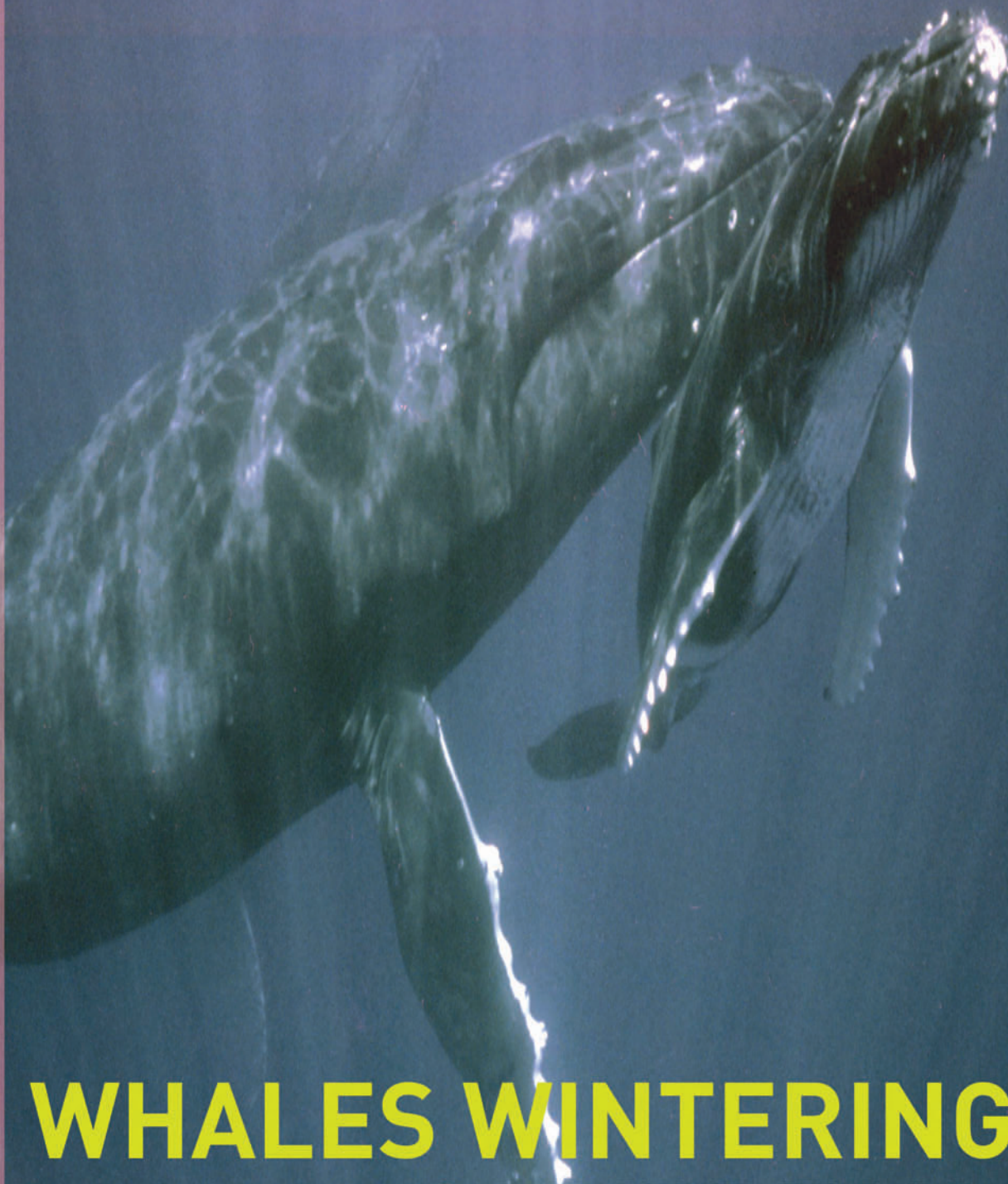


MEET SALT'S FAMILY

Salt is one of the first of the Whale Adoption Project whales' to come up in conversation because she was one of the very first whales to be individually identified and named in 1976! She returned with her first known calf, a male named Crystal, in 1980. Since then, she's had eight more calves of her own and she's now a grandmother! In fact, her daughter Thalassa had a brand new calf in 2005, giving Salt grandchild number five!

Since moms and calves remain together for the first year, we can identify families and develop family trees based on a "matriarchy" system (or mom's side of the family).

As mammals, humpback calves drink their mother's milk. Since that's a job that only mom can do, there's really no need for dad to hang around, leaving mom to care for her calf on her own. That means that Thalassa's calf suckled 40 to 60 gallons of milk each day for most of the past year! The high milk fat content means a shorter time that the calf has to depend on its mother because it grows so fast. Since researchers began identifying individual humpbacks in the Gulf of Maine, we've seen a new generation of sons and daughters, grandcalves and now great-grandcalves. Stay tuned as we expect Salt to become a "great grandmother" anytime now!



