

NEWSLETTER OF THE PUGET SOUND CHAPTER  
OF THE AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 4

LATE FALL 2006

**Next Meeting: - Wed Nov 15th**

**Dr. James Ha** will speak on the Social Behavior of Resident Inshore Killer Whales in the Pacific Northwest: Natural and Human Influences—He is actively involved in research on the social behavior of Old World monkeys, Pacific Northwest killer whales, local and Pacific island crows, and domestic dogs. He is also certified as an Applied Animal Behaviorist — *more on page 7*

**Event Information**

All speaker series events meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Phinney Neighborhood Center, Room 6, 6532 Phinney Ave. N., Seattle, (just north of the Woodland Park Zoo).

Doors open at 7pm and the program starts at 7:30pm. Plenty of free parking is available in the upper and lower parking lots. Admission is free—donations to offset the room rental costs are gratefully appreciated of course as we operate on a shoestring like almost all nonprofits.

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**Iceland Renews Whaling**

On Tuesday, October 17, Iceland announced it would resume commercial whaling after a hiatus of 20 years. Despite an international ban, Iceland plans to target 9 fin whales and 30 minke whales in 2006/2007. As of this writing 3 fin whales have been killed.

Conservation groups are particularly angered by plans to hunt endangered fin whales. But, Iceland maintains numbers are high enough to permit hunting. It disputes the assessment of scientists in IUCN, the World Conservation Union, that fin whale stocks are fragile.

Iceland's decision has sparked heavy criticism from many countries in the world. Calling it a "flagrant disregard for international agreements," some anti-whaling nations have vowed to step up diplomacy to prevent such a resumption.

There seems to be no rationale for this decision, and as pointed out by some, Iceland cannot even find markets for the whale meat it gets from so-called 'scientific' whaling.

A global moratorium on commercial  
*(Continued on page 3)*

**Vashon Hydrophone Project Update:  
K and L Pods Blow into Town**

*by Ann Stateler, VHP Coordinator*

On October 18 around 9:30 AM, K and L Pods heralded the fall return of Southern Resident orcas to Vashon-Maury waters. We surmise they did a quick scan of the salmon supply here. In an intriguing twist, they traveled south in East Passage, headed west into Dalco Pass between Vashon and Tacoma, and then shot the Tacoma Narrows around 2:00 PM instead of directly circumnavigating the Island.

Researchers and field observers affiliated with the Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP) and NOAA Fisheries collaborated in a marathon endeavor, in blustery weather, to obtain IDs on the 50-plus killer whales. When VHP observers first spied the numerous tall dorsal fins in East Passage, we knew that, at a minimum, L Pod whales were present. Kudos on confirming that K's were traveling with the L's  
*(Continued on page 7)*



## Beam Reach report

by Peggy Foreman

*“Teaching is the highest form of understanding.” Aristotle.*

This fall I chose to take a sabbatical from teaching in the classroom and be a student instead. I recently finished a fall semester with Beam Reach, a Marine Science and Sustainability School that is approved for academic credit through the University of Washington.

The two courses I completed were on Marine Field Research and Practicing Sustainability Science, in which I studied bioacoustics of killer whales in the Salish Sea.

My project was on localizing vocalizations of southern resident killer whales in regards to gender. I wanted to study the characteristics of the calls, such as call duration, fundamental frequency, and frequency modulations of the harmonics, to see if males and females were communicating differently.

It was an amazing learning experience which I look forward to sharing my stories of the five weeks at sea and the in-depth interactions we had with researchers, professors, and a plethora of dynamic people working to protect these endangered animals.

Our class was also involved in some pretty impressive service projects (ranging from volunteering a day on the water with the Soundwatch Boater Education Program; surveying beaches for creosote logs or chemically treated wood with San Juan County Beach Watchers- Creosote Removal Program: Water quality testing in eel grass beds for Friends of the San Juans; and lastly one student wrote an anecdotal story about a whale encounter to help support the Whale Museum Adoption Program).

I intend to go back to my former Middle School and share my learning experiences from this fall and then extend my ACS presentations in the region.

