

Spyhopper

ACS Newsletter
September 2014

NEWS FLASH: The Vaquita is Closer to Extinction Than We Thought – Only an Immediate and Total Gillnet Ban Can Save the Species!



Frédérique Lucas from the Netherlands has painted a heart-wrenching depiction of the vaquita's plight.

by **Thomas A. Jefferson, Ph.D., Director, ¡VIVA Vaquita!**

VAQUITA EMERGENCY!!

The vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*) is a small porpoise species found only in Mexico's Gulf of California or Sea of Cortez – one of only seven species in the cetacean family Phocoenidae (true porpoises). It is commonly regarded as the most endangered marine mammal species in the world. However, a new study by an international committee set up by the Mexican Government to advise on the recovery of the vaquita (Comité Internacional para la Recuperación de la Vaquita, CIRVA – in English, the International Committee for the Recovery of the Vaquita) has shown that the vaquita is much closer to going extinct than anyone thought. Delays in eliminating the legal gillnet fishing that occurs outside the vaquita refuge and a new, illegal gillnet fishery for totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, an endangered fish endemic to the northern Gulf) have resulted in a dramatic increase in the decline rate of the vaquita, from an alarming rate of about 5-8%/year through about 2008 to the current catastrophic 18.5%/year. Only an estimated 97 vaquitas remain as of mid-2014, and probably less than 25 of these are females capable of producing offspring!

Clearly, the current plan to save the species through a phase-out of gillnets in its range is not working and the clock has almost run out for the vaquita. This is the biggest crisis in marine mammal conservation since the Yangtze River dolphin (or baiji, *Lipotes vexillifer*) was declared extinct in 2006! This emergency requires a new strategy. There is no more time to wait for development of alternative gear and the switch-out program to solve the problem – these had been considered the vaquita's best hope until recently. Only a complete ban on ALL gillnets (legal and

Vaquita, cont.

illegal) in the vaquita's range starting this year will be able to save the species now. The following statement is from the CIRVA 2014 report:

Mexico's Porpoise Nears Extinction: a Simple Statement on the Situation Now

The vaquita, a small porpoise found only in the upper Gulf of California in Mexico, is one of the world's most endangered mammals. In the past three years, half of the vaquita population has been killed in fishing nets, many of them set illegally to capture an endangered fish. Fewer than 100 vaquitas remain and the species will soon be extinct unless drastic steps are taken immediately.

The species was described in 1958 and has the smallest range of any whale, dolphin or porpoise. Vaquitas live in an area used intensively by fishermen from three small towns along the shores of the northern Gulf of California.

Vaquitas die after becoming entangled in gillnets. Gillnets are designed to entangle fish and shrimps but also capture other animals, including porpoises, dolphins and turtles. The Government of Mexico has been pursuing a conservation plan for the species that includes a refuge, where all commercial fishing (including with gillnets) is banned, and a program to encourage fishermen to switch to fishing gear that does not threaten vaquitas. Over the past five years, the Government invested more than \$30 million (U.S.) in these efforts that slowed, but did not stop, the decline of the species. Scientists have warned for almost twenty years that anything short of eliminating gillnets would be insufficient to prevent the extinction of the vaquita.



A vaquita mother and calf surface in calm waters of the Sea of Cortez. Photo by T. Jefferson.

A new, illegal fishery has emerged in the past few years that is an even greater menace to the vaquita. Many vaquitas have died in nets set for totoaba, a giant fish that can reach 2 m in length and 100 kg in weight. This endangered fish is prized for its swim bladder, which is exported to China where it is used as an ingredient in soup and believed to have medicinal value. Thousands of swim bladders are dried and smuggled out of Mexico, often through the United States. The remainder of the fish is left to rot on the beach. Fishermen receive up to \$8,500 for each kilogram of totoaba swim bladder, equivalent to half a year's income from legal fishing activities.

At a meeting in July 2014, an international recovery team advising the Government of Mexico warned that time is rapidly running out. Unless drastic action is taken immediately, the vaquita will be lost. Mexican authorities must eliminate the gillnet fisheries that threaten the vaquita throughout the entire range of the species and enforce this gillnet ban. The Government must also stop illegal fishing

for totoaba. The Governments of the United States and China must help Mexico eliminate the illegal trade in totoaba products. Unless these steps are taken immediately, the vaquita will follow the Yangtze River dolphin into oblivion and become the second species of whale, dolphin or porpoise driven to extinction in human history.

RECENT EFFORTS TO RAISE AWARENESS

This year, Saturday, July 12, 2014 was designated as *International Save the Vaquita Day*. This is intended to be an annual event similar to Earth Day, but with a specific focus on raising awareness and appreciation of the world's most endangered marine mammal, the vaquita. Events around the globe directed the attention of people to the plight of this tiny porpoise species, and what needs to be done to save it

from extinction. There were booths, games, music, free prizes, educational brochures, educational talks, face painting, and several life-size models of vaquitas on hand to draw attention to and appreciation of the vaquita, a species sometimes called Mexico's "Panda of the Sea."

The primary goal was to make as many people as possible aware of the vaquita and its plight. Secondary goals were to gather signatures for our petition to the Mexican government (see below), and to raise additional funds for future educational and research work on the vaquita. The event was designed to be fun, as well as educational and kid-friendly!

