



“In Their World...
On Their Terms...”

PHOTO: LIAH MCPHERSON

RESEARCH DIRECTOR REPORT

Technology and tools of the summer Field Season

The 2019 field season was a technology adventure. Last year we enlisted the help of passive acoustic monitoring devices to better track our lost dolphins. EARs (Ecological Acoustic Recorders) are a creation of Dr. Marc Lammers at Oceanwide Sciences in Hawaii. In 2018 we deployed two EARs in our long-term study site with terrific results. In 2019 we decided to put three EARs out in the field for better coverage. Although we are still awaiting the data analysis, I have no doubt that we will continue to learn about the acoustics of these resident dolphins with this 24/7 listening strategy.

Dr. Matthias Hoffmann-Kuhnt, from the National University of Singapore, was out with us again this year. Matthias brought out the second prototype of ASPOD (Acoustic Source Position Overlay Device), his creation for localizing a vocalizing dolphin underwater and putting a marker on the underwater video to track. We've been trying to get Matthias in the water to collect examples of whistles and clicks to refine his system. This field season he was able to get in the water during some of the most vocal dolphin behavioral activities which are typically fighting and aggression behaviors. We hope to have a fully tested second prototype out with us in 2020 for a whole season to collect data.

This year we also had a CHAT (Cetacean Hearing Augmentation Telemetry) trip designated for testing our new underwater computer system. We had some challenges in the last few years getting our bigger and better computers working adequately. Between the need for larger amplifiers and better underwater speakers, only now do we have a new system ready to go. Every new system requires testing and retesting in the real environment, and this is something we do to ensure the system is working 100% before we use it with the dolphins. So hopefully, in 2020, we will have a more advanced system in place ready to go with the dolphins.



Dr. Thad Starner and Chad Ramey making adjustments to the C.H.A.T. box

Hurricane relief trip – deliveries and dolphins

As many of you know Hurricane Dorian took a major swipe at Grand Bahama Island where we have worked for decades. After hauling our boat out of the water in Florida, and taking cover ourselves, we emerged unscathed from Dorian. However, the eastern end of Grand Bahama Island, and Great Abaco, were both devastated. After weeks of fundraising, we set out to West End on R/V Stenella to drop off supplies and to look for dolphins. Thanks to all our donors we

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PHOTO: LIAH MCPHERSON

Dr. Matthias Hoffman-Kuhnt and a group of Atlantic spotted dolphins

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is my privilege to continue to serve as President of The Wild Dolphin Project's Board of Directors and to enjoy a front row seat as Dr. Herzing and her team break new ground in the study of Atlantic Spotted Dolphins "In Their World... On Their Terms."

The end of each field season is always a good time to reflect on the achievements and breakthroughs made by Dr. Herzing and her team, as well as the inevitable setbacks encountered when working in the wild, although we tend to focus on the former and forget about the latter.

After several challenging years, continuous improvements and extensive testing of each new iteration, the underwater wearable computer we call Cetacean Hearing Augmentation Telemetry (C.H.A.T.) is finally ready to go for the 2020 field season. This device will allow us to make further strides into the complex world of dolphin communication. I'm very excited to see what insights we will be able to gain through the use of this new technology in 2020 and beyond.

Ecological Acoustic Recorders (E.A.R.s) were a new tool first deployed during the 2018 field season. These devices, deployed in our study area, allow us to listen 24/7 and learn about the acoustics of the dolphins that are resident to that area. The initial 2018 deployment yielded terrific results and we have consequently increased the number of devices in the study area.

Each field season seems to bring more exciting developments in our ability to eventually "Crack The Code". With all the recent technological advances, the 2020 season is already shaping up to be incredibly exciting. I look forward to seeing the continued advancements in the research through technology and the commitment of our team.

Axel Stepan

Board of Directors, President



Liah McPherson flying a drone overhead



Drew Mayer and Tyler Hazelwood retrieve the E.A.R. from the sea floor

CONFERENCE NEWS

In December, some of us from the Wild Dolphin Project will be flying over to Barcelona, Spain for the 2019 World Marine Mammal Conference! We will each be presenting something different, and we look forward to learning a lot about marine mammal science from around the world while we are there. Check out what we will each be presenting below:

Cassie Volker (Research Assistant): I will be presenting a poster on my master's thesis work. For my thesis, I looked at the aggressive behaviors used by adult male Atlantic spotted dolphins when they fought other spotted dolphins versus when they fought bottlenose dolphins. I examined whether or not the spotted dolphins changed their behavior based on the opponent they were fighting. The title of my poster is "Aggressive behaviors of adult male Atlantic spotted dolphins: making signals count during intraspecific and interspecific conflicts" Authors: Volker C and Herzing D. I am currently working on getting my thesis published, so stay tuned!