WHALES WINTERING IN THE CARIBBEAN

WE HOPE THAT MANY FEMALE WHALES
WILL RETURN FROM THE TROPICS WITH
NEW CALVES TO STRENGTHEN BOTH
EAST AND WEST COAST HUMPBACK
POPULATIONS.

Photo: Debbie Glockner-Ferrari Taken under
NMFS scientific permit number 226

Wouldn't it be great to warm up your winter with a trip to the Caribbean? This is exactly what east coast humpback whales do every year. As you read this, the Whale Adoption Project whales are completing their 40 or so day, 1,500 mile journey back from the Caribbean where they have been breeding and enjoying warmer waters of the south.

Although Alaskan whales may not all migrate, most west coast whales have left the Alaskan waters by January. They head south to Mexico, Hawaii or possibly Japan to breed.

We hope that many female whales will return from the tropics with new calves to strengthen both the east and west coast humpback populations. The Whale Adoption Project whales face many different threats and population regeneration is essential for their survival.

CARIBBEAN WHALING

Humpbacks wintering in the Caribbean run the gauntlet of whalers in St Vincent and the Grenadines who are allowed by the International Whaling Commission to kill up to five humpbacks a year for subsistence purposes.

Following years of pressure, led by WDCS and the Whale Adoption Project, St Vincent recently adopted regulations to better manage the hunt. This included a ban on its practice of harpooning calves to lure mother whales closer to the whaling boat.

So far this year no humpbacks have been killed. However, last year we understand that whalers in St Vincent illegally killed a Bryde's whale in addition to an adult humpback. WDCS will urge the International Whaling Commission to deal aggressively with this infraction and refuse to renew St Vincent's quota when it expires in 2007.

To counter threats including whaling, WDCS is contributing to the development of marine mammal action plans to protect whales and dolphins in the wider Caribbean.



Photo: Marine Education & Research Center

WDCS CONNECTS WITH CARIBBEAN CHILDREN

WDCS is also partnering with regional educational experts to engage with young people in the Eastern Caribbean. Marine biologist, Dr. Nathalie Ward is working with high school students on Bequia, St Vincent and the Grenadines to increase awareness of the threats faced by whales and dolphins through poster, poetry and calypso song-writing contests.

NEW NAMES FOR NEW WHALES

Each year researchers keep a keen eye out for new Gulf of Maine whales and submit their photographs for the spring whale naming party. This year there were about 50 new whales to name including Lightning's 2002 calf "Downpour" and Apostrophe's 2004 calf "Mayo" who is Nurse's grandcalf. We've also added a new whale to the family tree of Auntie Tabasco, Uncle Crystal and Grammy Salt as Thalassa's 2003 calf was named Yosemite (See page 3).

To assist whale identification, the names must reflect unique markings and patterns on the whales' flukes. Each name has to be original and cannot be the same as any of the previous 1800 or more humpback whales named since 1976. Each year researchers need more creativity and imagination to come up with new names for new whales.

"Let Dolphins Swim Free In The Sea For All Generations To See"



This award-winning poster slogan was conceived by a 14-year old boy from Bequia. Winners received scholarship money, whale and dolphin educational materials, and an all-day dolphin watching trip to see the resident dolphins. Awareness-raising posters with this slogan translated into French, Dutch and Spanish are being distributed throughout the Eastern Caribbean.

WDCS believes that positive dolphin and whale watching experiences can inspire children to become future guardians of the sea. The next generation is essential to the continued survival of whales and dolphins.

KID'S corner



**SLOW MOVING
HUMPBCKS OFTEN
CARRY BARNACLES
WHICH FILTER FEED
FOR FOOD AS THE
WHALES DIVE.**

ROCKER THE HUMPBCK WHALE BREACHING.



Photo: Regina Asmutis-Silvia

WORD SEARCH

W	V	D	O	R	I	G	H	T	W	H	A	L	E	N	G	O	Z	M	H
X	D	T	E	Q	L	O	B	T	A	I	L	I	N	G	K	R	I	L	L
I	S	U	F	B	A	R	N	A	C	L	E	S	P	B	V	T	U	Y	E
R	S	X	E	V	T	F	R	A	X	U	A	L	A	L	X	U	W	H	L
B	U	S	E	M	S	V	T	F	I	T	B	R	C	K	N	W	T	A	X
T	R	G	D	D	M	G	L	Q	L	A	G	U	I	M	W	Q	M	L	O
Y	F	N	I	A	W	I	S	A	L	S	W	P	F	M	D	M	V	M	T
B	A	O	N	T	P	C	N	E	W	S	M	U	I	V	A	N	Z	I	H
U	C	S	G	P	X	T	E	I	G	C	U	Z	C	M	D	F	H	X	D
B	I	G	E	E	I	N	M	Y	M	B	L	C	C	B	J	I	S	C	I
B	N	R	T	C	E	M	N	I	F	L	A	S	R	O	D	N	A	A	V
L	G	L	H	S	I	F	L	L	A	M	S	D	O	P	M	B	L	L	E
E	B	M	M	N	O	V	V	U	Y	O	V	Z	Z	V	I	A	P	F	D
C	D	L	G	I	E	R	U	E	E	T	U	O	P	S	N	C	S	O	Z
L	O	G	O	H	U	M	P	B	A	C	K	J	R	B	K	K	L	G	X
O	C	I	X	W	D	Y	N	O	T	K	N	A	L	P	E	P	Q	B	W
U	Q	E	T	I	H	L	B	R	E	A	C	H	Y	I	H	A	O	I	S
D	Z	A	A	L	L	O	R	D	G	T	S	Q	I	I	J	B	W	H	A
T	A	D	C	F	J	I	L	N	Z	U	T	V	N	O	J	P	C	M	V
T	Y	S	O	N	A	R	R	E	F	L	U	K	E	V	G	F	V	G	S

