

Soundings

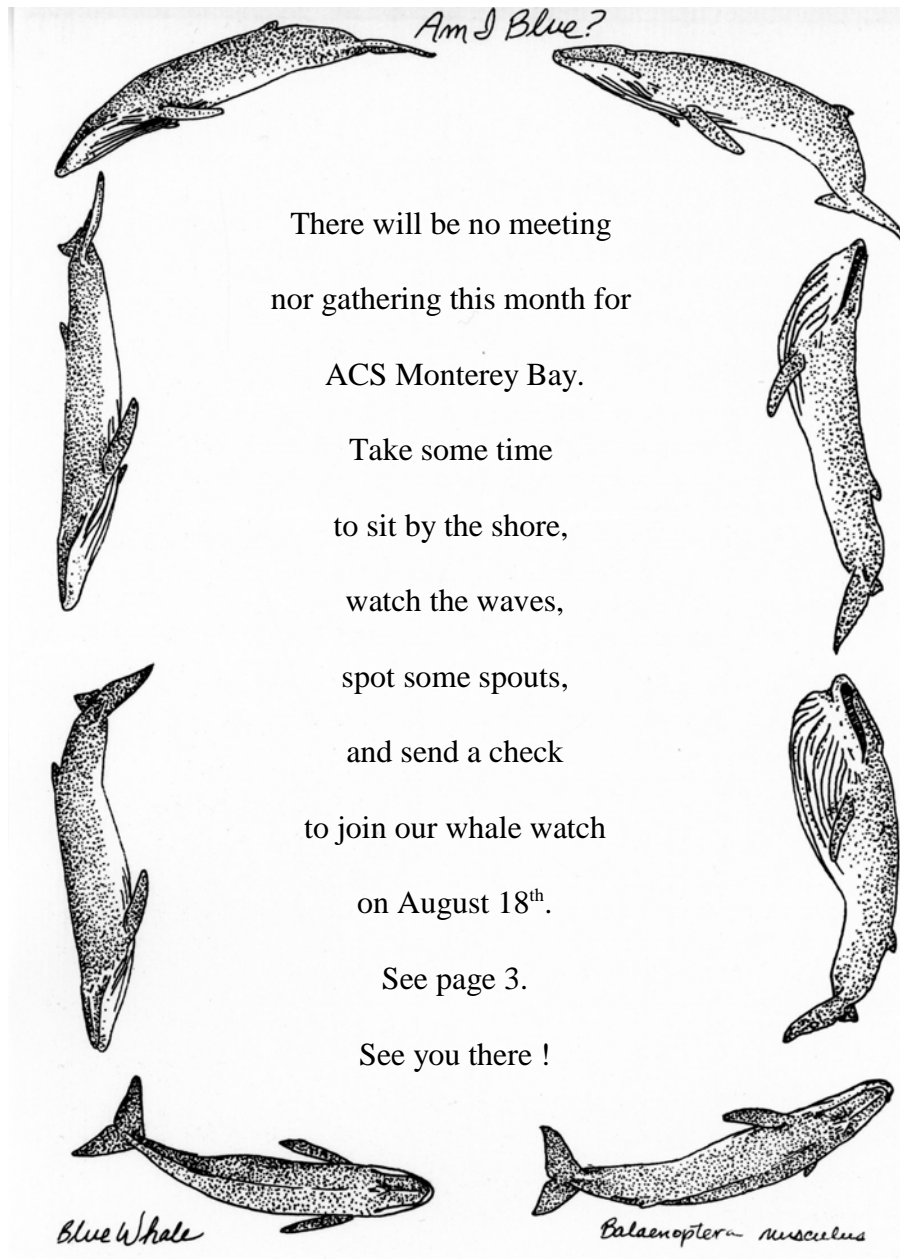


American Cetacean Society ~ Monterey Bay Chapter

July 2007

The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Chapter of ACS
AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY - MONTEREY BAY CHAPTER

Am I Blue?



There will be no meeting
nor gathering this month for
ACS Monterey Bay.

Take some time
to sit by the shore,
watch the waves,
spot some spouts,
and send a check
to join our whale watch
on August 18th.