Overall in 2014, there were 18 venues, 13 of them in the United States, and five in other countries, including Mexico. California was the main focus, with nine sites in the state, including four in the San Diego area. Altogether, it is estimated that well over 2,000 people were educated about the vaquita directly through the various activities, and many more received brochures or coloring books that will help them spread the message to their friends and family members. It is our hope that many of these people will follow-up by visiting the VIVA Vaquita website, and the others listed on our brochure, and by signing the petition and doing many of the things we are asking people to do to help:

- Tell all your friends and family about the vaquita
- Vote for politicians with a good environmental record
- Support the Mexican economy by traveling to Mexico
- Do not buy shrimp or fish caught with gillnets
- Support the ban on illegal fishing for totoaba and don't buy soup made with totoaba swim bladders
- Write to your elected officials and tell them about the vaquita
- Write letters to the Mexican Government departments responsible for vaquita protection (go to www.vivavaquita.org for links)
- Send vaquita drawings to the United Nations
- Donate to the vaquita recovery fund (go to www.vivavaquita.org for links)

WHAT IS NOW BEING DONE

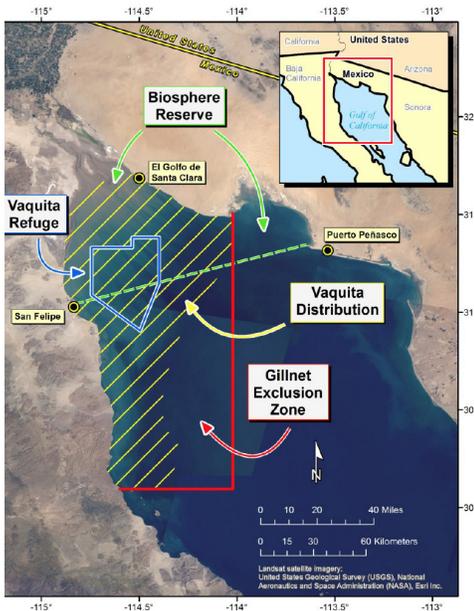
VIVA Vaquita is a collaborative effort of several scientists and green groups, including ACS. It is the only NGO that we know of with an exclusive focus on the vaquita. In response to the recent tragic news of the catastrophic decline of the vaquita, *VIVA Vaquita* is now requesting that the Mexican Government do everything in its power (and make full use of assistance offered from other countries, such as the United States and China) to eliminate all gillnet fishing (by creating a gillnet exclusion zone) in the vaquita's range by the start of the next shrimp fishing season in September 2014. If this does not happen, we will immediately begin campaigning for a boycott of ALL Mexican seafood products, until such time that the ban is considered to be in effect. Imports of Mexican seafood into the U.S. bring in over \$300 million dollars to the Mexican economy each year, so this can be a strong incentive. We recognize that this is a harsh move, but desperate times call for desperate measures, and if this last-ditch effort is not successful, it is virtually certain that the vaquita will be extinct (or past the point of 'no return') in a few short years.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Obviously, supporting all of the measures listed above will help. In addition, a change.org petition developed by our collaborator Cheryl Butner, with help from Tom Kieckhefer, has already gotten well over 25,000 signatures and we need more to reach our 50,000 goal, though we are more than halfway there. So, please sign our petition right now at: www.vivavaquita.org (click on the top link).

However, the most important thing you can do is to alert as many people as possible about the vaquita and its plight. Most people have still never heard about this shy and elusive animal, and we need to make people aware of its existence and of the threats that are facing it if we are to save it. Please help us to tell all your coworkers, friends and family members about the vaquita and ask them to sign the petition. It is still not too late. But time is quickly running out for the vaquita... Please help!

Vaquita, cont.



This map shows the current range of the vaquita (yellow hatching), the Biosphere Reserve (area above the green dashed line, which was enacted in part to protect the vaquita, but which has been largely ineffective at doing so), the area of the current vaquita refuge (blue polygon, in which gillnetting is illegal, but is still occurring), and the proposed gillnet exclusion zone (area delineated by the red solid line). The latter area needs to be made free of gillnets in the next couple of months if the vaquita is going to survive.

WHY THIS IS SUCH A BIG DEAL

According to Dr. Lorenzo Rojas-Bracho (a leading expert on the vaquita):

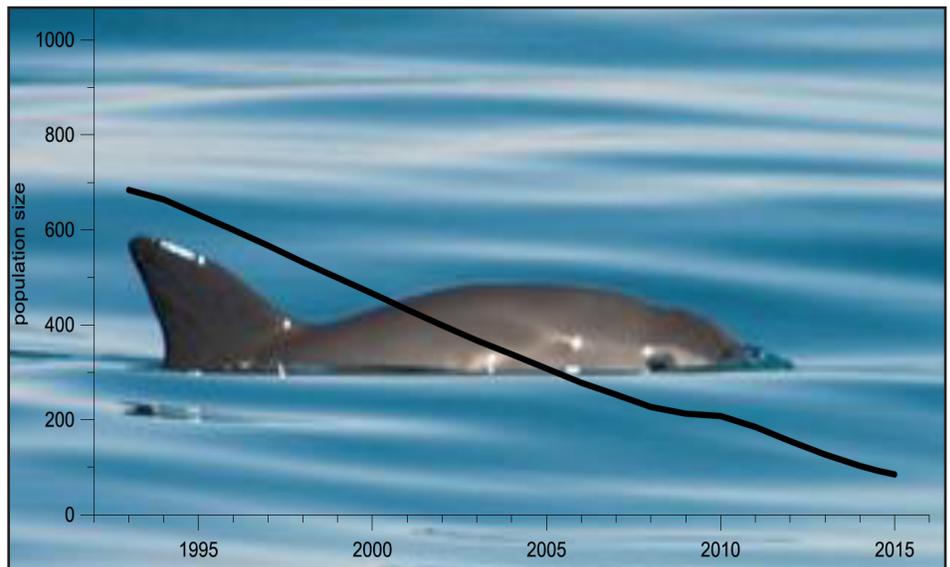
“If the vaquita disappears the world will lose the most critically endangered cetacean species. That sends a very bad message worldwide. You allow one to go and then it comes kind of like a chain reaction. There’s a risk of a chain reaction in which we have to save all the other species. In this case particularly, the vaquita is a unique species and people around the world have to save it as to save masterpieces or pieces of art because the vaquita is a Masterpiece. It’s a Picasso, a Monet, a Da Vinci or a Michelangelo, you choose. It’s a

masterpiece of nature...”