Liah McPherson (Field Assistant): My poster presentation will evaluate the effectiveness of drones for field research on Atlantic spotted dolphins. The data I collected over the past two field seasons has allowed me to assess behavioral disturbance caused by drones



and to explore methodologies for behavioral observation, habitat classification, photo identification, and calculating both respiration rates and body measurements. The title of my poster is "An assessment of UAS technology for studying Atlantic spotted dolphins." Authors: McPherson L and Herzing D.

Dr. Denise Herzing: (Research Director):

Along with Cassie's and Liah's posters, we are also represented in the following work at the conference. Along with our colleagues in the Bahamas and Mote Marine Lab, our work on the rehab and release of Lamda the stranded spotted dolphin from last fall will be presented, "Satellite-linked telemetry study of a rehabilitated and released Atlantic spotted dolphin in The Bahamas provides insights into broader ranging patterns and conservation needs". Authors: Dunn C, Claridge D, Herzing D, Volker C, Melillo-Sweeting K, Wells R., Turner T, O'Sullivan K. And a joint effort with colleagues around the world looking at bottlenose dolphin acoustic repertoires will be presented, "Geographic variation in the acoustic repertoires of common bottlenose dolphins in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea." Authors: Luís AR, May-Collado L, Rako N, Gridley T, Papale E, Azevedo A, Silva MA, Buscaino G, Herzing D, dos Santos ME.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT REPORT

A LOOK BACK AT THE 2019 FIELD SEASON

The 2019 field season has come to a close, and even though Hurricane Dorian ended our season earlier than we would have liked it was still one to remember! As always, we met some great people this summer who helped make the trips amazing. Those who came out with us this year included some returning interns from previous seasons, long-time project supporters, Board members, and we had some new faces that we hope to see back next season! Passengers play a vital role in helping us continue to do what we do best and we are so

thankful that they keep making it possible.

This summer was filled with lots of behavior, pregnant females, and calves! We are not sure why, but the Atlantic spotted dolphins down in Bimini exhibited a lot of aggressive behavior throughout the summer. Great Bahama Bank (GBB) residents fought amongst themselves, and sometimes GBB males were even seen fighting the Little Bahama Bank (LBB) males. While searching around our study site, we saw a lot of commotion and splashing at the surface, and occasionally a dorsal fin pierced through

the waves. When we got close enough, we slipped into the water and found large groups of spotted dolphins fighting each other underneath the waves. They were in head-to-head stand offs with mouths open, there was biting and tail slapping, and lots of vocalizations. It was chaotic, but at the same time really neat to watch and observe. Because of their "smile" people often think that they are always very peaceful animals, but they fight and battle just like any other animal! When we are in the water observing aggression, we make sure that we give the dolphins

space and let them do their thing. We also pay attention to their behaviors and if they seem to show aggression towards us, in the form of an open mouth or swimming perpendicularly in front of us, those are warnings to back off and get out of the water. We want to respect their space, and if they seem to not want us there, we leave. Our motto is "In Their World... On Their Terms..." and we mean it. This is why it's important to understand the behaviors of the animals you are studying. By understanding their aggressive behaviors
(continued on page 4)



1. A group of Atlantic spotted dolphins fighting; 2. Littleprawn playing with sargassum; 3. AKITA, Littleprawn; 4. Swiper, Nereide; 5. Research Assistant Cassie Volker recording underwater video of two Atlantic spotted dolphins; Photos: Liah McPherson

Research Assistant Report *from page 3*

towards each other, we know that if any are directed at us, we have overstayed our welcome.

Aside from all the aggression between the males this summer, we had a lot of pregnant females and quite a few new calves this season. There were 19 pregnant females this summer. The gestation period for an Atlantic spotted dolphin is 11-12 months so we project that they give birth during the fall and spring. If they look as if they are about to pop at the end of the season, that calf will most likely be a fall birth. But if the females are just starting to show (about 6 months) towards the end of the season, then that calf will most likely be born in the spring-time the following year. We look forward to meeting all the new calves next summer, make sure to follow our blogs next season to see who we meet!

We had 10 new spotted dolphin calves this season and hopefully we will have even more next season! There were 6 new calves from the LBB group, and 4 new calves from the GBB group. It was exciting to see so many new calves. New calves are a good sign that mothers are getting enough food to support the extra energy needed during pregnancy. Of the 10 calves, there were 5 female calves, 4 male calves, and 1 unknown sex.