If you are interested in classroom presentations, fieldtrip planning and implementation coordinator, or help with science fairs in your community please feel free to contact me. — Peggy Foreman. 206-930-8840 or email pforeman20@yahoo.com

## Whulj “the saltwater we know”

The Newsletter of  
the Puget Sound Chapter  
of the American Cetacean Society



P.O. Box 17136  
Seattle, WA 98127-0836  
206-734-4737  
info@acspugetsound.org

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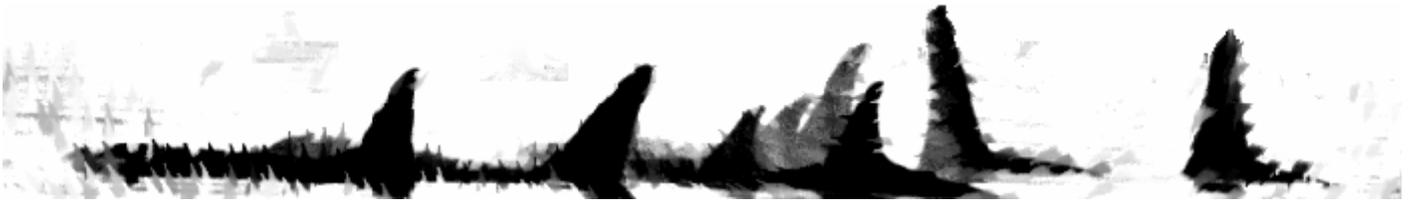
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Whulj publication schedule: February, May, August, November  
**Editor -** Diane Allen, diane@artemisComputing.com - 360-437-1303  
46 Village Way, suite 171, Port Ludlow WA 98365  
submissions, comments, suggestions, and questions welcomed

If you haven't changed your records—please note the  
new (winter 2006) ACS/PS number: 206-734-4737



## Iceland Resumes Whaling—continued

(Continued from page 1)

hunting has been in place for 20 years, with only Norway breaking it, having legally lodged a "reservation" to the moratorium when it came into force. Since 2002 Iceland has been catching minke whales in the name of scientific research, as it is allowed to under International Whaling Commission (IWC) rules.

Having left the IWC in 1992, it rejoined a decade later under questionable circumstances, expressing a reservation to the moratorium, which anti-whaling countries believe to have been illegal. [editor's note: see the side bar by Katy Penland, ACS National Past-President and former ACS IWC Rep on the ACS National site: <http://www.acsonline.org/issues/whaling/whatisIWC.html> ]

But international reaction has not been entirely negative. Predictably, Japan, which hunts more whales than any other country, welcomed Iceland's move. "The size of Iceland's catch will in no way endanger the whale population," said Fisheries Agency official Hideki Moronuki.

Japan currently hunts for scientific research, but makes no secret of its desire for a return to commercial whaling.

At this year's IWC meeting it was able to push through a resolution, the first in 20 years, endorsing the eventual return of commercial fleets.

Sources: BBC and WDCCS

### What you can do to stop Iceland:

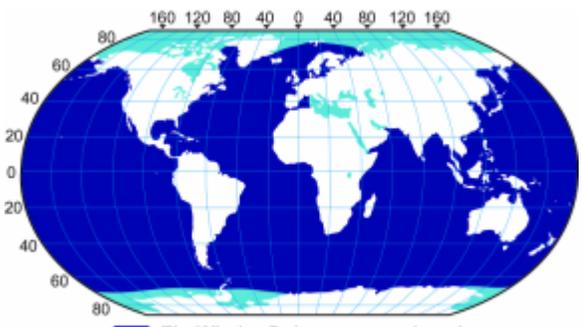
Send a protest to the Government of Iceland.

Minister Einar Kristinn Guofinnsson  
The Ministry of Fisheries  
Skulagata 4  
150 Reykjavik  
Iceland

Email is [fisheries@fisheries.is](mailto:fisheries@fisheries.is)