We have all heard a lot recently about the issue of killer whales in captivity (especially of late, through the movie *Blackfish*), and we know about the threats to cetaceans from naval sonar operations and even the ‘scientific whaling’ issue with Japan. These are all important issues that should be dealt with and I hope they will. However, what we are talking about with the vaquita issue is on a whole different level. We are talking about the extinction of an entire species at human hands. One that is completely preventable...

True, the vaquita is only one out of 91 species of living cetaceans in the world (just 1% of cetacean diversity, if you will). But, it represents one out of only seven species of porpoises (14% of porpoise diversity). If that last vaquita dies, 14% of the biological diversity of the cetacean family Phocoenidae is gone... lost forever. There are no vaquitas in captivity to replenish the species once the habitat is protected. There are no genetics labs waiting to provide a real-world ‘Jurassic Park’ and bring the vaquita back to life from its genetic material.

When that last vaquita dies, that is the end. An entire species - and one that is part of perhaps the most-beloved groups of animals on the planet, the cetaceans - has disappeared forever. It cannot be brought back. There is no chance to correct our colossal error. This product of millions of years of evolution will have vanished from the face of the earth. And it will have happened because we were not willing to make the changes that were needed to save it. We know how to save the vaquita. It is simply a matter of moving one specific kind of fishing net out of a very tiny corner of the world. It will not be easy, but it can be done. It is simply a matter of funds (are you listening, Bill Gates and Carlos Slim?) and a matter of will by the Mexican



The vaquita population has been declining precipitously for the past several decades, but the rate of the decline has increased since about 2010, with the advent of new, illegal fishing for totoaba.

Government. Certainly a species that can send people to the moon and build vessels that can explore the crushing depths of world's oceanic trenches can do this! Can't we?

REFERENCE

CIRVA (International Committee for the Recovery of the Vaquita). 2014. Report of the Fifth Meeting of the International Committee for the Recovery of the Vaquita (CIRVA), Ensenada, Baja California, México, 8-10 July 2014. Unpublished report, 38+ pp.



Graphic design by Joe Dluogo.

Dr. Jefferson has been studying marine mammals since 1983, as an undergraduate. His main interests are the development of marine mammal identification aids and the systematics and population ecology of the more poorly-known species of dolphins and porpoises. Essentially all of his work for the past 31 years has been related to conservation and management of marine mammals threatened by human activities. Since 1995, he has been working in Southeast Asia, and has traveled widely in the region. His current primary research focuses on the conservation biology of Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) and Indo-Pacific finless porpoise (*Neophocaena phocaenoides*) populations in Hong Kong and surrounding waters. He is also working on other projects looking at the systematics and ecology of these animals throughout their ranges. In addition, he is involved in many other projects, including those on the conservation of the critically-endangered vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*) and on the taxonomy and population ecology of common dolphins (*Delphinus spp.*). With co-authors, Marc Webber and Robert Pitman, he published a comprehensive identification guide to the marine mammals of the world in 2008 (Academic Press). He has published over 120 books and papers on marine mammals, and recently published a paper revising the taxonomy of the humpback dolphins and describing a new species (*Sousa sahulensis*, the Australian humpback dolphin).



Message from the President

Dear Cetacean Supporters,

Join us for the 14th ACS International Conference, “Tuned In to Whales: Conservation, Research and Education,” November 7-9, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency at Newport Beach, California.

Register online at <https://2014acsconference.eventbrite.com/>
The Conference schedules and other important FAQs are on the site. Early bird registration ends September 19, 2014.

The conference will be dedicated to lifelong whale enthusiast, Alan Baldrige.

ACS invites you to join a unique gathering of scientists, policy makers, and conservationists from all over the world as we share current status and research, examining how we are all “tuned in” to whales.

The amazing Saturday and Sunday program includes experts in cetacean conservation, research and education. Sessions include Citizen Science, New Technologies, Anatomy, Ocean Sound, Behavioral Response Studies, a New Look at Conservation and a special session on Cetaceans in Captivity.

And don't forget the book signings, art show, silent auction, marine life photo contest, research poster contest, and the whale watching trip on Friday prior to conference time. On Sunday morning, students will have an opportunity to interface with scientists over breakfast.

The Welcome Reception on Friday night will highlight the beauty and biodiversity of Antarctica and the fascinating research being conducted there.

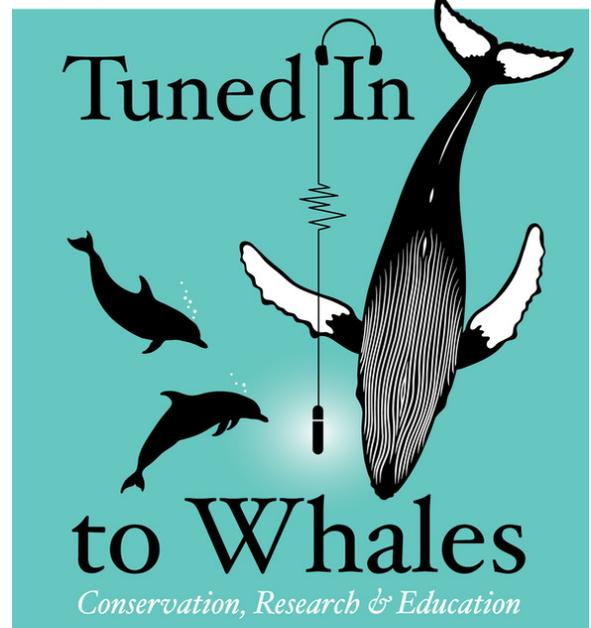
The Saturday night banquet will feature special guest speaker, Robert L. Pitman. Bob has worked with NOAA Fisheries for over 35 years, studying marine mammals in all the world's oceans. It is rumored that Bob has the most extensive list of cetacean sightings than anyone else.