Some were calves of experienced mothers while others were calves of first-time moms. We hope they all survived Hurricane Dorian, and we will give you an update as we see them next season!

In regards to our study populations as a whole, we saw about 80% of our GBB Atlantic spotted dolphins and about 35% of our LBB Atlantic spotted dolphins, both on Little Bahama Bank and down in Bimini combined. The LBB dolphins are still really hard to find up on Little Bahama Bank, but we were able to see a few of them. We even had a great encounter with Brush a fused female and Tristan a mottled female. Brush and Tristan were very playful, tugging around sargassum and dropping it not only to each other, but to us as well. These two females also appeared to be pregnant, which is a good sign. As for the LBB dolphins who moved down to Bimini we saw about 65% of those individuals. We even saw a few we haven't seen in a couple of years such as Geo (male fused), Bishu (female fused with new calf), Lava (female fused with new calf), and Marble (female mottled with new calf) among others. We are still implementing new technology, such as the E.A.R.s, to try and help us locate the LBB spotted dolphins.

Even though our focus is studying dolphins, we still get excited about other marine mega fauna that we may run into. This season was full of turtle sightings, and lots of fish out on the reefs. But there were three really great experiences with other marine creatures that we will never forget. Earlier in the summer, we were taking a snorkel break at Hens and Chicks (a popular snorkel spot on Great Bahama Bank) and had a surprise visit from a ~9ft Great Hammerhead shark! It cruised right by us without a care in the world, needless to say we were all really excited. We see reef sharks at that snorkel spot all the time, but it was a first for a hammerhead shark. Then towards the middle of the season we had left the Bahamas and started making our way back to the states when there was stomping on the bridge. Captain Brad started yelling that he thinks he sees a whale. I grabbed the camera and sure enough there was a sperm whale! We believe there were two, a mom/calf pair, but we only saw the larger one briefly in the distance. However, the smaller whale hung out at the surface for some time before it dove out of site! The last crazy encounter happened during Trip 8. We were on LBB near Memory Rock when all the sudden someone spotted a WHALE

SHARK! It was a juvenile about 18-20ft long and we jumped in and grabbed a few photos and some video. This shark species has been on my bucket list for a while and it was an amazing site to see! We submitted our photos into "Wildbook for Whale Sharks" to see if there is a match. We will keep everyone updated!

Overall, 2019 was a great summer season filled with lots of dolphin encounters rich with behavior. Plenty of playful encounters, aggressive encounters, and encounters where the dolphins just seemed to be relaxing and traveling from place to place. On top of a great dolphin filled summer, we had beautiful weather for most of the trips and some great animal sightings such as the hammerhead shark, sperm whale, and whale shark. We also had the chance to bring over supplies to help some of the Bahamians on Grand Bahama Island after Hurricane Dorian. See the "Hurricane Dorian Relief Trip" section in this newsletter to find out more.

The summer season goes by so fast but the 2020 season will be here before we know it!

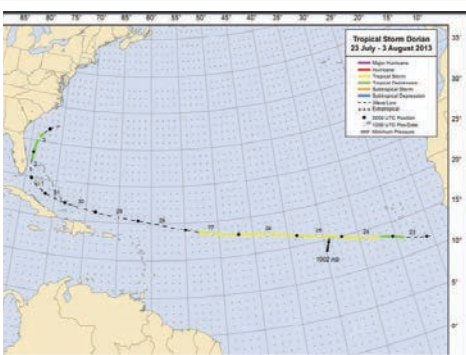
Cassie Volker
Research Assistant

Hurricane relief *from page 1*

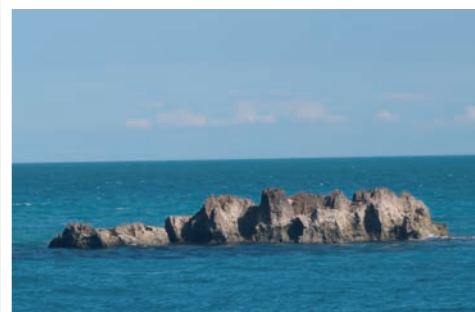
we were able to take over much needed supplies. Melissa, our super organizer here at WDP, took on the task of organizing, ordering, and coordinating. See her section detailing the relief efforts (page 9) and more ways you can help (page10).