See page 3.
See you there !

Blue Whale

Balaenoptera musculus

Blue whale design by Robin Lee for ACS Cetaceanery

Calendar

August 30: The next regular meeting of ACS Monterey Bay

July and August: MBARI seminars

MBARI seminars are usually held on Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m. in the Pacific Forum and are open to the public. The seminars cover a wide range of topics related to deep-ocean research and engineering. Our speakers include top scientists and engineers from all over the world, as well as from MBARI. MBARI is located at 7700 Sandholdt Road in Moss Landing, California. (This announcement is from the MBARI web site www.mbari.org)

July 11, 3 pm, Pacific Forum: David Pawson, Ph.D., National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

A distant mirror: deep-sea research on the Albatross 100 years ago

(For photos go to http://www.mbari.org/seminars/2007/summer_07/Pawson_July.htm)

What was it really like on board early deep-sea research ships, when deep-sea exploration was just beginning, when every trawl haul consisted of animals new to science? Pioneering deep-sea research from sailing ships or steamships was often perilous, sometimes tedious, and surely endlessly exciting. Strangely, personal accounts of these great voyages are rare. Newly-acquired archival materials from great marine biologists Austin Hobart Clark, Walter K. Fisher and Alexander Agassiz provide personal insights into daily life aboard the US Fish Commission Steamer *Albatross*, her explorations in the Pacific Ocean, the trawls full of treasures that she obtained, and also storms, waterspouts, coal dust, meals, and shore leave. From the vantage point of today, we note that the technology has changed over the years and we're learning more, but the excitement hasn't diminished, new things are always being discovered, and we still have 95% of the deep-sea to explore!

July 18: Jan Witting, Ph.D., Sea Education Assoc. Topic to be announced.

August 1: Helena Solo-Gabriele, Ph.D., University of Miami Topic to be announced.

A Fourth of July Whimsy: Kelp Horns by Esta Lee Albright

While watching a Fourth of July parade on Lopez Island, WA, I was amazed by another attendee who had a movie camera in one hand and a long twisted stipe of bull kelp in the other. He alternated photography with blowing the kelp stipe, producing long, deep calls. See my photo to the right. I was visiting ACS members, and we attempted making kelp horns but never successfully dried and shaped the slippery kelp. I've been researching kelp horns ever since.

Krystyna Bobrowski is a sound artist, composer and musician living in Oakland, California. In addition to French horn she plays acoustic and electronic instruments of her own design. Her collection of original instruments includes prepared amplified rocking chairs, bull kelp horns, Leaf Speakers, Gliss Glass and the Harmonic Slide. She [presents] Kelp Call, new works for multiple Kelp Horn quartets. Kelp, technically known as *Nereocystis luetkeana*, is a large, hollow, naturally conical-shaped seaweed found along the Northern California coast. After drying for several weeks, the kelp may be cut and played in a similar fashion to a brass instrument: bugle, trumpet, French horn, trombone or tuba. www.bayimproviser.com



The Whale Crier's kelp horn was first heard in Hermanus, South Africa, in August 1992. Pieter Claasen, then an employee of the Old Harbour, was the first Whale Crier.

He retired as Whale Crier in 1998 and his position has been taken over by Wilson Salakusana. In the months of June through November, when Southern Right whales come to frolic, mate and calve in the warm waters of the bay, it is his mission to alert hundreds of shore-based whale watchers to the whereabouts of whales. He does this by blowing his kelp horn calls in code. The sandwich board he wears tells whale watchers how to interpret the code which will lead them to spots where the whales have been sighted. [See the photo at http://www.hermanusaccommodation.co.za/whale_crier.htm]



**Monterey Bay
Chapter of
The American Cetacean Society
is pleased to announce its
Annual
Blue
Whale
Watch**

**Saturday, August 18, 2007
9 am - 1 pm
aboard the 70' *Sea Wolf II*
in Monterey**

Photo by Esta Lee Albright: Passengers on the *Sea Wolf II* enjoy Humpback whales on a calm, blue Monterey Bay.

Monterey Bay is considered one of the best locations in the world to observe the largest animal in the history of life on earth, the Great Blue Whale, during its summer and fall feeding season in Monterey Bay.

