

Soundings



American Cetacean Society- Monterey Bay Chapter
PO Box H E, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

January 2011

**MONTHLY MEETING AT HOPKINS MARINE STATION,
LECTURE HALL BOAT WORKS BUILDING
(ACROSS FROM THE AMERICAN TIN CANNERY OUTLET STORES)
MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

DATE: THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2011

TIME: 7:30 PM. PLEASE JOIN US AT 7:00 FOR REFRESHMENTS

**Speaker: Dennis J. Long, Executive Director
Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation**

Title: California's Marine Protected Areas

The State of California has been a leader among states when it comes to protecting marine resources. The underwater Reserve at Point Lobos State Reserve was established in 1960 and was the first underwater Reserve in the Nation. Even more locally, marine protected areas such as the Hopkins Marine Life Refuge, established in 1931, and The Pacific Grove Marine Refuge, founded in 1952, also pre-dated the more widely known Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary which was established in 1992. In 1999 California continued its leadership role among states by passing the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA).

Our speaker is an expert on the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) which are established under the MLPA. He will speak to us about the Central Coast MPAs implemented in 2007 including the story behind what happened to our local marine protected areas that existed before 2007. He will also discuss how the State MPAs might affect cetacean foraging, the impact they might have on the gray whale migration routes and how injuries to marine life from mid and low frequency will be handled by the State. Finally, he will present us with a "report card" on the benefits of a coordinated approach to protecting marine resources as realized in established marine reserves and sanctuaries off California's coastline.

Please join us for what will be a timely update on MPA's and to find out what the tangible results are from a coordinated effort toward marine conservation.

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CALENDAR**ACS Monterey Bay
Gray Whale Fundraiser****Sunday, Jan. 23, 2011 8am-10am**

Trip will take place on the 100' Princess. Monterey's Largest Whale Watch Boat This Trip Coincides with the Peak of Southbound Gray Whale Migration. Dolphins and Killer Whales are Also Possible on This Trip. Expert Naturalist Will be Onboard To Discuss Gray Whale Biology and Ecology. Cost is \$25.00 For Reservations and Information Please Contact Tony Lorenz at 831-901-7259

**University of California Museum of
Paleontology Short Course
The Evolution of Marine Mammals**

Saturday, February 26, 2011

This Course will Meet on the Berkeley Campus. For More Info Contact Judy Schotchmoor at 510-642-1821

**8th Annual San Francisco
Ocean Film Festival**

March 9-13, 2011 at Pier 39 in San Francisco
For More Info Please Call 415-561 6251
More Info will be Forhcoming

BOOK
RECOMMENDATIONS

A State of Change: Forgotten Landscapes of California. Text and art by Laura Cunningham
2010 Heyday Books

The View from Lazy Point: A Natural Year in an Unnatural World. By Carl Safina

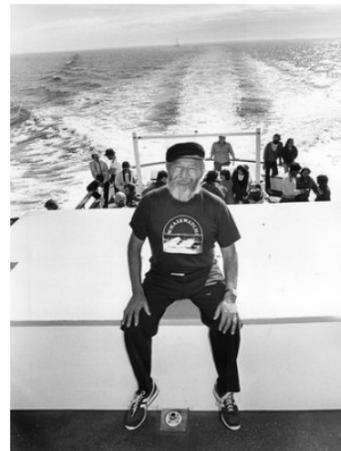
For Young Readers:

A Polar Bear's World and A Walrus' World.
Written and Illustrated by Caroline Arnold
Caroline is the Recipient of Numerous
Children's Book Awards

**JOHN OLGUIN DIES AT 89; DIRECTOR OF
SAN PEDRO'S CABRILLO MARINE
MUSEUM**

By Keith Thursby, Los Angeles Times
Jan 3, 2011s

Olguin became director of the museum in 1949, starting education programs and founding the Cabrillo Whalewatch naturalist-training program.



John Olguin, whose enthusiasm for the ocean made him a perfect teacher for generations of youngsters who visited the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro, has died. He was 89.

Olguin, the longtime director of what was then called the Cabrillo Marine Museum, died Saturday at his home in San Pedro, said his daughters, Vi Olguin and Moni Olguin-Patten. No cause was given.

