

ALOHA FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS! HERE IS OUR ANNUAL NEWSLETTER TO SHARE OUR WORK AND THANK THE MANY PEOPLE WHO HELP MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE.

RESEARCH

This year was a windy one. Nevertheless, HMMC conducted its annual winter field season in February and March 2013. During 13 boat days, we identified 155 humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*). We also began a new collaboration with researcher Colleen Bryan of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Colleen accompanied us in the field to collect biopsy samples of whales and provided equipment necessary for NIST protocols for sample preservation and archiving. The samples will be processed by NIST to determine the range of variability in trace element levels in humpback whale blubber, and investigate linkages with the apparent health of the whales, based on thorough photography of the each individual whale.



HUMPBAC WHALE WITH BUMPY SKIN AND BIOPSY DART

We encountered spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*) three times this season, and shared the resulting individual identification photos with the Pacific Islands Photo-Identification Network (PIPIN, www.pipin.org/community). We also shared information with Julian Tyne of the SAPPHIRE Project in South Kona.

We also completed our 11th consecutive season of shore-based marine mammal scans from our “Old Ruins” site near Kawaihae. In 2013, we documented many more whales than we did in 2012, and comparatively large numbers of calves. We are still working on summarizing over 10 years of scan data to identify trends in the relative distribution and abundance of whales.



THE DORSAL FIN
MARKING ON EACH
BLACKTIP REEF SHARK IS
UNIQUE

Winter scans for blacktip reef sharks in Pelekane Bay, begun in 2007, continued at Pu‘ukohola Heiau National Historic Site. These days we don’t conduct year-round scans, due to other demands on our time, but focus instead on the winter months in which the shark numbers are highest. Long-time HMMC volunteer Kim New spent a month in the field with HMMC, helping out with whale fieldwork and helping us catch up the shark

photo-ID data. She determined that we have identified at least 18 different individual sharks since 2007. In 2012, HMMC researchers and Park staff recorded several more sightings of a species of larger gray shark (possibly sandbar, Galapagos or blacktip) in Pelekane Bay in the fall and early winter. Species identification has proven to be difficult with the available images and video.

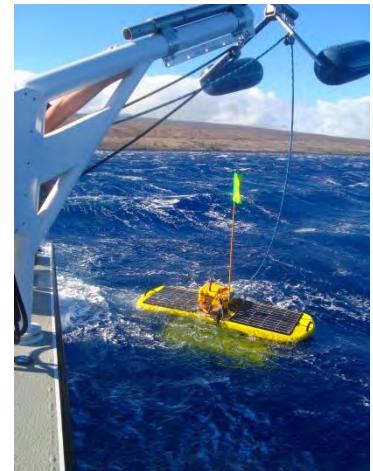


On a sad note, HMMC lost our long-time friend and colleague Mike Hoffhines to lung cancer in May 2013. He will be greatly missed for his insights and generous spirit, not to mention the Apple tech support. Please take a moment to view our web [slide show tribute to Mike](#). We very much appreciate all of you who made a donation to HMMC in honor of Mike.

YIN AND CHRIS ENJOY ONE OF MANY GOOD TIMES WITH MIKE ON THE MALOLO. IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING, NO, GINGER SNAPS IS NOT OUR SPONSOR (BUT MAYBE THEY SHOULD BE).

EDUCATION

Our annual March stint with Cornell University's interdisciplinary Ocean Resources and Ecosystems Program took an exciting turn this year. In collaboration with Jupiter Research Foundation, and with visiting scientist Dean Hawthorne from Cornell's Bioacoustics Research Program, this year's focus was on combining theodolite tracking with acoustic tracking using [Wave Gliders](#). Board member, Adam Frankel wasn't able to be in the field this year, so board members Chris Gabriele and Suzanne Yin provided classes on humpback whale biology and field techniques to the Cornell students. They also led the student field team to visually track a singing whale that Dean could hear via the Wave Gliders, for over an hour.



JUPITER RESEARCH DEPLOYS A WAVE GLIDER TO TRACK SINGING WHALES IN WINDY SEAS OFF THE KOHALA COAST

This summer, with some coaching from Adam as well as from Beth Goodwin of Jupiter Research Foundation, two of the students (Katherine Kirk and Michael Walsh) worked up the data as their independent study project for the class. Adam's talk about our work generated much interest at the 20th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals in Dunedin, New Zealand in December 2013. Way to go Kathleen, Michael and Adam! We look forward to continuing this collaboration in 2014.