Special rates are available at our hosting hotel, the Newport Beach Hyatt Regency. Use this direct link for our event: <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/AMCS14> or call Hyatt's central reservation line at (888) 421-1442, referencing the American Cetacean Society's room block.

Don't miss this exciting event! Register today! If you need assistance with registration or have any questions, please contact the ACS National Headquarters at acsoffice@acsonline.org or call me directly at (831)214-1016.

On another whale note: ACS San Francisco board member, Melanie Smith, is traveling to Slovenia to represent the American Cetacean Society at the International Whaling Commission meeting there. She will be blogging from the site: <http://www.bubblenetter.com/>

 AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY



14th International Conference
Newport Beach, California - November 7-9, 2014
Hyatt Regency Newport Beach

We are grateful to Melanie for attending the IWC meeting at her own expense. If you would like to contribute any amount towards her expenses, please visit acsonline.org to make a donation. Attendance at the IWC is invaluable for ACS and other non-governmental organizations to monitor the activities and international laws pertaining to cetaceans.

Lastly, it was disheartening to learn that the plight of the vaquita is more tenuous than previously thought. Dr. Tom Jefferson has provided us with an update on the vaquita in this issue of *Spyhopper*. There is not much time left for this species if the use of gillnets continues in its relatively small range. Please encourage Mexico to protect its native porpoise before it is too late.

Hope to see you in beautiful Newport Beach in November,



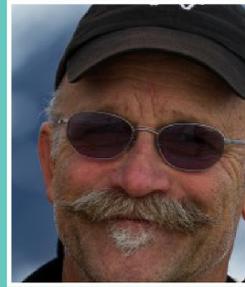
President, American Cetacean Society



Ken Balcomb (plenary speaker)
Center for Whale Research



Joy Reidenberg (plenary speaker)
Icahn School of Medicine, Mt Sinai



Bob Pitman (banquet keynote)
Southwest Fisheries Science Center



Ted Cheeseman (reception keynote)
Cheeseman's Ecology Safaris



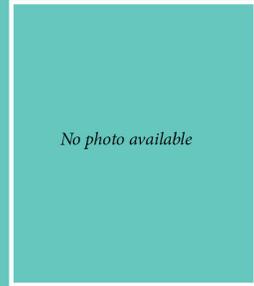
Judy St Leger
SeaWorld



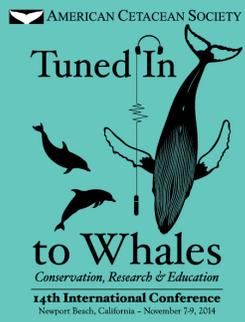
Thomas White
Loyola Maramount University



Naomi Rose
Animal Welfare Institute



Kelly Jaakkola
Dolphin Research Center



John Calambokidis
Cascadia Research Collective



Ari Friedlaender
Marine Mammal Institute, OSU



Greg Schorr
Cascadia Research Collective



Ted Cranford
San Diego State University



Michael Moore
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute



Chris Parsons
George Mason University



Lisa Ballance
Southwest Fisheries Science Center



Marc Webber
Golden Gate Cetacean Research



Bill Keener
Golden Gate Cetacean Research



Alisa Schulman-Janiger
ACS-Los Angeles Chapter



Jeremy Goldbogen
Hopkins Marine Station, Stanford U.

SF Bay Member Will Represent ACS at IWC

I feel incredibly honored to be selected to represent the American Cetacean Society at the International Whaling Commission (IWC) conference this year. Upon accepting this opportunity, I began recounting my experiences and development since my time with ACS. Last spring, I had the privilege of completing an internship with Lynette Kofinow, president of the ACS SF Bay Area Chapter. The main focus of the internship was educational outreach and development of presentations and activities to bring into the Bay area schools.

After one year, it has been amazing to see the snowballing of requests from schools and camps inviting us to teach their students about whales and conservation. While I am currently serving as vice president for the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, my role and heart is still in educational outreach and delivering school presentations. Realizing one of the best ways to affect positive change is through education and public awareness, I couldn't be more excited to attend the IWC meeting on behalf of ACS with the responsibility to disseminate critical information that will shape whale conservation over the coming years.

I will be journaling the accounts of each day's events online in order to make the conference available to the public and give ACS members an inside account. With the recent ruling from the ICJ against Japan and Iceland's increase in whaling activity, this year's meeting will be a crucial moment for cetacean conservation worldwide. Given ACS's tireless effort to promote conservation of whales, our presence at the IWC increases the solidarity of the anti-whaling NGOs.

Melanie Smith
Vice President SF Bay ACS Chapter

Help support ACS in its ongoing effort to **stop commercial whaling** by bringing a representative to the IWC!

ACS is grateful to Melanie for attending the IWC meeting in Slovenia at her own expense. If you would like to help her by contributing any amount towards her expenses, please visit www.acsonline.org to make a donation. Attendance at the IWC is invaluable to ACS so that we can closely monitor the activities and international laws relating to cetaceans and keep you informed!

SharkPulse: Seeking Citizen Scientists' Input for Exciting Shark Research!

by Cheryl Butner, Hopkins Marine Station

Have you ever seen a shark while out whale watching, fishing, boating, surfing, diving, or at the beach? Now YOU can participate in important shark research by submitting your shark photos to a new project called SharkPulse, from Hopkins Marine Station of Stanford University! SharkPulse's vision is to build a global observer network created by scientists, professionals and the general public, where anybody can contribute in taking the pulse of global shark population.