Olguin was a Cabrillo Beach lifeguard captain when he became director of the museum in 1949. During the ensuing decades he started educational programs that introduced children and others to such topics as grunion, tide pools and whales.

"He was Mr. San Pedro. We lost a guiding light," said Mike Schadt, the aquarium's director. "The things we do, most of them were started by John. He made the public programs come alive."

Olguin was known for his exuberance, teaching students by making them dance like a jellyfish or a grunion. "Children learn from example," he told The Times in 1981. "What you experience is part of your life."

John Main Olguin was born Feb. 18, 1921, in San Pedro. His father, Roy, came to California from Mexico in 1910 and married Josie Main of Long Beach.

Olguin started working as a lifeguard in 1937 and graduated from San Pedro High School

in 1941. He won a Silver Star while in the Army from 1942 to 1945, serving in New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan.

The Cabrillo Beach museum started modestly in the mid-1930s when the city of Los Angeles moved a Venice Beach lifeguard's collection of shells and other items to a vacant bathhouse at Cabrillo Beach.

William Lloyd, a retired dentist, became the museum director and Olguin started helping him, Schaadt said. When Lloyd retired in 1949, Olguin became lifeguard captain and director.

"I enrolled in biology classes at universities and junior colleges and soaked up as much knowledge as I could," he told *The Times* in 1995. "I told them, 'I don't care about the credit, all I want to do is learn.' "

A charter member of the American Cetacean Society and founder of the Cabrillo Whalewatch naturalist-training program, Olguin became known as the father of recreational whale watching, persuading sports fishermen to allow the use of their boats for the trips.

"He was continuously seeing what the ocean had to offer," said his daughter, Vi.

He was director or co-director until he retired in 1987, becoming the director emeritus. The museum changed its name to the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in 1993.

Alisa Schulman-Janiger, a marine biologist and marine science teacher at San Pedro High School's marine science magnet, said Olguin was "an inspiration for his enthusiasm. That kid in him was always there. He was very interested in kids, he'd do anything he could to get them engaged."

Schulman-Janiger recalled watching Olguin tell students on a whale-watching trip about some approaching dolphins. "He'd practically be hopping up and down. Kids would pick up that enthusiasm," she said.

Olguin remained active at the aquarium and was involved over the years in several other local organizations. He also helped establish the Point Fermin Marine Life Refuge.

In addition to his daughters, who live in San Pedro, Olguin is survived by his wife, Muriel; son John Cabrillo Olguin of Flagstaff,

Ariz.; brothers Leonard of La Habra Heights and Albert of San Pedro; sisters Belia Olguin Smith of Rancho Palos Verdes and Esther Olguin Riggs of Manson, Wash; and four grandchildren.

Services will be private. The family is planning a public memorial.

CALIFORNIA GROUP SEEKS PROTECTIONS FOR GRAY WHALE

Sixteen years after the gray whale was taken off the endangered species list, the California Gray Whale Coalition says their numbers are dwindling again and is leading a campaign to protect the marine mammals further declines.

As a first step toward the goal of having the gray whale listed as endangered once again, the Coalition has petitioned the U.S. National Marine & Fisheries Service to list the Eastern North Pacific gray whale population -- also known as the California gray whale -- as depleted, a designation which would then prompt the agency to develop a conservation plan.

"The gray whales are facing challenges on all fronts, hunting, killer whales, low cow/calf counts, climate change," said Sue Arnold, chief executive of the Gray Whale Coalition, which is based in Palo Alto and has representatives in Santa Cruz. "Where do you draw the line in the sand?"

While the number of calves produced by gray whales have been counted continuously for the last 16 years, an abundance study for the total population has not been done since 2006-2007, when there were an estimated 19,000 whales according to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

The Southwest Fisheries division of NOAA is in the midst of a new two-year abundance study. The first phase was conducted in January during the whales' winter migration and a second set of data will be gathered in January 2011. The results will not be available until at least a year from now, said biologist Wayne Perryman of Southwest Fisheries.

Gray whales were listed as endangered, with an estimated population of 17,000, under the U.S. Endangered Species Act in 1973 and

removed after their numbers reached 20,000 in 1994.