August also brings a great diversity of cetaceans and marine life to Monterey Bay. Observations possible on this trip include Humpback whales, Minke whales, Fin whales, Killer whales, two species of Common Dolphins, Risso's, Northern Right Whale, Pacific White-sided and Bottlenose dolphin species, Dall's and Harbor porpoise, four species of pinnipeds, Leatherback Sea turtles, numerous species of marine birds, Blue sharks, Mola Mola and various species of jellies.

Cost \$45, which includes automatic membership to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter.

Trip departs from Monterey Bay Whale Watch Center located at Fisherman's Wharf.

Naturalists and marine biologists include Captain Richard Ternullo, expert on Monterey Bay seabirds and cetaceans, and Nancy Black, California's pre-eminent expert on Killer Whales and Monterey Bay cetaceans.

For reservations and information, please contact Tony Lorenz (831) 648-8968 or (831) 901-7259 or Jerry Loomis (831) 419-1051.

Please mail checks to ACS Monterey Bay Chapter, PO Box HE, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

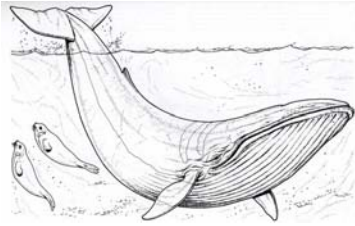
Information contributed by Alan Baldrige

Are you aware there is more information to be gained about our whale watch trips? Go to our chapter web site at www.starrsites.com/acsmmb/ and select "Fundraiser Cruise August 18." You'll find photos from previous cruises and reports on the summer cruises for 2005, 2004, 2000, and 1999.

Be sure to linger on the report for the year 2000, led off by Tom Kieckhefer's stunning photo of a male Killer whale approaching the *Sea Wolf II*. Alan Baldrige was the record-keeper that year and he's a master at species lists. This is the most complete of the reports. Lists and tales of sightings include 5 cetaceans, 2 pinnipeds, a sea otter, 23 species of birds, 3 species of jellies, and blue sharks. "Notable species" are marked. Surely, the sea conditions, the weather and the sightings will be excellent this year, too. Be sure to help spot the whales and take notes !

—Esta Lee Albright

International Whaling Commission
May 28-31, Alaska, "Once more into the breach..."



Minke whale

After reading reports from the 3 sources below, in their differing flavors, there seem to be 3 themes:

1. There was contention over scientific whaling. Japan presented some data

from their program. It was judged good by pro-whalers and poor by the anti-whalers.

2. There was contention over aboriginal whaling in various countries and a proposal by Japan for shore whaling in a few coastal areas in that country.

3. There was contention over the role being played by contention in the IWC.

Sources: www.IWCoffice.org; [//news.bbc.co.uk](http://news.bbc.co.uk); Jonathan Stern, NGO reporting to ACS National, email: jonney@sfsu.edu

[IWC] The catch limits for **aboriginal whaling** are usually set for five-year periods. Taking into account the advice of the Scientific Committee, the Commission renewed the following catch limits for a further 5 years.

(1)**Bowhead** whales of the Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas Stock (taken by native people of Alaska and Chukotka). A total of up to 280 bowhead whales can be landed in the period 2008-2012, with no more than 67 whales struck in any year (and up to 15 unused strikes may be carried over each year).

(2)**Eastern North Pacific gray whales**

A total catch of 620 whales is allowed or the years 2008-2012 with a maximum of 140 in any one year.

(3)**Humpback whales** taken by St. Vincent and The Grenadines. For the seasons 2008-2012 the number of humpback whales to be taken shall not exceed 20.

[BBC] Denmark's plan to include humpbacks in an expanded hunt by its Inuit communities in Greenland provided the one controversial element in the subsistence whaling debate. [IWC] Catch limits agreed for the years 2008-2012 for Greenland were: West Greenland **fin** whales: 19 struck per year; West Greenland common **minke** whales: 200 struck per year, with annual review by the Scientific Committee; East Greenland **bowhead** whales: 2 strikes per year with annual review by the Scientific Committee; East Greenland common **minke**



Bowhead whale

whales: 12 strikes per year.