In 2013, HMMC shared our work in Hawai'i with various audiences. Chris gave a talk to board member Susan Rickard's 10th grade Animal Behavior class at Parker School in Waimea; the 1st grade class also tagged along. In January - March, we talked with visitors at several of the Sanctuary-sponsored whale spotting sessions at Pu'ukohola Heiau National Historic Site.

SUPPORTING HMMC

After the success of the 2012 whale-tail educational art poster, in 2013 we produced note cards. These boxed cards are blank inside and showcase nine unique and beautiful humpback whales on the cover, whose histories are described on our web site. For 2014, we added a QR code to the card for smart-phone users to go directly to the whale history page.

Cards and/or posters are sold at 15 local businesses (*Mahalo for your support!*)

BAMBOO GALLERY
BASICALLY BOOKS
BIG ISLAND DIVERS
HAWAII OCEAN SPORTS
HAWAII PACIFIC PARKS
HEALTHWAYS II WAIMEA
KOHALA DIVERS
ISLAND NATURALS PAHOA
ISLAND NATURALS HILO
ISLAND NATURALS KONA
PACIFIC RIM FISHING SUPPLIES
AT HONOKOHAU HARBOR
WAIMEA GENERAL STORE
WITHOUT BOUNDARIES



Box of 6 Notecards
HMMC's new humpback "Whale Tale" note card tells the stories of nine distinct individuals that are recognized by their unique tail fluke markings.

\$ 20.00

Add to cart



Fluke Poster
56 different images of 53 different whales. Find the three matching whales!

Click [here](#) to get the answers

\$ 20.00

Add to cart

Cards and posters are available year round, through our [HMMC online store](#) where you can also find a link to the histories of the card whales and [the answers to the matching puzzle on the poster](#). All profits go directly to our whale research, conservation and education efforts, so please support us by enjoying unique cards and posters in your home - they make great gifts too. We appreciate your support!

Direct donations to support HMMC can be made online (<http://www.hmmc.org/Contribute/Contribute.html>) or by contacting us info@hmmc.org



Hawai'i Island folks, you can take your HI-5 containers to any of [Business Services Hawai'i's](#) operated Redemption Centers (at community transfer stations) and tell them you want to donate to HMMC. Mahalo!

HEARTFELT THANKS

“MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS!”



EACH YEAR SINCE 2003, WE'VE ENJOYED SPENDING FIELD TIME WITH HOLLY SARGEANT-GREEN (LEFT).



MAHALO TO KIM NEW (ABOVE), WHO CAME ALL THE WAY FROM MINNESOTA TO SPEND FEBRUARY HELPING US OUT.

THANKS TO NOA AND MELE RICKARDS (RIGHT) FOR HELPING AND PLAYING AT SHORE STATION.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING A PRODUCTIVE COLLABORATION WITH COLLEEN BRYAN FROM NIST (LEFT) TO UNDERSTAND CONTAMINANTS LEVELS IN WHALE BLUBBER

THANKS TO ROBYN SMITH (MIDDLE) FOR FIELD ASSISTANCE AND DONATING AN UNDERWATER CAMERA

DESRAY REEB (RIGHT) GOT US OUT OF A JAM AND MADE HMMC HISTORY BY TAKING NOTES FOR SHORE SCANS BY CELL PHONE IN VIRGINIA.



WE EXTEND A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SURFER'S JOURNAL, WHICH CHOSE HMMC AS THEIR "ONE PERCENT FOR THE PLANET" RECIPIENT IN 2013. WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION AND THE RECOGNITION OF OUR EFFORTS.

THANK YOU TO OUR GROWING LIST OF SUPPORTERS:

DEAN HAWTHORNE AND CORNELL BIOACOUSTICS RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO LISTEN TO LIVE WHALE SONG AT SHORE STATION FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS * BETH GOODWIN AND MURRAY TAYLOR AT JUPITER RESEARCH FOR MAKING WAVE GLIDERS AVAILABLE FOR THE WHALE SONG STUDY * CHUCK GREENE FOR INTRODUCING US TO ANOTHER GREAT CLASS OF CORNELL STUDENTS * ED LYMAN (NOAA SANCTUARIES) * JOE MOBLEY OF UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII * HONDA MOTOR CORPORATION OF AMERICA * KONA COAST MARINE * GABRIELA SERRA-VALENTE AND SUSAN CHIVERS (NOAA SOUTHWEST FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER) * ALL OF OUR POSTER AND NOTE CARD VENDORS * ALOHA AND BEST WISHES TO JUSTIN VIEZBICKE (NOAA SANCTUARIES) ON YOUR NEW ADVENTURES IN CALIFORNIA.

CETACEAN PHOTOS IN THIS NEWSLETTER WERE TAKEN UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PERMITS ISSUED BY THE NOAA FISHERIES.