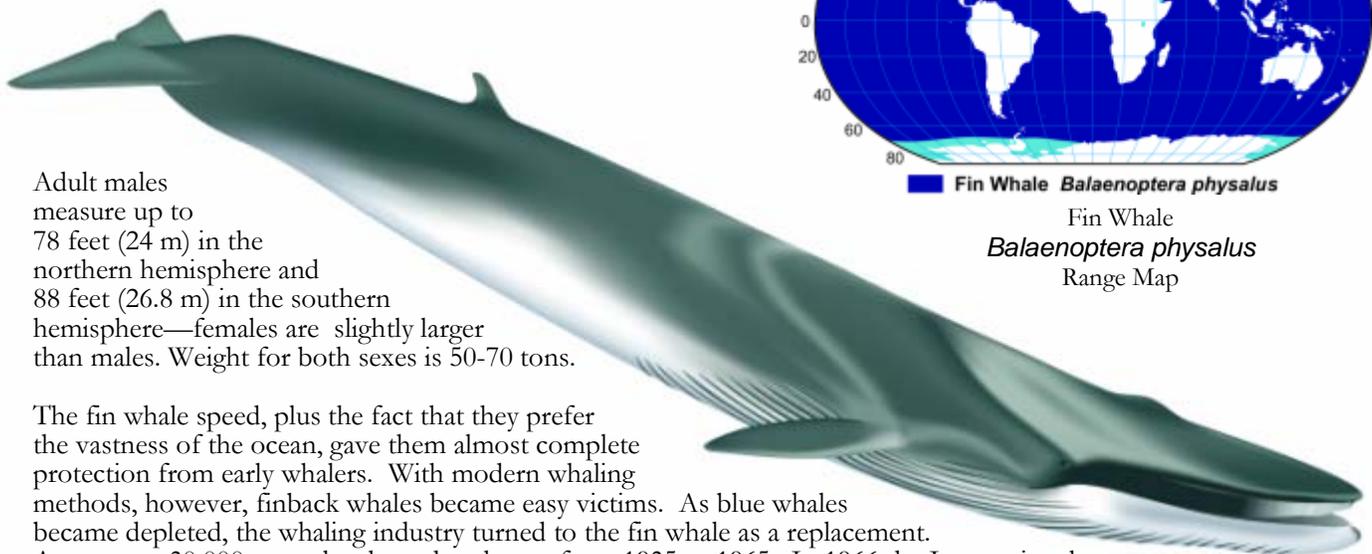
Support whale watching in Iceland.

Tell your family and friends.



Fin Whale *Balaenoptera physalus*

Fin Whale  
*Balaenoptera physalus*  
Range Map



- Adult males measure up to 78 feet (24 m) in the northern hemisphere and 88 feet (26.8 m) in the southern hemisphere—females are slightly larger than males. Weight for both sexes is 50-70 tons.
- The fin whale speed, plus the fact that they prefer the vastness of the ocean, gave them almost complete protection from early whalers. With modern whaling methods, however, finback whales became easy victims. As blue whales became depleted, the whaling industry turned to the fin whale as a replacement. As many as 30,000 were slaughtered each year from 1935 to 1965. In 1966 the International Whaling Commission (IWC) placed them under full protection beginning with the North Pacific population.

Fin Whale Illustration and Fin Whale Range Map courtesy Uko Gorter, copyright © 2004, all rights reserved



Book review — by Uko Gorter

## Whales, Dolphins, and Other Marine Mammals of the World By Hadoram Shirihihi and Brett Jarrett (Illustrator)

It was in spring of 2002 that I reviewed the excellent National Audubon Society's "Field Guide to Marine Mammals of the World", by Reeves et al., and illustrations by Pieter Folkens (Whulj, Vol. 3, Iss. 3). In my review, I lamented about the lack of good quality field guides for marine mammals up to that point. Exceptions were the two Sierra Club Handbooks (Whales and Dolphins, 1983; Seals and Sirenians, 1992), and the DK Eyewitness Handbook (Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises, 1995), as well as a handful of regional guides. And while we will never see the amount of guides that have been produced for birds, things have improved.

Now, more than four years later, a new one-of-a-kind marine mammal field guide has been published that may well become THE standard work for years to come. Written by Hadoram Shirihihi, and illustrated by Brett Jarrett, the "Whales, Dolphins, and Other Marine Mammals of the World", has surpassed my expectations. Previously both author and illustrator collaborated on "The Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife". An astounding work that brought high hopes for their current field guide.

At first glance, this profusely illustrated guide seems a bit confusing. It is hard to see where one species account starts and where the other ends. However, after some thumbing through it becomes clearer. Unlike previous guides, the author has abandoned a pure taxonomic arrangement for an easier comparative arrangement of similar species.