The "depleted" designation requires a petition under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, while labeling the gray whale as either threatened or endangered -- signifying a greater peril than depleted -- would require a petition under the Endangered Species Act.

In 2001, when estimates put the population at 16,000 as an unusual amount of gray whales were stranded and found emaciated, a petition was filed to place the cetacean back on the endangered species list, but sufficient evidence was not found to warrant re-listing, said Fisheries biologist Tom Eagle.

While observers of the gray whale population are in agreement that the number of calves has significantly dropped in the last three years -- averaging 423 per year from 2007-2009 and 1,164 per year between 2004-2006 according to NOAA -- there is disagreement as to why.

"I don't necessarily think there is cause for alarm," said Leah Gerber, a biologist at Arizona State University who studied the original decision to drop the gray whale from the endangered species list.

"A new carrying capacity is being established, and it makes sense biologically that the reproductive rate would be lower as the population adjusts to a sustainable level. I would not say there is high probability of extinction in the foreseeable future which would be the criteria for listing it as endangered."

The calf count is prone to fluctuations due to a variety of reasons, and is not, by itself, cause for alarm, said Perryman.

The California Gray Whale Coalition, in its petition, attributes the threat to gray whales to five main causes: over-estimating the population which has led to over-harvesting; the drop in cow/calf numbers; predation by orcas; major

changes in habitat and prey due to climate change; and a reduction in available prey species.

The gray whale, which undertakes one of the longest annual migrations of any mammal traveling between 9,000 and 12,500 miles a year between the Arctic and the Baja Peninsula, is particularly susceptible to climate change.

Currently, the International Whaling Commission has a quota for gray whales of 140 per year, most of which is designated for a Russian exception to the commercial whaling ban for "aboriginal/subsistence whaling."

The Native American Makah Tribe of Washington -- which has traditionally hunted gray whales -- has sought a waiver to the Marine Mammal Protection Act, but legal challenges have mostly prevented the Makah from hunting.

"If the gray whale were listed as depleted then (National Marine & Fisheries Service) could

not support the waiver to the Marine Mammal Protection Act," Eagle said.

Arnold and the coalition argue that the IWC quota was set on faulty population figures and hopes to see a moratorium placed on all gray whale hunting.

The gray whale population data due out next year from NOAA should

help clarify the matter.

"I think it's time for a new population estimate," Gerber said. "The new data will be interesting, and if that suggests a steep decline there is merit to the petition."

However, the new data will not be available during the period that the National Marine & Fisheries Service evaluates the petition.

"The U.S. government has responsibility of doing the counts and seeing to the maintenance of a viable population," said Burney Le Boeuf, professor emeritus of biology at UC Berkeley. "But they are slow to put out this information, and the terrible irony is that if the animal is in danger you have to proceed more rapidly than that."



The National Marine & Fisheries Service 60 days to respond to the petition, which was filed Oct. 21. If significant evidence is presented to warrant further study, the agency then has an additional 150 days (210 from the petition date) to review the population status and rule on the petition, said Eagle. Once a ruling is published there will be a 60 day comment period, after which the National Marine & Fisheries Service is obligated to publish a final ruling within 90 days.

A DIRGE FOR THE BLUEFIN TUNA

By David Jolly

International fisheries negotiators dashed hopes for protection of the bluefin tuna over the weekend in Paris, agreeing to leave fishing quotas for the endangered fish essentially unchanged next year. Conservationists did claim small victories in measures to protect sharks and turtles, however.

As I wrote in Sunday's paper, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, or Iccat, voted to reduce the total allowable bluefin catch in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean next year to 12,900 tons from 13,500 tons. The western Atlantic catch was cut to 1,750 tons from 1,800 tons. Conservationists had been calling for a much sharper reduction — even a moratorium — and a ban on fishing during the spawning season. (More on that in a moment.)

The picture on shark conservation was not quite so bleak. "If you're looking just at sharks, then this meeting was a great success," said Elizabeth Griffin Wilson, a marine scientist with the environmental group Oceana.

The commission approved a ban on taking oceanic whitetip sharks, a step that means the fish will be protected "in all of the Iccat convention area, meaning the entire Atlantic Ocean," Ms. Wilson said.