It's easy! SharkPulse is a smartphone application developed to involve citizen scientists in monitoring shark populations around the world. The app can be downloaded from the Apple Store and Google Play stores and allows users to report shark sightings to the Shark Baseline Project. You can also submit your pictures via our website, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, and Panoramio. To use your favorite social media sites to submit photos, please use the hashtag #SharkPulse so we can retrieve the information from the web. We will even accept past shark sightings as well. Send in your photos today!

The Shark Baseline Project #sharkPulse

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/sharkbaselines>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/sharkbaselines>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/sharkbaselines>

Website: http://baseline.stanford.edu/?page_id=802

E-mail: sharkbaselines@gmail.com

Chapters in Action

Lynette Koftinow, San Francisco Bay

It has been a very busy time for our chapter and we want to share all the exciting news with you!

We are in the midst of creating our Naturalist Program to begin Tuesday, September 16th. It will run for 6 weeks with certification upon completion. To learn more about our naturalist program and sign up go to our website: www.acs-sfbay.org. Look under Education - Naturalist program.

We are so proud and excited! Melanie Smith, our vice president, has been chosen by ACS National to go to the IWC conference in September! Melanie began as an intern in 2013 working her way up as our Education board member to current VP. Melanie has done a fabulous job over this time in creating educational tools, exercises, and classes. She did a fantastic job teaching class sessions at Ocean School (Pacifica), Brewer Island School (Foster City), and a Veterinary Camp (Walnut Creek) this spring. Her classes ranged in age from 3rd-4th graders to 7th-9th graders. The students were fabulous and so well-prepared for her classes. She is currently working with Lisa Gentile on the Naturalist program class curriculum.



Melanie Smith will represent ACS at the IWC conference this year.

We are honored to have Lisa Gentile as our new Education board member. She is heading the creation of our new Naturalist program and doing a magnificent job! She exemplifies our ACS beliefs of caring about our oceans and their inhabitants and brings the enthusiasm of sharing our knowledge and what we can do to others. Welcome aboard Lisa!

Like humpback whales, Lisa loves anchovies. But more relevant to her work with SF Bay ACS is her background in research, education, organizational development, and strategy. Formerly, she was the education director for Spirit of the Sea, senior crew for the Pegasus Project, and a performance improvement analyst at UC Berkeley. She studied at UC San Diego Revelle (experimental psychology), CSU East Bay (education), and Fielding Graduate University (evidence-based coaching).



Lisa Gentile is our new Education board member.

This summer she is completing her Performance and Learning Professional certification through the Association for Talent Development. She owns Moxie Mavericks LLC, a performance coaching practice.

Citizen School Ocean/Cetacean Class:

We have been very happy to have our ACS education in the Citizen School in Redwood City last spring. The 10 week curriculum course was so well-received that four of the other Citizen schools (two in Oakland and two in San Jose) want to incorporate our curriculum in their schools. We are actively looking for teacher's aids to assist the main teachers of these schools. If you are in the area and would like to work with us please let us know. Contact: Lynette R. Koftinow: acs.sfbay@gmail.com

Please join SF Bay American Cetacean Society and Oceanic Society for our Annual Farallon Islands Whale Watching Trips August 24th and September 14th! Oceanic Society is being gracious in giving our SF Bay ACS chapter members a DISCOUNT! Tickets are \$110 per person and a donation goes toward our 2014 Student Research Grant Fund! You MUST CALL or E-MAIL the office to receive this discount and tell them you are a SF Bay ACS member. You CANNOT get the discount online. To sign up call or e-mail: Donna Redstone of Oceanic Society @ (415) 256-9604 redstone@oceanicsociety.org

Our June and July presentations were given by our 2013 Research Grant awardees.

- June 24th: Laura Duffy “Physical-Biological Interactions of Harbor Porpoise Habitat in San Francisco Bay.”
- July 29th: Angela Szesciorka: “The Role of Dive and Foraging Behaviors in Ship Strikes.” The audience was enthralled by and learned so much from their new research.

If you are in the area please join us for our upcoming presentations:

- August 26th: Todd Steiner: “Cocos Island National Park, Costa Rica: An Underwater Serengetti “
- September 30th: Mary Jane Schramm: “Take the plunge into the underwater world beyond the Golden Gate into the Gulf of the Farallones”
- October 28th: Sarah Allen: “New Science on California Orcas”

Special events: Stop by and say hello at our educational table!

- Wildlife Conservation Expo 2014 - October 11th: 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Mission Bay Conference Center, 1675 Owens St., SF, CA
- Discovery Days at AT&T Park Bay Area Science Festival: November 1st: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

We began our Harbor Porpoise Volunteer Research Project at the end of December 2013, conducted in collaboration with San Francisco State University and Golden Gate Cetacean Research organization. We are looking for Volunteers to participate in this exciting volunteer Harbor Porpoise research study. For further information please contact: Lynette R. Kofinow @ acs.sfbay@gmail.com

We are putting a call out for board members, volunteers, and interns to join our active chapter! You have an opportunity to become a board member, volunteer, or intern with us. We have a variety of positions available that require as little as two hours of your time a month. To find out more about becoming a board

member or volunteering, please contact Lynette R. Kofinow @ acs.sfbay@gmail.com. Look forward to working with you!

For our schedule of inspiring monthly presentations, special events, SF Bay ACS Student Chapters, School projects and Classes please visit our website: www.acs-sfbay.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/sfacs.

Our new class at the Citizen School in Redwood City is going fantastically. It is a 10-week semester with a WOW! (think “science fair”) at the end so the students can show off what they’ve learned to family, friends, community, and Citizen Schools employees/volunteers. We are hoping to expand our class to the five other Citizen Schools after this semester is over. We feel so fortunate to have them teaching the children about cetaceans and the ocean environment.

