

S U M M E R 2 0 1 2

seawatch

the Ocean Conservation Society newsletter
www.oceanconservation.org

One Minute Editorial

James Hansen says "Climate change is here... and worse than we thought"

"When I testified before the Senate in the hot summer of 1988, I warned of the kind of future that climate change would bring to us and our planet. I painted a grim picture of the consequences of steadily increasing temperatures, driven by mankind's use of fossil fuels. But I have a confession to make: I was too optimistic." This is the beginning of an article just published by James E. Hansen, Director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies. As this recognized expert explains, his projections about increasing global temperature have been proven true, but even his estimates couldn't explore how quickly that average rise would drive an increase in extreme weather. A new scientific study by Hansen and his colleagues now reveals a stunning increase in the frequency of extremely hot summers, with troubling ramifications not only for our future (and that of other species...) but also in the present. One important thing to understand is that this is not a climate model or a prediction, but actual observations of weather events and temperatures that have happened. There is virtually no other explanation except human induced climate change! There is little time to act and we must act NOW.

- Maddalena Bearzi, OCS President

OCS NEW RESEARCH VESSEL !



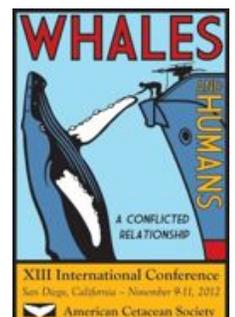
Her name is Mary's Triumph and she is a beautiful Santa Cruz 52 sailing boat with all amenities. In June, we moved from our Robalo powerboat to this new vessel, setting it up for on-the-water studies and training a few new research assistants. By the beginning of July, Mary's Triumph was ready to start work on marine mammals in Southern California waters. In addition to our regular monitoring studies, we are planning to take this new vessel offshore and down to the Baja Coast to expand our investigations on dolphins, whales and other marine mammals. We will be re-introducing our **Research Ride-Along program** so watch for details. We would like to thank the SAVE OUR COAST-MALIBU DOLPHIN WATCH Foundation for their support!

Save the Date!

**ACS Conference in San Diego, CA
November 9-11, 2012**

Whales and Humans: A Conflicted Relationship, this is the title of the 13th American Cetacean Society International Conference that will take place at the California

Hyatt Regency, in Mission Bay, California. For more information, please check the ACS website: <http://acsonline.org/education/conference/2012-conference/>



OCS Facebook Fan Corner

Almost 5,000 fans ! Once again, we would like to thank all our OCS Facebook friends for their useful comments and suggestions. Not yet a OCS FB friend...? Please go to the Ocean Conservation Society website and click on the Facebook logo, then click "like" next to the page title of OCS FB. It's a great way to stay informed about our marine mammal research in California, get current news on dolphins, whales and other magnificent ocean creatures and become more aware of problems facing our environment.



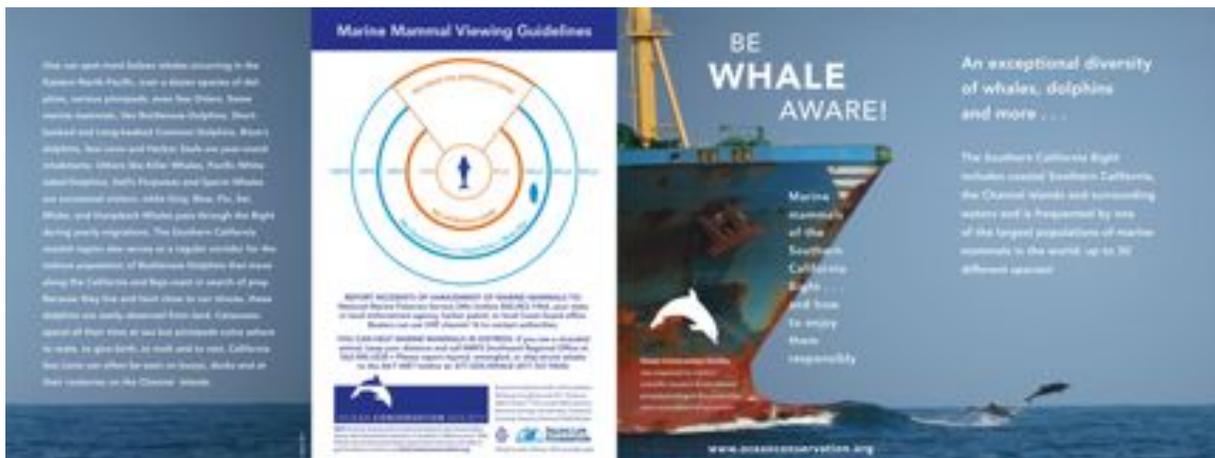
NEW OCS RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