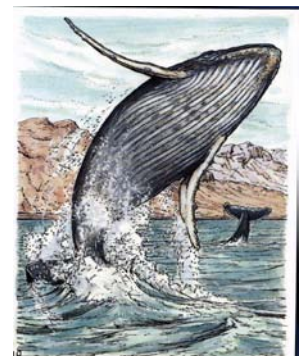
The Commission then considered matters relating to socio-economic implications and **small-type whaling**. As in previous years, Japan gave a presentation on the hardship suffered by its four community-based whaling communities in Japan... as a result of the moratorium. It had developed a proposal to allow a catch for these communities..... no consensus the matter was left open.

[BBC] The Commission then turned its attention to the question of **special permit whaling**. The Scientific Committee had carried out a review of the 18 year JARPA programme at an intersessional workshop earlier this year. Japan began a programme known as JARPA II after the completion of JARPA. Under the lethal component of the programme in 2006/07, 505 Antarctic **minke** whales and 3 **fin** whales were caught. Japan also has a North Pacific programme under which a total of 195 common **minke**, 50 **Bryde's**, 100 **sei** and 6 **sperm** whales were caught in 2006. As part of its program, Iceland took 58 common **minke** whales.... The Commission passed a Resolution asking Japan to refrain from issuing a permit for JARPA II by 40 votes in favour, 2 votes against and 1 abstention; 27 countries decided not to participate in the vote as they believed that the submission of the proposal was not conducive to building bridges within the Commission.

[BBC] Japan and its backers argue that its coastal communities are just as entitled on historical and cultural grounds to a small annual catch as the indigenous peoples of Alaska, Chukotka in Russia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the native American Makah tribe of the western US. Anti-whaling countries view the proposal as a breach of the 21-year moratorium on commercial whaling.

[BBC] Proposals for a South Atlantic whale sanctuary have been defeated in the first vote at the IWC meeting this year. Proposed by Latin American countries, it would have seen whale protection extended northwards from the existing Southern Ocean Sanctuary. Delegations supported the proposal by a margin of 39 to 29, which fell short of the three-quarters majority needed.

Japan voted against, as did Norway, Denmark and many Caribbean and African countries. "We are very sad because we are trying to emphasize (the needs of) many coastal communities in Brazil, in Uruguay, Argentina, even South Africa, but they are not respected here with this decision," Argentina's whaling commissioner Eduardo Iglesias told BBC News.

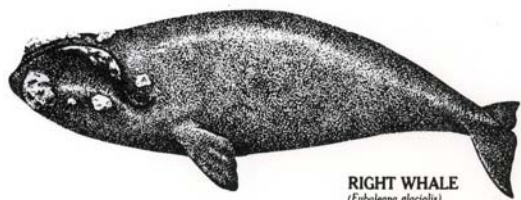


Humpback whale

[BBC] The fiercest row concerns Japan's plan to add 50 **humpbacks** to its annual Antarctic hunt, which it conducts in the name of scientific research. Before the meeting started, Japan offered to consider abandoning the **humpback** element if the anti-whaling bloc could consider its request to allow limited commercial hunting by 4 coastal communities. The offer was dismissed instantly; but Japanese commissioners met informally with ministers from anti-whaling countries Australia, the UK and New Zealand in an attempt to find a way forward. After the session, New Zealand's conservation minister Chris Carter told BBC News that they had agreed to continue talking, with the future of the IWC one item on which it might be possible to find common ground. However, he said, the Japanese coastal whaling proposal would not be endorsed, while his government's opposition to the **humpback** hunt remained as implacable as ever. Japanese delegates declined to comment. The **humpbacks** are an emotive issue for Australia and New Zealand, where their acrobatic leaps and tumbles are a highlight for whale-watchers.