In case the name Dorian sounds familiar to you, it's because we had a Tropical Storm Dorian in 2013. I was recently reviewing some of our field notes from 2013 and lo and behold, there was a Tropical Storm named Dorian in August of 2013. Turns out that the National Hurricane Center maintains 6 lists of hurricane names that they recycle every six years. A name is removed once it has impacted land severely. There is no doubt that the name Dorian will now be removed and replaced. I just hope they don't replace it with Denise!!

Dr. Denise Herzing
Research Director,
Wild Dolphin Project



Tropical Storm Dorian 2013 and Hurricane Dorian 2019



Memory Rock before and after Hurricane Dorian

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Howdy Wild Dolphin Project family, it's Captain Brad here, with the 2019 edition of the Captain's Corner! We just finished another fantastic field season on board R/V Stenella. This year was full of great encounters, wonderful guests, and a few surprise visitors! It's hard to talk about all of the incredible things that happened but here are some of the highlights.

The season started off with a bang. We were all wondering when, or if we would, encounter Lamda, the dolphin that we helped rescue and release last fall in Bimini. Sure enough we observed him on the first encounter of the season! It was very exciting for all of us, and we are happy to report he was in good shape and behaving normally with his regular group of dolphins.

A few trips later, on one hot afternoon we decided to take a snorkeling break at the wonderful Hens and Chicks reef. While snorkeling around, Research Assistant Cassie

and I encountered a Great Hammerhead Shark who was roughly 10 feet long (although underwater it looked even bigger!). The hammerhead was docile, beautiful and gave us a close-up look where we managed to get a picture. It also checked out a few of our other snorkelers and crew on its journey around the reef. It was an incredible experience and we felt very lucky to see him!

This truly was a season of surprises. On our way home from trip six, we were roughly 40 miles from Palm Beach in the Gulf Stream when off the starboard side about a quarter mile out I saw a mist in the air. It was a whale spout! We investigated closer and it was two beautiful sperm whales logging on the surface. They hung around for a few minutes before diving deep. I had never observed this species before and neither had most of our crew. Needless to say it was a very exciting moment on board!

After all of these incredible experiences you would think

you've hit some sort of lucky limit, right? Well, I was wrong as Mother Nature had one last surprise visitor in store for us. On trip eight while cruising along the edge of the Little

This year was full of great encounters, wonderful guests, and a few surprise visitors!

Bahama Bank we came across a beautiful juvenile whale shark! The whale shark was roughly 18-20 feet long covered in beautiful white spots and very majestic. To see it in 40 feet of crystal clear water was something I'll never forget. We were able to put a few divers in for about 15 minutes, and after they got out you couldn't get the

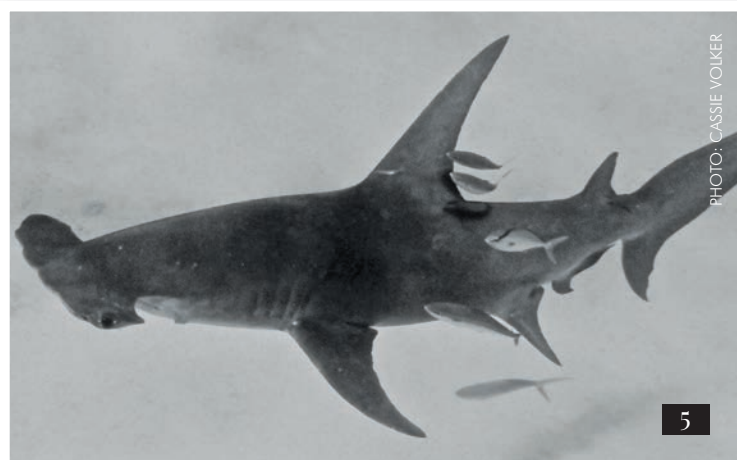
smile off their faces for days!

It was one of my best seasons on R/V Stenella by far. I'm leaving out so many awesome moments, but I feel thankful to have been there for all of them, and fortunate to have such a stellar crew and to have met so many amazing passengers this season! I really do have an all-star crew. Thank you all so much for your hard work throughout the season! Thank you Dr. Herzing for making this all possible and for being a great friend, boss, and leader. And Melissa, we couldn't do it without your support from land. It's always so special to have you out with us!

I'm already looking forward to 2020 and what surprises it might hold! I hope those who have joined us in the past come back and those thinking about joining us decide to do it! Until then I'll keep asking myself, "How lucky am I?"