The conference agreed that only coastal fisheries in developing nations should be allowed to take hammerheads and that the fins of those hammerheads could not legally be traded. Member countries were also charged with collecting data on shortfin makos, one of the most heavily fished sharks, a step that means scientists

will have more information to work with at future meetings.

Still, it wasn't a complete success for shark advocates. Oceana says that Iccat's data is so inadequate that millions of migratory sharks are probably being caught in the Atlantic each year, mostly for Chinese tables, without any records being kept.

And the conference failed to agree to a "fins-on" proposal — already adopted by the United States for Atlantic fisheries — that would have required any sharks to be kept intact. Such a policy would keep fishermen from simply cutting off the fins, which are prized in China for soup, and simply dumping the still-living fish back into the sea.

The conference also announced the adoption of measures to reduce the incidental catch of sea turtles and to safely free them when they are caught by long line, steps that Ms. Wilson said opened "the beginning of a process to help sea turtles."

But it was the bluefin that was in the spotlight. The case seemed compelling: Iccat scientists have said that continuing the catch at the 2009 level would leave a 30 to 40 percent chance that the stock would collapse. The meeting had also been pitched as "one last chance" for the commission after delegates to the March meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or Cites, rejected a trade ban on the fish. Cites agreed with Japan that Iccat, a regional fisheries management organization, was the proper forum for regulating its trade.

All of the delegates to the 48-nation organization knew that the reductions to which they agreed were essentially meaningless; compliance with Iccat quotas is poor, as a recent report on the black market in the species makes clear, one reason that conservationists had pushed for a complete moratorium until the stock recovers.

"Iccat should take the word 'conservation' out of their name," said a Greenpeace spokesman, Oliver Knowles. "They act much more like an industry association."

A proposal to ban fishing during the spawning season also went nowhere. The highly lucrative business of the industrial fishing boats known as purse-seiners was an incentive for some European governments to keep the quotas intact; they essentially do all of their fishing during the spawning season, so such a measure would have been tantamount to a moratorium.

"This meeting's not about fish, it's about money," said Rob Kramer, president of the International Game Fish Association, which represents sport fishermen in 120 countries. His association supports greater protections for the bluefin. Though some sport fishermen, particularly off Massachusetts, sell their catch, many practice catch-and-release. And even those sport fishermen who sell their catch are unenthusiastic about the purse-seiners.

"We were hopeful Cites would take it out of the hands of Iccat," Mr. Kramer said. "This is a sacrifice of the recreation community. Iccat is just the foxes guarding the henhouse."

One of the most troubling things about the meeting was its opaqueness: no journalists were allowed to sit in after the opening ceremony. (I was unable to make it across town during the week to try my luck, but Charles Clover, the environmental

journalist behind the documentary "End of the Line," was removed when he sought simply to join delegates at a coffee break.)

N.G.O.'s with observer status were allowed to attend plenary sessions, but that did them little good, because the real negotiations took place out of sight, in the proverbial backroom.

When the proposal was made Thursday to close fishing during the spawning season, Mr. Kramer said, it was clear that the answer had been decided behind closed doors. "You could have heard a pin drop," he said. "Not a single

country was willing to open up the debate."

Then, just minutes before the 10-day meeting ended, the decision on the closely watched bluefin quota began filtering out through various participants and observers. The delegates went home, with no public discussion or information on who traded what to keep the industrial fleets in business another year.

Am I alone in thinking that the public interest in managing endangered species justifies a little more transparency?

UNDERSTANDING THE VULNERABLE NORTHERN BOTTLENOSE WHALE

*The northern bottlenose whale -- *Hyperoodon ampullatus* -- is a strange creature. They have a long, stout body with a bulbous forehead -- called a "melon" -- and a short, tube-like snout.*

ScienceDaily (Nov. 21, 2010) — Hunted for centuries for their oil (and until the 1970s for dog food), there may be only 160 of these gentle giants in the population found off Nova Scotia. In 2006, this population (known as the Scotian Shelf population) was designated as endangered by the Canadian Species At Risk Act.