[Jonathan Stern] 30 May. There is a heaviness in the air that is palpable. This is due to the potential impasses envisioned by many attendees. The biggest anticipated impasse was the U.S. quota for **bowheads**. This came to the floor yesterday. It was the first of such similar votes. When this amendment was brought to the floor, many countries signaled their desire to comment. Fifth or sixth in the queue was Japan.... Joji Morishita spoke, and then in a geraldo-opens-al-capone's-safe moment, Japan stated they had no objection. Then, the rest of the countries, including those thought to oppose the quota, followed suit. Consensus. Built on sound science.

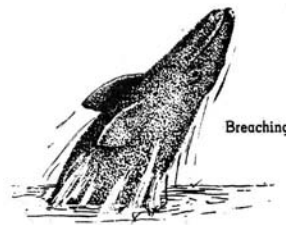
The Greenland proposal to increase their take of **fin** whales and **minke** whales, in addition to adding **humpbacks** and **bowheads** did not pass. No consensus. Bad science. St. Lucia's proposal to take 4 **humpbacks** passed on the consensus through the good science band wagon. I hope this consensus-from-science continues. Australia gave my favorite moment. Alluding to the fact that just saying you are doing science does not mean you are doing GOOD science. I applauded and shouted in my heart. 1 June. Japan's resolution for small-type coastal whaling did not go for a consensus vote ... They suggested



RIGHT WHALE
(*Eubalaena glacialis*)

a new management plan for the coastal **minke** whales ... they wanted

a take for a time until things were figured out, and their post-interim hunt could continue. The New Zealand delegate pointed out they were setting up a program before it got accepted. Then, stopping it would be infinitely difficult. Then Morishita's boss, Nakamura, gave a prepared statement. Some of my highlights were: this is the last chance for the IWC; the IWC is dysfunctional with a double standard; change your attitude (to those opposed to their resolution); there is a price to pay. So they are going to review how they interact with the IWC and begin to investigate a new organization of managing ocean resources in a sustainable way ... I was tempted to yell out "southern blue fin, you *%h@#e!!" So there it is ... battle lines being drawn .. Power to the people, right on!! There is no clear answer to what they have said. It was an unveiled threat: let us hunt from our coastal communities, or we quit the IWC. They said that the bowhead hunt is commercial since artifacts were sold from the whale carcasses. They called us hypocrites.



Gray whale

[IWC] Report of the Scientific Committee on the status of a number of large whale stocks. New information was received on Antarctic **minke** whales, North Pacific common **minke** whales, Southern Hemisphere **humpback** whales, Southern Hemisphere **blue** whales and a

number of other small stocks of **bowhead**, **right** and **gray** whales. There was positive evidence of increases in abundance for several of the stocks of **humpback**, **blue** and **right** whales in the Southern Hemisphere, although they remain at reduced levels compared to their pre-whaling numbers. Information remains lacking for other stocks. Special attention was paid to the status of the endangered western North Pacific **gray** whale, whose feeding grounds coincide with oil and gas operations of Sakhalin Island, Russian Federation. The population numbers only about 120 animals and although there is evidence that it has been increasing at perhaps 3% per year over the last decade, any additional deaths, for example in fishing gear as has recently occurred, put the survival of the population in doubt. The Commission agreed to work together to try to mitigate anthropogenic threats to this endangered population. Ship strikes and entanglement are also a treat to the endangered western North Atlantic **right** whale population which numbers around 300. The Commission agrees again that anthropogenic mortality should be reduced to zero as soon as possible. [In general whale population concerns include] Pollution, Whale watching and Ship strikes.

Excerpts selected by Esta Lee Albright. Illustrations by the ff: Humpback, bowhead, minke by John Green; gray and right whales by Robin Makowski for ACS. Quotation in title by Shakespeare, *King Henry V*.

Cetacean Miscellany

Aged Bowhead

19th Century Weapon Found in Whale

(CBS) *BOSTON* A 50-ton bowhead whale caught off the Alaskan coast last month had a weapon fragment embedded in its neck that showed it survived a similar hunt - more than a century ago. Embedded deep under its blubber was a 3 1/2-inch arrow-shaped projectile that has given researchers insight into the whale's age, estimated between 115 and 130 years old.....

Calculating a whale's age can be difficult, and is usually gauged by amino acids in the eye lenses. It's rare to find one that has lived more than a century, but experts say the oldest were close to 200 years old. The bomb lance fragment, lodged in a bone between the whale's neck and shoulder blade, was likely manufactured in New Bedford, on the southeast coast of Massachusetts, a major whaling center at that time..