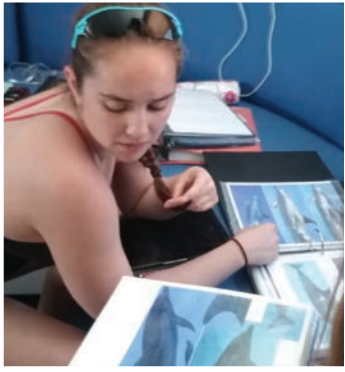
Brad Ruda

Captain R/V Stenella,



1. Captain Brad Ruda 2. First Mate Tyler Hazelwood poised and ready to help swimmers at the platform 3. Sperm Whale 4. Whale Shark observed during trip 8 5. Hammerhead shark observed during a snorkel break

Hayley Knapp, Field Intern



I first heard about the Wild Dolphin Project in 2013 when I watched Dr. Denise Herzing's TED Talk "Could We Speak the Language of Dolphins?" This summer, and 6 years later, I was blessed with the opportunity to join the WDP on Trip #2 as a field intern. When I stepped on the boat, I remember feeling both excited and nervous because I knew this trip would be the adventure of a lifetime, but I was just a small, midwestern girl from Kansas in the middle of a big ocean far from home. While I had been dreaming about dolphins since the age of

four, the closest I had come to them was on family vacations to SeaWorld. Thankfully, with the help of Captain Brad, I warmed right up to the crew and other passengers and was ready to see dolphins.

We first encountered dolphins on the second day, where they were waiting to welcome us to Great Bahama Bank. That first encounter was breathtaking. These magnificent creatures swam under, in front of, and around me in circles all the while whistling their happy tunes. They swam so close it was thrilling, and I was awestruck by their inquisitive nature. Sadly, the encounter didn't last long, but I knew I wanted more. Swimming with dolphins had always been a dream of mine, but observing them underwater in their natural habitat with researchers was even better. Despite the weather and a lack of dolphins for almost 3 days, the crew kept us entertained with stories, music, jokes, pranks, presentations, and delicious food. Finally, on day 5, we spotted dolphins. Since it included Theresa's favorite

mischievous dolphin Monkey, this encounter was by far the most entertaining. We observed the spotted dolphins for an hour while they played "dolphin rugby" with a poor sea cucumber. Monkey, ever the antagonist, seemed to be an instigator of some play tussling amongst the juveniles, much to our amusement and Theresa's delight. That evening we celebrated, receiving a live concert from Canadian country singer Ryan Cook. From bow-riding to nursing to playing with sargassum, the spotted dolphins exhibited an endless range of behaviors for us to observe throughout the rest of the trip. Toward the end of the trip we encountered a pod of more than 30 dolphins, including Lettice, Smokey, Nassau, and some calves (one of which was Nassau's newly named calf, Nugget). The pod seemed content to ride the waves at the bow of the boat, letting us follow them with Liah's drone. Whether I was up on dolphin watch recording information, balancing on the bow counting dolphins, or in the water observing them "In their world... On their terms," I was infatuated with the finesse they had in their natural habitat.

The WDP team's hard work, dedication, and determination encouraged me to continue pursuing my dream of marine biology. From the hours of dolphin identification exercises, dolphin watch shifts, film reviews, and environmental conditions logs, I learned so much from the WDP and their vast database of behavioral information. They have diligently worked to expand our knowledge about Atlantic spotted Dolphins and, with every field season, it continues to rapidly grow. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity to participate in the WDP's research, and am excited for what the future holds for their work. My internship with them brought hundreds of fun memories, a plethora of knowledge, and beautiful friendships with other avid dolphin fanatics. I've heard it said that "once a dolphin enters your heart, it can never be removed," and after this stunning experience I wholeheartedly agree.

Hayley Knapp

College Senior

William Jewell College

Major: Biology with a Spanish Minor

Isabella Canepa, Field Intern



A few months ago, I boarded the Research Vessel Stenella full of joy and ready to embark on Trip #6 with WDP. As soon as I got on board, I was greeted by the crew and saw Theresa's delicious snacks already being put out in the galley. I knew from the start that this would be an experience I would never forget. Before taking off to the Bahamas, Research Assistant Cassie Volker and Field Assistant Liah McPherson explained to us interns a bit about the project. Then Captain Brad Ruda and

First Mate Tyler Hazelwood gave us an overview of the boat and situations expected at sea. After the introductions and brief overviews, Captain Brad started up the boat and we were off to the Bahamas.

During the entire trip, I woke up early to get ready for the day because I didn't want to miss any dolphin encounters! The first two days we anchored off Grand Bahama Island and saw bottlenose dolphins, but they were pretty elusive and Liah, the field assistant, was only able to grab some surface ID shots before we lost them. On the third day of the trip, we headed to Bimini. That day I had my first encounter with Atlantic spotted dolphins and I was fascinated by them! Some of the dolphins we saw that day included Doc, Lamda, Roo, Donkey, Latte and Mocha. On Sunday, I had a very peaceful encounter with two older males Duke and Atlas. Then later that night we had a night encounter during a night drift.