Atlantic

Baleen

Barnacles

Blowhole

Breach

Bubblecloud

Calf

Dive

Dolphin

Dorsal fin

Feeding

Finback

Flipper

Fluke

Humpback

Krill

Lobtailing

Mammal

Minke

Pacific

Plankton

Pods

Right whale

Small fish

Sonar

Songs

Splash

Spout

Surfacing

Swimming

Word Search Information

Many species of **baleen** whales, such as **finback**, **minke**, **humpback** and the **right whale** can be found **feeding** in the cold waters of the North **Atlantic** and North **Pacific** during the summer months. Most whales feed on **small fish** but some prefer **plankton** or **krill**. Some whales, like humpbacks, startle fish using **bubble clouds**, **lob tailing**, or making a **splash** with their **flipper**, **fluke** or whole body (**breach**). All whales are **mammals**, **surfacing** to exhale air from their **blowholes** causing a **spout** and a female whale will nurse her newborn **calf** with milk. **Dolphins** are usually seen **swimming** in **pods** and use **sonar** to locate their food. We don't think humpback whales use sonar but they do sing complex **songs**. Dolphins usually have a big **dorsal fin** for their body size and are faster than slower moving baleen whales. Slow moving humpbacks often carry **barnacles** which filter feed for food as the whales **dive**.

WHAT AM I?

?

QUIZ: WHAT AM I?

See if you can guess which sort of whale or dolphin is in each photo. Once you have figured them out, you can check to see if your answers are correct on the back page of this newsletter.

?

1

WHAT AM I?



Hint: I can be 15 feet (4.6 meters) long and weigh up to a ton. With a powerful stroke I can stun fish.

2

WHAT AM I?



Hint: I help regulate my body temperature and I keep my body stable for fast swimming.

3

WHAT AM I?



Hint: I am critically endangered because hunters thought I was the "correct" whale to hunt!

Kids have the greatest ideas!

The children in the photo below had an 'Under the Sea' party to celebrate Mia Lynn Poley's sixth birthday. Instead of bringing gifts, Mia asked her six year old friends to donate to WDCS and help protect the marine mammals they all care so much about.

The funds raised allowed our Biologist Regina to give additional See a Spout talks and educate more boaters on safe navigation around whales. Not only is this crucial to the lives of our adoptable humpback whales, but also the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale.



THANK YOU
KIDS!



Other ways to HELP WHALES

SAVE LIVES TODAY! BECOME A WHALE
ADOPTION PROJECT **M.D.!**



Photo: Duncan Murrell

When you join our Whale Adoption Project "M.D." monthly donor program, your donation helps us plan important long term conservation projects and when there's an emergency, your support helps ensure we will be prepared. The savings on mailing renewal reminders will go directly toward our rescue and protection programs and literally save lives. Call 1-888-MyWhale or go online to www.whales.org today and join the growing list of supporters who are enabling us to plan for the future.

Don't forget to visit our adopters only section at whales.org and enter "oceansalive" password.

WDCS 2007 CALENDAR!

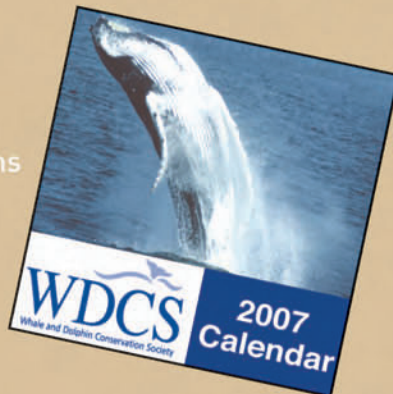
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ORDER TODAY.

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

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Or go Online: www.wdcscalendar.com

Deadline to order: July 1, 2006.



ONLY \$14.95*

*plus \$3.95 shipping & handling

WHAT AM I? ANSWERS

1) HUMPBACK WHALE FLIPPER

Humpbacks have the longest flippers of the whale-world at about 15ft (4.6 meters) long!



Photo: Ingrid N. Visser

2) BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN DORSAL FIN

This is the bottlenose dolphin dorsal fin. For most toothed whale species the bigger the dorsal fin the faster the animal is.



Photo: Charlie Phillips

3) RIGHT WHALE

What you can see in the picture is the whale's head. It is covered in roughened skin called callosities, which are different on each right whale.



Photo: Tim Voorhies

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.

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