[../wcbstv.com/watercooler/local_story_164115343.html](http://wcbstv.com/watercooler/local_story_164115343.html)

It seems there are various ways of estimating ages of various species of whales: (1) sectioning a tooth from odontocetes and reading or counting the growth layer groups; (2) well-marked whales can be reidentified from photographs; (3) analysis of tissues of mysticetes collected during postmortem exams; (4) counting growth layers in mysticetes' ear plugs; (5) counting oscillations in the stable carbon isotopes in the baleen; (6) counting growth layers in the bullae (ear bones); and further.....

Determining age by measuring the degree of racemization of aspartic acid in the eye lens and teeth has been applied to several species of marine mammals including bowhead whales. For the work cited below, a total of 48 eye globes were collected and analyzed to estimate ages of bowhead whales using the aspartic acid racemization technique. In this technique, age is estimated based on intrinsic changes in the D and L enantiomeric isomeric forms of aspartic acid in the eye lens nucleus. Age estimates were successful for 42 animals. Based on these data, growth appears faster for females than males, and age at sexual maturity (age at length 12-13 m for males and 13-13.5 m for females) occurs at around 25 years of age. Growth slows markedly for both sexes at roughly 40-50 years of age. Four individuals (all males) exceed 100 years of age. Recoveries of traditional whale-hunting tools from five recently harvested whales also suggest life-span in excess of 100 years of age in some cases. [Information and excerpts above are from: "Age and growth estimates of bowhead whales *Balaena mysticetus*" via aspartic acid racemization." by John C. George, Jeffrey Bada, Judith Zeh, Laura Scott, Stephen E. Brown, Todd O'Hara and Robert Suydam. *Can. J. Zool.* 77: 571-580 (1999)]

We wish to thank Mason Weinrich of Whale Center of

New England for bringing this article to our attention.

Belugas

Only 300 Left in Cook Inlet

There are only 300 beluga whales left in Alaska's Cook Inlet -- a 77 percent decline from the 1,300 whales that thrived there in the early 1980's. Now that these whales are on the brink of extinction, the National Marine Fisheries Service is finally proposing to protect them as an endangered species. But industry groups -- backed by all three members of Alaska's congressional delegation -- are opposed to the whale's protection. Send your Citizen Comment urging the Bush Administration to give these whales a fighting chance by protecting them as endangered and designating their critical habitat.

Genetically unique, Cook Inlet beluga whales are found nowhere else -- and no similar beluga habitat exists in Alaska or elsewhere in the United States.

Kaja Brix, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA

www.nrdconline.org/campaign/actionfund_beluga

Sushi Company

Boycott Seafood from True World Foods

As one of the last remaining large-scale distributors of whale meat in Japan, seafood company Kyokuyo Co., Ltd has been a major player in Japan's history of commercial whaling since the 1930's. The premier sushi quality seafood distributor in the US, True World Foods, Inc., announced a partnership with Kyokuyo in 2006 to sell sushi in the US under the brand name "Polar Seas." If you eat or buy seafood supplied by True World Foods you probably are unaware you could be supporting a pro-whaling company. www.ifaw.org

Sonar

U.S. Navy Being Sued

Five environmental groups have filed a federal lawsuit against the U.S. Navy for its use of high-intensity, active sonar in training exercises around the Hawaiian Islands, which they state "will harm whales and other marine mammals." The lawsuit also cites the National Marine Fisheries Service for inadequately assessing the Navy's plans to be sure its actions do not harm endangered marine life. www.surfrider.org

More Sonar

Take on the U.S. Navy Off CA, Too

This summer, under the sea -- and out of the view of the American public -- the Navy will unleash a dangerous two-year onslaught of deadly sonar in sensitive whale habitat off Southern California's coast. The Navy's mid-frequency sonar, which will be blasted during 14 naval training (Continued, please see next page, col. 1)

Sightings

compiled by staff of Monterey Bay Whale Watch. For updates see www.gowhales.com

Date # Type of Animal(s)

6/1 am 7 Humpback Whales, 120 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 250 Risso's Dolphins, 5 Harbor Porpoise.