We had a great time April 30 at Sir Frances Drake High School for their Earth Day event. It was very inspiring to see teachers that inspire their students regarding the ocean and environment by doing everything from beach cleanups to showing the film “Blackfish.” We look forward to giving presentations and classes over the next couple months at Ocean Shore School (Pacifica), Sir Frances Drake High School (San Anselmo), Brewer High School (Foster City), Tamalpais High School (Mill Valley), Camp ARF (Vet Science Camp - Walnut Creek), and in the fall Santa Clara School. If you are a teacher or student that would like to partner with us on Educational Projects or creating a SF Bay ACS Ocean Club please notify us. We would love to work with you!

Our Harbor Porpoise Research Project, conducted in collaboration with San Francisco State University and Golden Gate Cetacean Research organization, is in development and going well. We are looking for additional volunteers to participate with us on this project. It is a very exciting project and a fabulous opportunity to work with us and the scientists. For further information please contact: Lynette Kofinow: lklifeart@sbcglobal.net.

We are putting a call out for board members, volunteers, and interns to join our active chapter! You have an opportunity to become a board member, volunteer, or intern with us. We have a variety of positions available that require as little as two hours of your time a month. To find out more about becoming a board member or volunteering, please contact Lynette R. Kofinow at acs.sfbay@gmail.com. Look forward to working with you!

For our inspiring monthly presentations, events, SF Bay ACS Student Chapters and school projects, and updates on issues please visit our website: www.acs-sfbay.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/sfacs.

Chapters, cont.

Mike Makofske, Orange County

The summer quarter was a busy one for ACS-OC as we prepare for the 14th International ACS Conference, being held right in our backyard in Newport Beach, November 7-9, 2014.

Members of the Orange County Chapter have been coming forward to offer their help with the conference, and all are excited, happy, and looking forward to seeing everyone!

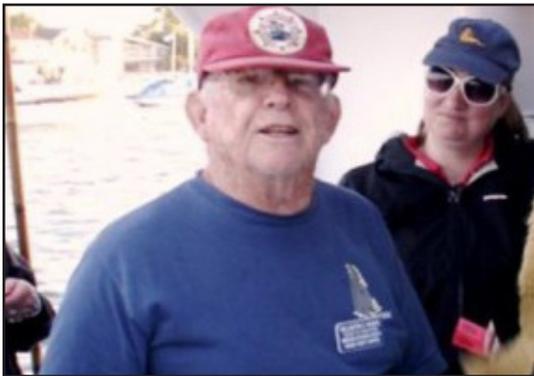
In other news, we have a large class of ACS-OC Naturalists signed up for our Fall 2014 class, starting in August and graduating in December, just in time for gray whale season. Credit goes to our Naturalist Instructor, Desi Green, for her excellent and tireless work putting together and running the classes the past five years.



Maui?? Alaska?? No – Dana Point! Photo by ACS-OC Naturalist Martee Shabsin, taken July 25 on a trip with Capt. Dave's Dolphin Safari.

August also saw us hosting two special events – an August 23 fundraising whale-watch trip with Capt. Dave's Dolphin Safari of Dana Point, and a special August 28 monthly meeting at which we screened the documentary *Blackfish*, followed by a Q&A with Dean Gomersall, Animal Care Supervisor at the Pacific Marine Mammal Center in Laguna Beach. Dean is one of the former Sea World employees featured in the film, and we greatly appreciated his insights on the hot subject of cetacean captivity. It was one of our best-attended and most informative meetings ever.

Our thanks go out to our May and June speakers as well: Sea Turtle Expert Nathan Robinson, who spoke about his work with leatherback turtles in Costa Rica, and our own Dr. Irene Gilgoff, who gave a fascinating talk on the challenges cetaceans face with human-caused ocean noise, with a special focus on our own Southern California coastal and island waters.



The ACS National Board thanks Wellington Rogers for his many years of service as a Board member and as president of the OC chapter.

On September 25, we'll welcome Robb Mead, an activist with several Southern California conservation groups. Robb is a very popular and engaging speaker, and one of his topics will be the continuing efforts to protect the harbor seal rookery in La Jolla.

A bit of organizational news – in August, our long-time President, Wellington Rogers, decided to step down from the presidency, and the OC Board elected Mike Makofske to succeed him. Wellington, the heart and soul of the OC chapter for many years, will remain on the Board as VP, and we look forward to his continued guidance.

Also at the August meeting, we elected Nicole (Nicki) Barbour as a full member of the Board. Nicki has done a great job as head of our Student Group at Orange Coast College for the past year and a half, and we look forward to her energy and intelligence working with us on the OC Board.

Richard Ternullo, Monterey Bay

Filling the house during the monthly meetings of the Monterey Bay chapter has been typical over the last several months. Highlights include Dr. Steve Palumbi, Director of Hopkins Marine Station, introducing his new book, *The Extreme Life of the Sea*. Dr. Karin Forney of NOAA presented a fascinating talk entitled: “Where’s Waldo? Modeling cetacean distributions in dynamic habitats to reduce anthropogenic impacts.” Whale researcher, extreme naturalist and photographer Jodi Frediani engaged the audience with her theories about the abundance of whales and food sources in Monterey Bay with a talk entitled, “Anomaly, anachronism or wave of the future?”

A very successful whalewatching fundraiser was held on June 28, taking advantage of the species abundance in Monterey Bay.

World Vaquita Day was celebrated in Monterey on July 12, with a booth and distribution of information. Another tabling event to promote ACS Monterey Bay and Viva Vaquita was held at the West End Celebration in Sand City in August.

Research grants were awarded to Mario Pardo of Mexico for his proposal, “Using a quadcopter drone for studying Marine Mammal ecology” and to Geraldine Busquets Vass for “Foraging Ecology of the Blue Whale in the N.E. Pacific.”