Captain Brad and First Mate Tyler put lights in the water, attached to the stern of the boat, to see squid and fish (spotted dolphin prey). Soon the dolphins came and it was a feeding frenzy! I was amazed as I watched the dolphins chasing after their prey full of energy. On the last day of the trip we had the opportunity to experience a playful encounter. Little prawn and some other juvenile spotted dolphins were playing with pieces of sargassum in what appeared to be a game of keep-away, and occasionally they would pick up a piece of sargassum that one of us had dropped! Every time I would get back on the boat after an encounter, I would take my mask off completely amazed! It's truly a breath-taking sensation when you exchange stares with an animal that is mutually curious and seems just as amused with you as you are with them. You can perceive how intelligent these animals are just by looking into their eyes. During these encounters with spotted dolphins we observed many behaviors, such as foraging, aggression, mating, baby-sitting, resting, and

mother-calf interactions. We also heard many sounds produced by the dolphins such as echolocation clicks, whistles, buzzes and burst-pulses. On top of the great dolphin encounters, we also had awesome snorkeling experiences over the beautiful reefs and seagrass beds of the Bahamas.

This trip had a tremendous positive impact on me. The whole crew was very welcoming and everyone had a great time. The scientific work done by Dr. Denise Herzing and the WDP is very unique and detailed, and provides a much deeper understanding of what we know about this population of Atlantic spotted dolphins. There is no better way to observe and learn about the dolphins than being "In Their World; On Their Terms". I am very grateful to Dr. Denise Herzing and all the WDP crew for providing such a priceless experience.

Isabella Canepa

College Junior

Universidade Federal Fluminense, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Major: Biological Science & Marine Biology

2020 BAHAMAS TRIPS



Brittini Hill records environmental data during dolphin watch



Field Assistant Liah McPherson collects a fecal sample

You can join us in the field!

We invite you to learn the how's and why's of our non-invasive approach, assist our research team in studying and observing natural dolphin behavior both above and underwater, and enjoy presentations and lectures given in the evening. For 9-days aboard R/V Stenella, you can get unplugged from the demands of the world and revel in the spectacular sunsets and starlit skies. A full-time cook is aboard ensuring everyone is well fed and hydrated as some dolphin encounters can be lengthy and can happen multiple times throughout the day.

Students currently enrolled in high school or college with an interest in marine biology can participate in our internship program. Responsibilities are to conduct daily dolphin watches on the bridge, assist the research team with logging data, assist with underwater photography and processing for photo identification.

Signing up is easy!

ARE YOU A WDP MEMBER?

In December, we finalize the summer schedule and notify you via email that trips are open for sign up. Let us know your preferred trip dates so we can confirm availability and send you the application paperwork and payment options.

FOR NON-MEMBERS

To be placed on a notification list, simply email your contact information and interest to wdptrips@gmail.com. After members are given first opportunity to sign-up, 4-6 weeks later (usually in mid-January) we will send an email to the inquiry list with the schedule and remaining open spots. It will be posted on social media at that time as well.

Once your spot is fully reserved (by submitting your application and making payment in full), we will send you marina instructions, departure details, packing guidelines, and other travel information.

Visit www.wilddolphinproject.org/participate/bahamas-trip or www.wilddolphinproject.org/participate/student-internship-opportunities for more information.

Melissa Williams

Wild Dolphin Project, Trip Coordinator
561.575.5660
wdptrips@gmail.com



RV Stenella at sunset

2020 SUMMER SCHEDULE

Trip 1	May	Trip 7	August
Trip 2	May	Trip 8	August
Trip 3	June	Trip 9	September
Trip 4	June		
Trip 5	July		
Trip 6	July		

Trip Dates to be Announced

EVENTS



1. Melissa Williams and Cassie Volker attend TurtleFest 2. Melissa Williams shares fun facts about the Atlantic spotted dolphins at Coastal Fest, April 2019 3. Cassie Volker's presentation to members of The Grass River Garden Club, February 2019

SAVE THE DATE

Wild Ocean Science 2020

Save the Date! Join us **SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH** for our 3rd annual signature event, Wild Ocean Science. We are honored that legendary oceanographer, Dr. Sylvia Earle of Mission Blue will be our featured presenter. Journalist and PBS NewsHour correspondent, Miles O'Brien, will be the Master of Ceremonies. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Melissa at 561.575.5660 or email wildoceanscience@gmail.com.

