Welcome to yet another newsletter of the Wild Dolphin Project. As of 2009 we have now finished 25 years in the field! Amazingly we are still tracking some of the same individuals that we have known since 1985. Some of you will remember Stubby, Romeo, Big Gash, Little Gash, and Mugsy, who are still around. Little Gash is a grandmother, Romeo is a verified grandfather, and Mugsy continues to have offspring! So, that makes three generations of dolphins!

I am also pleased to let you know that after some difficult years after the hurricanes of 2004 and 2005 the dolphins have re-stabilized and are reproducing as normal. This year we had a great calf year, totaling 10 new youngsters. And although we have not yet found, or seen, any of our lost hurricane individuals, we continue to look. New bottlenose dolphins have moved into the area, and just this year new spotted dolphins. So, life goes on for the dolphins after all.

The Wild Dolphin Project is facing, like all non-profits these days, difficult financial times. Although we are used to being a lean, mean research machine, the recession has been more difficult than any other time in my 25 years running the project. I wanted to personally thank all of you for being ongoing loyal donors and members over the years as you continue to answer our call for help. We appreciate it!

And although this year we had hoped to have a large celebration for our 25-year mark, we are scaling down an event for the spring. So please check in with our website as we determine a date and event to celebrate with you, our members and friends, our long-term work in the Bahamas!

Squeaks and whistles,
Dr. Denise Herzing,
Founder and Research Director

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The First Days of a New Project...

This fall marked the beginning of a new project for WDP, work in Florida. The first step was to obtain a NMFS permit. Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, it is illegal to interact or approach marine mammals in US waters without a research permit. These types of regulations are vital to help protect marine mammals. After successfully obtaining a NMFS permit to research cetaceans in Palm Beach and Southern Martin Counties, we began our Florida Expansion Project. This permit allows us to approach cetacean groups, take photographs and collect data at the surface only (we do not work underwater in Florida). There are two parts to this project: offshore and Intracoastal.

The primary goal of the offshore work is to determine the cetacean diversity in the study area. We want to determine what species are present and in what abundance. For this work we utilize our large research vessel, *Stenella*. This gives us a stable platform that can easily explore the offshore waters of South Florida. Little is known about what species are present here, but we expect to find both dolphins and whales in these waters.

The Intracoastal work is focused on the bottlenose dolphins that inhabit the waterway. We want to identify individuals and learn about their distribution and social structure. For this work we use a smaller vessel, our 14’ Novourania, named *frontalis*. This allows us to easily maneuver in the Intracoastal to document the dolphins that we see.

The first day of Florida work began on September 23, 2009, on *frontalis* in the Intracoastal. We ventured into the northern part of our study area. We spent a good 8 hours on the water, but unfortunately did not find any dolphins. Though a little discouraged, we reminded ourselves that this is a part of field work: days like this will occur, as dolphins are wild animals and we may not see them every day we go out. With this in mind, we began positive thinking for our next survey.

Our next outing was offshore aboard *Stenella* on September 26, 2009. The weather was beautiful as we worked the northern area offshore. The morning was uneventful, but the afternoon provided great excitement. The first species we encountered was spotted dolphins (see picture on right) – the same species we study in the Bahamas! We had a small group and found that they behaved similarly to our Bahamas population. They were friendly and remained near the boat, allowing us to easily photograph their dorsal fins. Contrary to the Bahamas population, however, their dorsal fins were very distinctive, which will allow us to identify them from the surface. We were lucky again as we found a group of bottlenose dolphins. They too were similar to the bottlenose we study in the Bahamas, a little shy and harder to photograph; however, we were able to obtain good photographs of the individuals in the small group. Our first day offshore was a great success, finding two different species of cetaceans.

In November we took *frontalis* out in the southern part of the study area. We had a much more successful day than our first outing. In the afternoon we found 2 small groups of bottlenose feeding in the Intracoastal (see picture on left). We have noticed a lot of baitfish (including mullet) activity, and the dolphins were taking advantage of this. One of them even did some beautiful aerials after chasing some fish at the surface. It was an exciting day on the Intracoastal!

Our first few surveys have shown us that there are many cetaceans in our South Florida waters and great potential for The Florida Expansion Project. We will be gathering much needed information about the cetaceans of these previously little-researched South Florida waters in the days, months, and years ahead. We invite you to join us on this journey and become a Cetacean Sighter! Membership is $500 for the year, September – April. As a member of the Cetacean Sighters you will be invited to join us on these Florida surveys. Members will be rotated so that everyone has an equal chance to participate. Call the office, or email Cindy at celliser@wilddolphinproject.org for more information.

Cindy Elliser, M.S.
Research Assistant, PhD Candidate
The Board of Directors of the Wild Dolphin Project requests the honor of your absence at the most important social function not held this holiday season…

The Wild Dolphin Project's 12th Annual No Show Holiday Ball

Thursday the 31st of December, Two Thousand Nine

You are cordially invited to enjoy an evening however you choose. Whether it is a quiet evening at home with family, friends and pets or a night on the town, just have fun and don’t show up at our No Show Ball!