World Vaquita Day with ACS President Diane Glim, ACS Monterey Bay President Richard Ternullo, and ACS National Treasurer Debra Ternullo.



Lunge-feeding humpback whales captured by Jodi Frediani and presented during her talk about the Year of Abundance.

Sabena Siddiqui, Student Coalition

As students are busy traveling, studying, interning, and working throughout the summer, the student coalition is preparing for the recruitment rush when classes begin in the fall.

We invite you to consider starting your own student coalition group or to recommend any talented students you think can lead! Leading your own ACS-SC group can be very rewarding and fun. ACS-SC groups have hosted guest speakers, screened numerous documentaries, hosted fundraisers, participated in beach clean ups and research, and have had social events such as marine themed parties, and attended campus events. In a time where activism is characterized by extreme rhetoric that is often counterproductive, we hope to use strategic, science and reason based action to effectively protect cetaceans and their habitats. For more information regarding our campaigns and activities please find us on facebook and check out our website. If you are interested and would like assistance in starting your own group, e-mail us: acssc.national@gmail.com

Chapters, cont.

Joy Primrose, Oregon

The ACS Oregon Chapter has had a very busy summer. A special thank you to all our volunteers – you made our events a success!

We hosted a table for World Oceans Day on June 7, 2014 at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. We had information and activities on cetaceans and ACS. On June 18 we participated in a Special Guest Display Day at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. We had a whale trivia game, bio-facts and posters, and discussed responsible whale watching with visitors. We will be participating in another Special Guest Display Day on August 20th.

We hosted one of the 24 venues for International Save the Vaquita Day on July 12 to bring attention to the plight of the endangered vaquita porpoise. Almost all of our visitors had never heard of the vaquita so it was a very educational outreach program. We provided information sheets, coloring books and Viva Vaquita stickers to visitors. Children and teachers were encouraged to have a classroom project on the vaquita during the upcoming school year.

Our beach clean-up, in partnership with the Surfrider Foundation, was held at Nye Beach in Newport on July 19th. We found firework debris, broken glass, rusty nails, metal bedsprings as well as the usual litter, cans and bottles, cigarette butts, and plastics. Sage DeLuna, Beach Cleanup Coordinator for the Surfrider Foundation, showed us how to use colanders to easily pick up cigarette butts, micro plastics and other small marine debris. Every time you visit a watershed or beach bring a bag to collect garbage and encourage others to do the same.

It was our Third Annual Summer Whale Watch Weekend July 26 & 27. Wonderful visitors and gray whales showed up for our free, eco-friendly shore-based whale watch at Boiler Bay State Park.

The ACS Oregon Chapter was an exhibitor at the Blue on Tour Ocean Film Festival held in Newport, OR on August 1 & 2. The film festival was a collection of amazing marine-themed cinematography along with discussion panels. We provided a table with information and education on cetaceans.

This year we had a summer potluck picnic and shore based whale watch at Rocky Creek State Park in Depoe Bay on August 10. What could be better – we had good food, great company and watched whales while we ate! Many visitors from around our country and foreign countries were at the park, so we took the opportunity to share about the whales. One little boy was an excellent whale spotter and very enthusiastic, perhaps a future cetacean researcher in the making.

This fall our speaker series meetings will resume at the Newport Public Library, details to come!



Summer Whale Watch Weekend July 26 & 27 was third annual eco-friendly shore-based whale watch at Boiler Bay State Park.

Sandy Rosenberg, San Diego

The San Diego Chapter had several fascinating speakers over the last three months. Dr. Ana Sirovic of Scripps Institution of Oceanography gave a talk titled “Can You Hear Me Now? Coping with an Increasingly Noisy Ocean.” Representing Viva Vaquita, Dr. Thomas Jefferson spoke on “The Vaquita: The World’s Most Endangered Marine Mammal Species.” Dr. R.H. DeFran, Director of the Cetacean Research Laboratory, spoke about “The Itinerant Life and Times of California Bottlenose Dolphins” showing the wide range of what were previously thought to be local populations.

Our Chapter had a strong presence at the International Save The Vaquita Day. Booths were set up at four locations. Over 400 people heard our message. Stickers and coloring books were both popular take-aways. The booth at the San Diego Natural History Museum was particularly successful with many fun activities for children.

Few in number – high in enthusiasm – a small group of ACS-San Diego Chapter members enjoyed a beautiful morning on board San Diego Whale Watch’s Privateer. Six blue whales were observed, including a cow/calf pair. San Diego Whale Watch generously allowed local Chapter members to go on this cruise for half the normal price, and is donating a portion of the cost of their tickets back to the Chapter.

July saw a change in leadership. Due to a move out of the area, Sandy Rosenberg stepped down as President of the Chapter. Former Vice President Diane Cullins has taken on the role of Acting President. Diane has been responsible for the success of our speaker program and has introduced many new activities for the Chapter. We are sure everyone will give Diane their support. New elections are being scheduled.



Thank you, Sandy, and good luck in your new pursuits!

Diane Alps, Los Angeles

Here are a few pictures from National’s whalewatching trip held on August 16 on the Condor Express out of Santa Barbara. Attendees were rewarded with encounters with humpback whales, Risso’s dolphins, and a large haul-out of elephant seals as they approached the Channel Islands. Photos by Diane Alps.



Chapters, cont.

A Warm Aloha to ACS's Newest Student Coalition: University of Hawai'i at Manoa

President: Brijonnay Madrigal

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acsuhmanoa>

The UH Mānoa ACSSC went to elementary school classrooms and gave ocean conservation presentations. ACS lead ocean crafts to engage students and promote awareness. Our members really had fun getting involved with the kids so we plan on continuing this form of outreach and we hope to include elementary school students in beach clean-ups at the local beaches.