Visit www.wilddolphinproject.org/media/wild-ocean-science/ for updates and details.

Sylvia Earle



EVENTS

Stay tuned to our "events" page for upcoming talks, lectures, meet-n-greets, open houses for workplace giving opportunities, fundraisers, and more! Here's what is on the books already with many more being lined up.

- **OCTOBER 8, 2019** Presentation by Melissa Williams during the CFC Kick Off Charity Fair for federal employees at CBP office, Port of Palm Beach. Any federal employee can support WDP through their workplace giving. Our CFC number is 69488!

- **NOVEMBER 4, 2019** Joint presentation by Research Director Dr. Herzing and Research Assistant Cassie Volker at Town of Jupiter Inlet Colony

- **DECEMBER 5, 2019** Exhibition table at Bloomingdales at the Palm Beach Gardens Mall. Shop here on this day and support WDP! You can meet our staff and learn more about the project. For location and directions, visit locations.bloomingdales.com/palm-beach-gardens

- **JANUARY 29, 2020** Presentation by Research Assistant, Cassie Volker for the "Who's New" ladies group.

- **FEBRUARY 11, 2020** Presentation by Research Assistant, Cassie Volker for the South Florida Underwater Photography Society. Visit sfups.org for more about this organization.

- **MARCH 28, 2020** Save the Date! Wild Dolphin Project's signature event, Wild Ocean Science, will feature legendary oceanographer, Sylvia Earle.

- **APRIL 10 & 11, 2020** The Wild Dolphin Project will attend Jupiter Lighthouse's Wild & Scenic Film Festival, one of the nation's premier environmental and adventure film festivals.

If your club, school, or community is interested in having WDP attend or speak at your event, please call 561.575.5660 or email Melissa at media@wilddolphinproject.org

HURRICANE DORIAN RELIEF TRIP

For two excruciatingly long days Hurricane Dorian stalled over the islands of the Northern Bahamas as a Category 5 storm. 185 mph sustained winds, 3' of rain, and a 20' storm surge left many of the islands utterly devastated.

A mere 60 miles away in Jupiter, Florida, we were left unscathed by Dorian's wrath but we couldn't help but join in the efforts to help our neighbors in need, our home in the summer field season.

Wild Dolphin Project Research Director and Founder, Dr. Denise Herzing announced that all donations received in September would be used for hurricane relief supplies for the Bahamas. After touching base with our contacts in West End, it was decided that we would focus our efforts on providing items for recovery and rebuilding. We wanted to take advantage of R/V Stenella's wide deck, large interior cabin, and 2 deep hulls to transport as much as possible.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, over \$40,000 was collected and used to purchase tools, building supplies and materials, roofing tools, roofing supplies and material, portable generators, cleaning supplies, mosquito repellent and first aid supplies, water and non-perishable food, and pet food.

Our efforts were further enhanced when Wilson Engleby, the son of Will who was our Captain back in the 1990's, reached out to us stating he raised over \$8,000 at his school for

hurricane relief for the Bahamas. We were happy to make room aboard R/V Stenella for his supplies, which included over 40 complete bedding sets twin and queen sized inflatable mattresses with pumps, pillow and sheet sets, and hygiene products such as soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, men's and women's razors, and more. Wilson also gathered miscellaneous hand tools, chainsaws, electrical and plumbing supplies, and more water and non-perishable foods.

Topping off the generosity, friends of WDP kindly donated additional medical supplies, hygiene items, pet supplies and plumbing supplies, backpacks, can openers, and additional roofing materials.

Filled to the brim, the WDP team set sail aboard R/V Stenella to bring all of these supplies to those in need.

We arrived at West End late in the afternoon and met awaiting Jerreth Rolle and Kyle Wilchcombe, whom we were in contact with on nearly a daily basis over the preceding weeks. These men were instrumental in refining and anticipating the needs of the people so that the supplies we brought were truly what was needed most at that time. On our approach to the dock we passed a sunken vessel, simply a small indication of what was to be witnessed later in the day as we toured the island.

We tied up and saw there was plenty of help at hand to help us off-load. They were happily overwhelmed at how much supplies, tools, and building materials kept pouring out from inside the vessel.

Soon, their vehicles were filled to capacity and they headed out to hand-deliver supplies to those in need across Grand Bahama Island. Island residents came to the trucks with empty bags, happy to receive much needed food and water, and new bedding for their families. First aid supplies, hygiene care, and solar powered lights helped give them hope for brighter days ahead. No time was wasted in firing up the generators, as many were happy to have some power at hand to begin rebuilding what could be restored of their homes.

