

ORCAWALE 2001: Weekly Report for 11/29/01 to 12/05/01

05 December 2001: Jim Carretta

After 16-18 foot swells yesterday, we're just happy to be working again. Sightings have been sparse in the southern end of the study area, maybe everyone's gone to the resorts in Mexico. Most interesting marine mammal sighting of the week was a dead balaenopterid which was attended by many birds (see Mike and Cornelia's report). We managed to bring the whale alongside the ship and proceeded to chew it up with the props. This loosened many pieces of tissue, which Laura deftly dipnetted. We recommend this 'blender method' on future carcasses, as this one seemed impervious to repeated biopsy strikes. Only two more days of effort until the end of ORCAWALE 2001!

Date	Time	Lat	Long	Trackline Miles	Avg Beauf
112901		No Effort			
		Beaufort 6-7			
113001	0707	N34:04.15	W122:36.85	97.2nmi	3.3
	1703	N32:28.84	W123:06.64		
120101	0710	N34:21.90	W124:09.67	76.3nmi	5.2
	1701	N32:52.78	W124:38.13		
120201	0712	N31:53.24	W123:17.64	89.6nmi	4.4
	1653	N30:18.09	W123:46.80		
120301	0658	N30:38.62	W124:15.75	24.5nmi	5.2
	1202	N30:28.11	W123:21.74		
120401		No Effort			
		Beaufort 7, 16-18' swells			
120501	0657	N31:52.04	W121:37.95	84.5nmi	4.9
	1521	N33:10.02	W121:13.54		

Code	Species	Tot#
13	striped dolphin	1
17	shortbeak common dolphin	3
44	Dall's porpoise	2
49	unidentified beaked whale	2
	TOTAL	8

Biopsy (Juan Carlos Salinas and Erin LaBrecque)

Species	# Samples This Week	Cumulative Total
<i>Balaenoptera sp.</i>	1	1
<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	0	12
<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	0	13
<i>Delphinus capensis</i>	0	5

<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	2	100
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	0	1
<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i>	0	3
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	0	5
<i>Lagenorhynchus obliquidens</i>	0	10
<i>Lissodelphis borealis</i>	0	31
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	0	15
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	0	4
<i>Phocoenoides dalli</i>	0	9
<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	0	10
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	0	10
<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	0	1
Grand Total	0	230

Photo-ID (Laura Morse and Annie Douglas)

None ;

Oceanography (Pierre Malan)

Day	#CTDs	#XBTs	#Bongos
29 Nov	0	5	1
30 Nov	1	4	0
01 Dec	1	4	1
02 Dec	1	4	1
03 Dec	1	4	1
04 Dec	0	5	0
05 Dec	0	5	0

General notes: heavy seas put a damper on our CTD/Bongo capabilities a few times this week.

Seabirds (Michael Force, Cornelia Oedekoven)

From the perspective of the final week of ORCAWALE 2001 we can confidently proclaim Leach's Storm-Petrel as the most widespread seabird detected on the survey. From Washington to southern California, hardly a day would pass without us seeing at least one of these very successful seabirds. Again this week, it was also the most abundant. Unlike last week, we were not threatened with overwhelming data collection. In fact, the greatest threat was hitting the deck comatose from boredom. This part of the study area, the far southwestern limit of the Southern California Bight, is remarkably depauperate. However, we found a few Mottled and Cook's Petrels, and Laysan Albatrosses have moved in for the winter. A dead unidentified large rorqual attracted an impressive 1200 Northern Fulmars, a few gulls and a single Wilson's Storm-Petrel. At 280 NM south-southwest of Point Conception, a female Greater Scaup was

definitely off course. The sea surface temperature was adequate for Red-tailed Tropicbirds (18-19C), and we found them here last month, but none this time. Perhaps this species is only a late summer to fall visitor to southern California. An "unofficial" grand total of 79 species, including lost and confused non-marine species, was recorded on this year's survey. One hundred and eight species were recorded during ORCAWALE 1996.