We conducted a beach clean-up at Ala Moana Park and collected 6 garbage bags of trash! We created a new campaign that we plan to implement next semester in full force that is focused on beach clean-ups. Since we have so many beaches in Hawai'i, we really want to take advantage of this and really make a difference in our community by staying committed to making the beaches of Hawai'i cleaner to contribute to bettering ocean health and ultimately cetacean conservation.

In February, ACSSC UH Mānoa members participated in the 2014 Ocean Count held through the NOAA Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. We contributed to the annual shore based monitoring census by counting humpback whales that migrate to Hawai'i from January-March. Our members were able to learn about humpback whale behavior, contribute to ongoing humpback whale data collection, and promote awareness about humpback whales to ensure their health in the future. Some members were excited to see humpback whales in the wild for the first time!

A Blackfish movie night was held to promote awareness of the Sea World industry to our students, some of whom did not know the issue very well or had never seen the movie. The movie was followed by a discussion..

Graduate students from the UH Mānoa Marine Mammal Research Program came in to speak to our members about their current research projects in a student panel forum. Members were also able to gain advice about entering graduate school in the marine mammal field. Our keynote speaker for the night was Kristi West from the Hawai'i Pacific University Marine Mammal Stranding Program. ACS members had the opportunity to attend a dolphin necropsy at the Hawai'i Pacific University through the Marine Mammal Stranding Program a week after the presentation.





Quest for Whales

**Journey to
Antarctica -
March 8-26,
2016**



A unique collaboration between Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris and the American Cetacean Society:

Longtime pioneer of Antarctic expeditions Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is collaborating with the ACS to offer this in-depth exploration of the marine mammals and landscapes of the Antarctic Peninsula. Expedition leader Ted Cheeseman and whale biologist Ari Friedlaender conceived this expedition focused on marine mammal encounters while sharing science, education and exploration of one of the most whale-rich stretches of water in the world. We will travel at peak season alongside marine biologists including ACS scientists for incredible photography, whale watching from the ship and Zodiacs, and landings at the best wildlife and landscape sites in the Antarctic. Join this grand departure from the norm of Antarctic cruises, benefitting from the depth expected from a Cheesemans' Ecology expedition. Ice permitting, our itinerary will include crossing the Antarctic Circle south to Margarite Bay. A portion of the proceeds from this trip will benefit the American Cetacean Society. For more information go to http://www.cheesemans.com/antarctica_wh_mar16.html

A Legacy of Conservation

The legacy of ACS will be the pivotal role it has played for over 40 years in protecting the world's "ambassadors of the seas." Part of your legacy can be in the support you provide toward this cause. You don't need to be wealthy to make a gift that will have an impact on the future of whales, dolphins, and porpoises and their habitats. A charitable bequest to ACS in your will or living trust will serve as a powerful testimony to your conviction that this work is important to the health and biodiversity of our marine ecosystem.

I hope you'll join me in including ACS in your estate planning. I can't think of a better gift for our children and grandchildren.

Diane Glim

All information about charitable bequests is held in the strictest confidence.

Your Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Street Address: _____ Phone: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please send more information about....

How IRAs can be used for charitable gifts

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Charitable lead and remainder trusts

Remembering ACS in my will

*The American Cetacean Society
welcomes gifts of stocks and
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financial planner.*

Please indicate if you have already made bequest arrangements to ACS:

I have established a charitable bequest to the American Cetacean Society. Please add my (our) name(s) to the Legacy of Conservation Display at ACS Headquarters and in the Spyhopper publications.

Thank you for supporting ACS and our mission.

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AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY 

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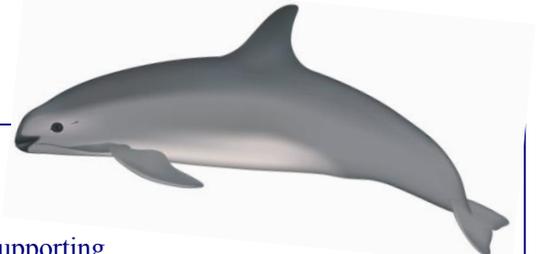
Photo ©Michael Ho, <http://MichaelDanielHo.com>

The American Cetacean Society (ACS) protects whales, dolphins, porpoises, and their habitats through public education, research grants, and conservation actions. Founded in 1967, ACS was the first whale conservation organization in the world.

ACS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with national headquarters based in San Pedro, California. We have active chapters in Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange County, Monterey, San Francisco, Puget Sound, and Oregon, and a Student Coalition based in Bloomington, IN. We also have new chapters forming in New England and Florida. Members live throughout the United States and in more than a dozen countries.

Join us in our mission, and help us spread the word! You will find many opportunities for education and involvement as an ACS member. **You can join/renew or make a donation** by using the form below, or go to www.acsonline.org and enroll or donate using PayPal. We hope to see you on the active rolls, and would love to have you share in our upcoming *Whalewatcher* journals and online *Spyhopper* newsletters.

Thank you,
Your friends at ACS



Please join, renew, and/or donate!

Select your one-year membership category:

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If you have questions, please call our national office at 310-548-6279 or e-mail acsoffice@acsonline.org



AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY

We Can't Do it Without You!

The American Cetacean Society continues to grow and make an increasingly meaningful impact on awareness, education, and protection of whales, dolphins, and porpoises and their habitats. This is due in large part to your support, personal dedication, and willingness to carry our message out to your own contacts and communities.

We hope that you will consider making a donation during this important fundraiser for ACS - our Annual Appeal to members and supporters. Thank you so much for your dedication to the American Cetacean Society - together, we can make a difference!

Diane Glim

Diane Glim
ACS Board President

*Help ACS protect whales, dolphins, porpoises
and their habitats through public education, research
grants, and conservation actions.*

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