Your contribution will benefit the continuation of long-term research conducted by the Wild Dolphin Project (www.wilddolphinproject.org), founded in 1985.

Prizes

Each donation to WDP through the No Show Holiday Ball form entitles each guest to a chance to win one of our grand prizes and/or one of our door prizes. The best parts are, you must not be present to win, and contributions are fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Grand Prizes

Research Trip 2010: Minimum donation $100

This is our most popular item and a fabulous deal! You will be a passenger on one of our summer research trips on board our research vessel Stenella. This is a 9-day cruise with WDP crew to Little Bahama Bank during our field season, May-September, 2010. Assist with the research to learn what it takes to be a marine mammal researcher. Swim with the dolphins, learn about these amazing animals, and snorkel with other interesting marine life off some very exciting reefs and shipwrecks.

Cetacean Sighter Membership 2010-2011: Minimum donation $50

As a member, you will be informed when WDP will be conducting Florida surveys (September 2010 to April 2011) and invited to join us on those trips. Opportunities are rotated so all members get a chance to participate. If you are unable to join us (as you live out of state), you are allowed to give this membership to a person of your choosing (just let us know), or you may donate it to us and we will give it to a deserving student.

Door Prizes:

WDP grab bag of goodies: Minimum donation $25

This will include items such as the WDP T-shirt, visor and more!

WDP apparel: Minimum donation $25

Be at the height of fashion while supporting WDP with a Wild Dolphin Project polo shirt. We have both men’s (left picture) and fitted women’s (right picture) polos.
RSVP No Show Holiday Ball

RSVP/Raffle Ticket
Cut along the seam and send this page back with your donation!!

I am very excited to be able to support the Wild Dolphin Project while I enjoy spending time with my furry friends!

Please indicate the amount of your donation below
(The higher the donation, the more chances to win the above prizes!)

____$______ I can enjoy just hanging around the house with my furry friends, relaxing, snoozing and being loved – hey, now that’s the life!

____$500.00 Allows me to go running with my dog, surely it will get rid of some of her energy?!

____$200.00 Gives me the chance to continue training my cats to do tricks… maybe they will stop ignoring me this time.

____$100.00 I can enjoy playing fetch with my dog… even if she doesn’t actually bring the ball back to me!

____$50.00 I can catch up on the latest cat gossip at the local hangout and nail sharpener – The Scratching Post.

____$25.00 For once I don’t have to use the line “I can’t go, the goat ate my invitation, along with my homework and my shorts!”

Good luck, and thank you for your generous donation; it is greatly appreciated, especially during this financially difficult time.

Name: ____________________________  Return this form along with your check, payable to:
Address: ___________________________
City: ________________________________
State/Zip: __________________________
Phone: ( ) __________________________
Email: ______________________________

Note: Winners will be notified by phone/email in mid-January 2010. Grand prizes must be used in 2010; airfare to and from Grand Bahama Island and/or Florida is not included. No exchanges or monetary cash-outs allowed.

From all of us at the Wild Dolphin Project, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season!!

Other ways you can help:

In-Kind donations: computers, monitors, cameras, servers, check our website for more ideas!
Stock donations: Contact myFi group with Solomon Smith Barney: 877-357-0888 to donate!
Airline Miles donations: Donate your unused airline miles to WDP; contact the office at 561-575-5660
Matching Programs: Find out if the company you work for will match your donation to WDP!
Thank You to Our Friends
(Donations received before November 23, 2009)

2009 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS

Neonate: Anna Medley, Barbara & Juliana O Vesney, Brian Tuohy, Bryan Crafts, M.D., Cecilia Chinnel-Palles, Dann Nielsen, Dolphin Dreaming, Inc., Gabriel & Valerie Schmergel, Helen Perry, Hill Du Rant, George & Martha Haddad, Jim Hadeland, Judith L. Newby, Karen Silverman, Lori Harrison, LuAnne Ekert, Margarita Orezell, Margie Stinson, Marie Mandeville, Miles Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Mark Hanson, Naomi Zowader, Pat & Heather Koontz, Rachel Marshall, Richard Reitman, Rick Reynolds, Rita Cassidy, Ruth Eichner, Sarah Warnke, Seth Freeman, Sonia Thomas, Tanya Burnett, Winona Holcutt