6/1 pm 6 Humpback Whales, 8 Harbor Porpoise.

6/2 am 9 Humpback Whales, 250 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 30 Risso's Dolphins.

6/2 pm 5 Humpback Whales, 7 Harbor Porpoise.

6/3 am 9 Humpback Whales, 1 Minke Whale.

6/3 pm 7 Humpback Whales, 2 Gray Whales, 400 Pacific White-sided Dolphins, 1000 Risso's Dolphins, 200 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

6/4 am 4 Humpback Whales, 6 Harbor Porpoise.

6/4 pm 4 Humpback Whales, 4 Harbor Porpoise.

6/5 6 Humpback Whales

6/6 6 No trip, poor weather

Cont. from page 6

exercises, is so intense that it drives whales to panic and causes their organs to hemorrhage. The Navy's next onslaught will take place in and around California's Channel Islands – home to dozens of species of whales and dolphins, including the endangered blue whale. Contact National Resources Defense Council to help with their court case to block it. www.savebiogems ~

6/7 am 17 Humpback Whales, 25 Pacific White-sided Dolphins.

6/7 pm 8 Humpback Whales (lunge feeding).

6/8 20 Humpback Whales, 30 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

6/9 am 17 Humpback Whales, 250 Pacific White-sided Dolphins,

50 Risso's Dolphins, 250 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

6/9 pm 12 Humpback Whales, 1 Northern Fur Seal.

6/10 10 Humpback Whales.

6/11 am 9 Humpback Whales.

6/11 pm 8 Humpback Whales.

6/12 am 6 Humpback Whales.

6/12 pm 7 Humpback Whales.

6/13 am 10 Humpback Whales.

6/13 pm 8 Humpback Whales.

6/14 am 18 Humpback Whales

6/14 pm 15 Humpback Whales.

6/15 am 32 Humpback Whales, 225 Risso's Dolphins.

6/15 pm 17 Humpback Whales.

6/16 17 Humpback Whales, 15 Risso's Dolphins, 7 Dall's Porpoise.

6/17 am 10 Humpback Whales.

6/17 pm 8 Humpback Whales.

6/18 12 Humpback Whales, 1 Fur Seal.

6/19 am 8 Humpback Whales.

6/19 pm 8 Humpback Whales.

6/20 am 6 Humpback Whales, 7 Killer Whales (transient type), 10 Risso's Dolphins, 5 Harbor

Porpoise.

6/20 pm 9 Humpback Whales, 30 Risso's Dolphins, 4 Harbor Porpoise.

6/21 am 4 Humpback Whales, 7 Killer Whales (transient type), 5 Harbor Porpoise.

6/21 pm 8 Humpback Whales, 6 Harbor Porpoise, 1 Elephant Seal.

6/22 am 14 Humpback Whales, 25 Risso's Dolphins.

6/22 pm 6 Humpback Whales.

6/23 2 Humpback Whales.

6/24 6 Humpback Whales.

6/25 am 3 Humpback Whales, 2 BLUE WHALES.

6/25 pm 3 Humpback Whales.

6/26 am 8 Humpback Whales, 300 Pacific White Sided Dolphins, 65 Risso's Dolphins, 350 Northern Right Whale Dolphins.

6/26 pm 4 Humpback Whales, 8 Harbor Porpoise.

6/27 am 5 Humpback Whales, 10 Harbor Porpoise.

6/27 pm 5 Humpback Whales, 8 Harbor Porpoise.

GOOD WHALE WATCH DAYS

Humpback whales almost every day, sometimes lunge-feeding; Killer whales, topic of our May meeting with Nancy Black; 2 Blue whales right on time; an abundance of dolphins and a few pinnipeds in addition to our shoreline pals. Captain of the *Sea Wolf II*, Richard Ternullo, also brings to our attention: graceful offshore jellies, including *Crysaora*, and the sighting of a Leatherback turtle by the crew of the boat Sanctuary. ~

American Cetacean Society
Monterey Bay Chapter
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