

EXPEDICIÓN INTERNACIONAL

Nov 7-20

VAQUITA MARINA 2015



CHIEF SCIENTISTS:

LORENZO ROJAS-BRACHO

BARBARA TAYLOR

VISUAL SURVEY

COORDINATOR:

ANNETTE HENRY

SCIENTISTS (A-Z):

LISA BALLANCE

JAY BARLOW

ANDREA BENDLIN

DAWN BREESE

SUSANNAH CALDERAN

JEFF MOORE

CORNELIAN OEDEKOVEN

PAULA OLSON

ROBERT PITMAN

JUAN CARLOS SALINAS

ADAM Ü

SUZANNE YIN

HONORARY VAQUITA

OBSERVER:

SECRETARY RAFAEL

PACCHIANO ALAMÁN

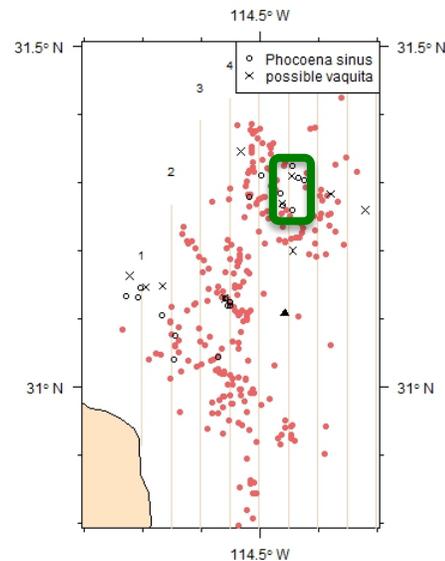


R/V OCEAN STARR
STABBERT
MARITIME

ESTIMATING ABUNDANCE OF MEXICO'S CRITICALLY ENDANGERED PORPOISE

We are filling remaining gaps in our survey trackline, but at a frustrating pace because of exceptional nearly continual winds, unlike the calm November of 2008. Sighting vaquitas requires calm waters and we've had but a few calm days in leg 2. The few days we did have, however, were very interesting.

On November 14 we ended the day with three vaquita sightings. All three sightings were within the green box below but other sightings in that box



A CLOSE UP VIEW OF JUST THE AREA WITH VAQUITA SIGHTINGS FROM 1993-2015. 2015 CONFIRMED VAQUITA (BLACK CIRCLES) AND POSSIBLE VAQUITA SIGHTINGS (BLACK X'S) ARE COMPARED TO SIGHTINGS FROM ALL PREVIOUS SURVEYS (PINK).

came from 2 other days. The remaining vaquitas are consistently found in only a few places. The pink dots are sightings from surveys in 1993, 1997 and 2008 and show that we are seeing fewer vaquitas in a smaller area.

The sightings came just before sunset when we finished official trackline effort. There were 6 vaquitas, including one group of 4. You can see a video of this group [here](#) (again thanks to Suzanne Yin and her iPhone through the 'big eyes' with Ernesto Vázquez as editor). Visiting reporters Sandra Dibble and Misael Virgen from the San Diego Union Tribune were on

hand to experience the excitement of seeing these rare animals. We were also pleased that our wonderful visitors, Lieutenant Damaso Lopez of the Mexican Navy and Nina Young from NOAA Fisheries International Office, were able to have this experience with us.

On November 17 we said goodbye to our two visitors and to Dr. Lisa Ballance (Director of the Marine Mammal and Turtle Division, Southwest Fisheries Science Center) and hello to Dr. Karin Forney (Lisa's observer replacement also from SWFSC), Ivonne Vomend (Mexican Navy) and Omar Vidal (Director of WWF-Mexico and long-time vaquita scientist).