They can be hard animals to study. For one thing, it's tough to get out to their prime habitat (in deep submarine canyons along the edge of the Scotian Shelf, about 200 kilometres offshore of Nova Scotia), especially in the winter when the weather is rough. Secondly, they're a deep-diving species which spends most of their time underwater. They make long, deep dives sometimes for 70 minutes, reaching depths of more than 1,400 metres. They surface to breathe for about 10 minutes, before diving down again in search of their primary prey, the armhook squid.

Not that the difficulty in conducting research has discouraged Hilary Moors. The PhD candidate with Hal Whitehead's Cetacean Research Lab of Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, just calls them on the "hydrophone."



Northern bottlenose whale. (Credit: Image courtesy of Dalhousie University)

Well, sort of. The hydrophone is a scientific instrument that's been positioned on the ocean floor to record sounds.

She's been able to make recordings of the northern bottlenose whale's underwater vocalizations. The whale's echo-location signals, used to help them navigate and locate food in dark murky waters, sound like high-pitched clicks as captured by the hydrophone.

One of the questions Ms. Moors has answered is whether the population that frequents The Gully, a Marine Protected Area on the edge of the Scotian Shelf, is year-round or migrating. It's an important question, particularly as scientists attempt to determine if oil and gas development activities in the vicinity have impacted at all on the population.

"We knew they were around in the summer, but the winter? That's what I wanted to find out," says Ms. Moors, who works part-time for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans as a marine mammal observer. "What we've been able to determine is that they're generally out there in the winter as much as they are in the summer."

Last summer, Ms. Moors observed the whales as part of the crew aboard Dr. Whitehead's 12-metre sailboat and floating research station, Balaena.

"Pretty much anytime you go out, you can see them. They're very curious and they love to check us out," she says.

Joining the expedition this summer was Kristin O'Brien, a master's student originally from Surrey, B.C. Her job was to photograph the whales at the surface; the nicks and gouges in the dorsal fin can help researchers identify individual animals.

"When you're out there, you don't see land for weeks, but we do see lots of marine life -- northern bottlenose whales, blue whales, which are also endangered, pilot whales and Sowerby's beaked whales"

"It's almost like living in a camper," adds Ms. Moors. "You'll either love it or hate it, but I think for me, it's made me very enthusiastic about the research."

Disclaimer: Views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of ScienceDaily or its staff.

SIGHTINGS compiled by Monterey Bay Whale Watch. For complete listing and updates see www.gowhales.com/sighting.htm

Date	#	Type of Animal(s)
1/3 p.m.	8	Gray Whales
	70	Risso's Dolphins
1/3 a.m.	3	Gray Whales
	70	Risso's Dolphins*
1/2 p.m.	3	Gray Whales
	70	Risso's Dolphins
1/2 a.m.	10	Gray Whales
	70	Risso's Dolphins
1/2 early a.m.	6	Gray Whales
	100	Risso's Dolphins
12/31 p.m.	10	Gray Whales
12/31 a.m.	2	Gray Whales
12/28 a.m.	6	Gray Whales
12/27 p.m.	3	Gray Whales
12/27 a.m.	5	Gray Whales
	1	Killer Whale (male)
12/26 p.m.	12	Gray Whales
12/26 a.m.	8	Gray Whales
12/24 p.m.	4	Gray Whales
12/24 a.m.	2	Gray Whales
	10	Risso's Dolphins
12/23 p.m.	6	Gray Whales
12/23 a.m.	5	Gray Whales
	7	Risso's Dolphins
12/22	2	Gray Whales
	10	Risso's Dolphins
12/21	4	Gray Whales
	5	Risso's Dolphins
12/18	3	Gray Whales
12/16	3	Gray Whales
	10	Risso's Dolphins
12/15	5	Risso's Dolphins
12/14	1	Gray Whale
	275	Risso's Dolphins
12/13	4	Gray Whales
	10	Risso's Dolphins
12/12	1	Gray Whale
	35	Risso's Dolphins
12/11	1	Minke Whale
	250	Risso's Dolphins
12/10	285	Risso's Dolphins
12/7	2	Blue Whales
	10	Killer Whales
	50	Risso's Dolphins

Skipped dates indicate no trips

*seen with calves

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