A remarkable chance to see dolphins, whales and other marine life up close and learn about the real world of marine biology and oceanography in the field! OCS Ride-Along Programs offer unique and diverse opportunities to accompany our researchers and participate "hands-on" in actual marine mammal surveys while supporting the continuing OCS research. The Ride-Along programs are conducted under the Marine Mammal Viewing Guidelines and guests may simply observe or participate by aiding researchers in actual data collection which includes marine mammal behavior observation and counting, bioacoustic recording of dolphin vocalizations, prey sampling, surface video recording of dolphin behavior, etc. LADP staff will explain the methodology and significance of the research, conservation issues and marine ecology. All program fees are tax-deductible contributions and will be used entirely to help continue our studies. Programs are booked on a first come first served basis. For more information, scheduling and prices, please contact info@oceanconservation.org.

BE WHALE AWARE! The new, pocket-size OCS marine mammal brochure

Amazing whale sightings are occurring now just off Los Angeles. Endangered Blue whales, Sperm whales, and Humpback whales are frequenting our area in search of food and people are taking to the water to see them first-hand. Many people don't know that these whales are protected and that getting too close may cause harm to these magnificent animals. OCS has recently published a free, color pocket-sized brochure about which marine mammals are present in our waters. It also helps whale enthusiasts and boaters understand how to safely view whales at sea. Whales and dolphins are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and boaters and whale watchers need to pay careful attention when approaching whales. It's a violation of federal law to harass or harm them and penalties can include up to one-year imprisonment and fines of up to \$20,000.

OCS works to protect whales and dolphins by making people more aware of the problems and challenges that marine mammals face, many of which are a result of human impact on the ocean environment. Humans can choose to be respectful of other creatures and their habitats and by learning more about these remarkable creatures, we can all help assure their future and well-being. Brochures are free. For more info contact: info@oceanconservation.org



The OCS marine mammal brochure **BE WHALE AWARE!** is now available in many locations along the Southern California coast. This 100% recyclable and waterproof brochure has information about marine mammals off Southern California, whale watching guidelines, drawings of the most common species observed in the area and much more. You can also download a PDF of the brochure at: http://www.oceanconservation.org/research/publications_pdf/OCS_brochure.pdf?v=WPQ4OKCh-yQ

OCS Research

Things have changed (... for the better) since we got our new OCS research vessel! Aboard Mary's Triumph we have already been able to collect a large amount of data on different species of marine mammals, both in coastal and pelagic waters. Our monitoring inside and outside the coastal Marine Protected Areas of Santa Monica Bay is currently ongoing to determine the occurrence and behavior of whales and dolphins in these MPAs as well as the presence of potential "hotspots" in these areas and nearby locations. In addition to our "regular friends" the coastal bottlenose dolphins and the short- and long-beaked common dolphins, endangered blue, humpback and sperm whales are now present in the bay and we are recording their behavior as well the presence of other boats near these species. Among the unusual sightings of the last months, we had a brown pelican that decided to take a long ride on our boat and observe a school of common dolphins with us (see image on the previous page, right side OCS Facebook Fan Corner).



*A coastal bottlenose dolphin slowly surfaces near Santa Monica pier in the Santa Monica Bay, California
M. Bearzi©2012
NOAA permit #856-1835*

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR L.A. DOLPHIN PROJECT RESEARCH ASSISTANT **CELIA** WHO HAS JUST PUBLISHED A NEW PAPER ENTITLED "SHAPE ANALYSIS OF ODONTOCETE MANDIBLES: FUNCTIONAL AND EVOLUTIONARY IMPLICATIONS" (Journal of Morphology, 2012)

We need help! Want to get involved with OCS? We need volunteers to help us distribute our "Be Whale Aware" brochures in coastal communities from Morro Bay to San Diego. Let us know if you are available and we will happily put you to work. Please, email csaylan@oceanconservation.org for details.

Dolphin Confidential:
Confessions of A Field Biologist
Saturday, August 18, 2012
3:00 p.m.
Martin Luther King, Jr. Auditorium
601 Santa Monica Blvd.

Field marine biologist and author Maddalena Bearzi presents a multimedia program with highlights from her book *Dolphin Confidential* and slides of the metropolitan bottlenose dolphins of Santa Monica Bay. A book sale and signing will follow the author's presentation.




UPCOMING BOOK TALKS

Dr. Maddalena Bearzi, OCS President and Research Director, will be presenting her new book "Dolphin Confidential: Confessions of a Field Biologist" (Chicago University Press, 2012) both on the West and East coasts of United States.

For a list of upcoming talks and more information, please check:

<http://www.oceanconservation.org/education/courses.htm>

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