Two Toned: Annie Harrington, A.Y. Morgan, Alison Reed, Beth & Cliff Bornman, Betty Kollmeyer, Bob Reger, Cassandra & Edward Weith, D. G. Hatch, David Butler, Denise Herzing, Diane Buhler, Dr. & Mrs. John Wesley, Dr. Kenneth & Elizabeth Pelletier, Gail & Jay Nelson, Hedy & Paul Friedrich, Helen Marchman, Helve Massakas, James P. Cummings, Jean Blyth, Jim Maney, K. Peter Krudsen, Kari Sandmeyer, Kimberly Swift, Laura Kerr, Linda & Charles Rogers, Linda Rorer, Marilyn Bauer, Marjorie Cochrane, Marjorie Fitzsimons, Michelle & Arnie Sachs, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Van der Grift, Mr. and Mrs. William Cary, Mr. and Mrs. Caleb Whittaker, Myrthe Doedens, Norma Jeanne Byrd, Robert Huet, Sarah Haney, Sarah Rahilly, Stacey Anderson, Sue Tippett, Tiffany & Robert Adams, Tina Moss, Walter & Jane Enterline, William & Nancy Boardman, Zita Wright

Speckled: Alma Armendariz, Bruce Miller, Chris Traughber, Dr. Barry Rock, Farley Rentschler, Gale Freeman, Gini Kopecy Wallace, Gretta Curry, Helen Marchman, Jackie Mosare, Jill Pando, Keith Twitchell, Marsha Coates, Matt & Kali Dambeck, Mike Flaugh, Mr. and Mrs. Fanjul, Nancy Collins, Ruth Samuels, Sue & Jerry Seitz, Theodore Thoburn

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Steward: Dr. Geoffrey Etherington, Michael Iwanciw


Special donations for Naia Mader's 9th Birthday: Ann Brown, Ellen Murphy, Evelyn & Jennifer Flaugh, Jane Eaker, Kelly Bond Pelletier, Lee & Mike England, Maggie Beatty, Natasja Kelly, Sara Shute

Cetacean Siretters: Barbara Birdsey, Debra Levitez, Meg Norris, Myrthe Doedens, Pat Weyer

Please note: All monetary giving is based on a calendar year and is accrued throughout the year. The No Show Ball funding is carried over to the following year.

2009 CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

Dolphin Designs, Woman’s Club of the Retreat

Product and In-Kind Gifts:

Blue Water Graphics and Southeastern Printing, Don Mader, for production of the newsletters and additional printing/promotional needs for WDP, Shaklee Corporation for supplying WDP with their environment-friendly products for R/V Stenella and the research office; Bruce Helander - framed print; Kathy Britton - original artwork
### IN THIS ISSUE

- Releasing a Spotted Dolphin Back into the Wild!
- Members in Action
- Unknown Dolphins off the Southeast Coast of Florida
- Cetacean Sighters
- Introducing Tristan
- Development Update
- Bulletin Board
- Thank You's

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Help protect the environment, Practice the 5 R’s

Start by recycling this newsletter, give it to a friend!

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### INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS

- $35  NEONATE MEMBERSHIP
- $75  TWO-TONED MEMBERSHIP
- $250  SPECKLED MEMBERSHIP
- $500  MOTTLED MEMBERSHIP
- $1,000  FUSED MEMBERSHIP
- $2,500  STEWARD MEMBERSHIP
- $5,000  AMBASSADOR MEMBERSHIP
- $10,000+  GENERATION MEMBERSHIP
- OTHER $______________

YES, PLEASE SEND ME MY MEMBERSHIP GIFTS

I'D LIKE TO MAKE THIS DONATION (OPTIONAL)

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† In memory of __________________________

† Please send acknowledgement of this gift to:

________________________________________

NAME: ________________________________

COMPANY: _____________________________

ADDRESS: _____________________________

CITY, STATE, ZIP: ______________________

COUNTRY: _____________________________

PHONE/EXT: ___________________________

EMAIL: __________________________________

*All memberships are based on a calendar year.

All monetary contributions are accumulated to your annual membership.

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### CORPORATE MEMBERSHIPS

**Does your company want to participate in the move to "Go Green"?** By supporting WDP, your company can help protect the animals and oceans.

- $100  CORPORATE SUPPORTER
- $250  CORPORATE SPONSOR
- $500  CORPORATE PATRON
- $1,000  CORPORATE BENEFACITOR
- $5,000+  CORPORATE TOP SPONSOR

**As a WDP corporate partner you will:**

- BE RECOGNIZED IN THE NEWSLETTER
- BE RECOGNIZED ON WDP’S WEBSITE (COMPANY LOGO AND WEBSITE LINK INCLUDED FOR TOP SPONSOR ONLY)

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**We apologize in advance for any unintentional misprints or absence of acknowledgments. Please contact the office so we can update our files. Thank you for your support.**

Names only will be published in newsletter, annual reports, etc. If you would like to be anonymous, please check here.

You can also become a member online! Please visit www.wilddolphinproject.org and click on “Donate/Renew Membership.”

All donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Please make checks payable to The Wild Dolphin Project and send to P.O. Box 8436 Jupiter, Florida 33468.  

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