There was a small window of good weather in the forecast and we wanted to survey for dolphins and potentially get a glimpse of how well they fared after the massive storm. With a humbled spirit and heavy hearts, we departed West End early the next morning.

On our way north, we passed "Memory Rock", an iconic and well-known isolated rock island with a solitary light. After the powerful strength of Hurricane Dorian's tidal surge, the light and most of the rock structure is now gone.

Not long after reaching our original study site at White Sand Ridge, we spotted some traveling dolphins! It was Navel, Poindexter, and Amanda and her calf, Astro. It's a good sign that a calf survived and it is probably a good indicator for the rest of the resident population. We'll know more next summer and will report on it during the field season.

Later the next day we set course towards our usual anchor spot near

Sandy Cay. Captain Brad noticed the appearance of the island before and after Hurricane Dorian. What used to be an island full and flush with wildlife, Australian pines and palm trees was now an island with only sticks and pine needles.

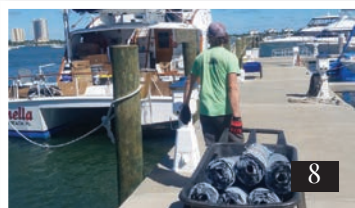
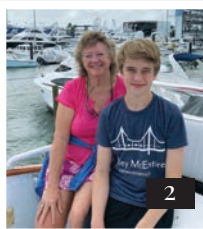
Now that we are back home in Florida, we will regroup and tally the remainder of the generous outpouring of donations that we received from our supporters. Remaining funds will be donated towards like-minded marine mammal groups and other research groups that are located in the Bahamas.

We'd like to thank everyone for supporting our efforts to bring relief and rebuilding supplies to those in the Bahamas devastated from Hurricane Dorian, September 2019.

Melissa Williams
Wild Dolphin Project

A list of hurricane relief supplies:

- (24) 3300 watt gasoline powered portable generators
- (25) 50' multi-outlet heavy duty extension cords
- (5) 20-volt cordless Dewalt 7-piece toolkit which includes a hammer drill driver, impact driver, reciprocating saw, circular saw, grinder, oscillating tool, work light, and rechargeable batteries in a Rolling ToughSystem Toolbox
- Extra batteries, chargers, blades, grinding wheels, and tips were included with each set.
- (3) Bostitch 6-gallon 150psi air compressors with hoses, accessories and oil
- (3) Bostitch coil roofing nailers
- (4) Dewalt cordless 20-volt framing nailers
- Several boxes of roofing and framing nails to go with each set
- (20) sheets of plywood
- (20) 2sq rolls of peel & stick, and roofing shingles
- (40) 50-count 42-gallon contractor bags
- (18) 121oz low splash HDX bleach
- (42) 70-quart Ultra clear storage boxes used to store dry goods and bedding.
- (30) backpacks were stuffed with mosquito repellent and first aid supplies such as Nitrile latex-free gloves, bandages, wraps, hand sanitizer and alcohol prep pads, multivitamins for children and adults, hydrogen peroxide, gauze and tape, hot/cold packs, antiseptic ointment, anti-itch cream, pain reliever and children's fever reducer
- We also brought water and non-perishable foods



1. Brad Ruda, Liah McPherson, Tyler Hazelwood, and (24) portable generators packed into the salon 2. Dr. Denise Herzing and Wilson Engleby 3. Hurricane Dorian Relief Trip Group Photo 4. Supplies going to those in need on Grand Bahama Island 5. Impacts from Hurricane Dorian 6 and 7. Supplies going to those in need on Grand Bahama Island 8. Tyler Hazelwood loading roofing supplies 9. Unloading supplies at West End

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– Many corporations offer a gift-matching incentive where they match your donations to your favorite charity up to a certain amount. Usually, it's simply a

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Memberships – As a member of the Wild Dolphin Project you get a free coffee table

book from Dr. Denise Herzing, a newsletter, and first priority when signing up for summer trips! Whether you are looking to possibly participate onboard R/V Stenella or just stay updated on the project, our research, and upcoming events, a WDP membership will benefit you.



Research Assistant Cassie Volker takes identification photos wearing WDP gear!

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amazonwishlist

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The Wild Dolphin Project

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GENERATION – \$10,000 - WDP Book & T-shirt, invites for Florida research trips, meet and greet with project updates, invites for Florida research day trips, intracoastal day trip for up to 6 on R/V Stenella

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