### Illustrations

As a marine mammal illustrator myself, any criticism given here will undoubtedly be seen as some kind of "jalousie de métier". Truth be told, there is very little to criticize. Although a relative newcomer to the field of marine mammal illustration, Brett Jarrett ([www.brettjarrett.com](http://www.brettjarrett.com)) is an accomplished wildlife artist. Brett's beautiful illustrations are skillfully painted in oil, and his years of careful observation in the field is evident in his work. The illustrations in this field guide depict not only all species known to date, it also shows the different sexes and geographic variations. Especially nice are the many killer whale eco-

types depicted here, even though they're still listed as a single species. I was disappointed however, to see the omission of the different harp seal stages. As immature harp seals, called "beaters" and "badlamers", look much like harbor seals, an inclusion in this guide would have been complete. A small and unclear photo of a "beater" is shown however.

### Photos

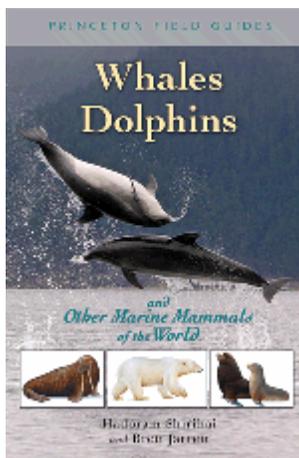
The guide is richly illustrated with photos too. Although, understandably, of mixed quality. Photos of stranded animals were carefully avoided, in favor of living animals in the wild to aid identification. Many of these wonderful photos have not been published before. In particular, the images of a breaching Hector's beaked whale and strap-toothed whale are a surprise.

This beautiful work gives us a nice snapshot of our current knowledge in marine mammal science. Since 2002, new species have been described with the aid of DNA. Now we find accounts of these "new" species, like the Australian snubfin dolphin, Perrin's beaked whale, and the latest taxonomic anomaly, the Omura's whale. It makes you wonder what a field guide in 2010 will look like.

This handy lightweight guide is an absolute must-have for any whale watcher and naturalist, amateur or professional. But don't throw away your Sierra Handbooks, DK eyewitness handbook or National Audubon Society's field guide, there is much to be admired of the illustrations by Larry Foster, Martin Camm and Pieter Folkens. These works also provide valuable information not found in this work.

Whales, Dolphins, and Other Marine Mammals of the World — By Hadoram Shirihihi and Brett Jarrett (Illustrator) — Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ (A&C Black Publishers, London, UK), October 2006

Paper | 2006 | \$24.95 / £15.95 | ISBN: 0-691-12757-3  
Cloth | 2006 | \$55.00 / £35.95 | ISBN: 0-691-12756-5  
384 pp. | 6 x 9 | 476 color photos. 75 color plates. 110 color maps.





## “Killer Whale Pod of Many Nations” Swims into Seattle

by Ann Stateler

*Killer Whale Pod of Many Nations* is a seven-foot-long, carved red cedar panel of five killer whales in five Northwest Coast Native art styles. Created by Tlingit artist and ACS/PS member Odin Lonning, it is a tribute to endangered orcas and Coastal tribes from Puget Sound to Alaska.

The designs in the five whales portray traditional and contemporary themes that symbolize the enduring bond between First Nations and killer whales. The Kwakwaka'wakw whale centered in Odin's photo here celebrates the triumphant reunion of Keetla (Springer/A73) with her pod in Namgis territory in British Columbia. The Nuuchahnulth whale partially shown on the left signifies the timeless wolf-killer whale connection in their culture and commemorates Tsux'it (Luna/L98).

Odin received a Native Arts grant from the Potlatch Fund ([www.potlatchfund.org](http://www.potlatchfund.org)) to produce *Killer Whale Pod of Many Nations*, which will serve as a teaching tool in the Seattle Aquarium's Puget Sound Orcas exhibit. In January

2007, the Aquarium will host a public dedication of the piece. Come to the unveiling to see the entire pod! We will notify ACS/PS members of the date and time when confirmed.



*Killer Whale Pod of Many Nations* courtesy Odin Lonning, copyright © 2006, all rights reserved

## Grant Awards Set ACS/PS Apart from Other Non Government Organizations

Since the year 2000, the Puget Sound Chapter of the American Cetacean Society has awarded seven grants to students studying cetaceans. These grants provide much needed funding for critical research.

Marine mammal scientists and their students are finding it more and more difficult to secure funding, especially under current federal environmental and science policies. That's why the grant money that the Puget Sound chapter awards is so important. We are the only local marine environmental organization that awards such research grants.

Unfortunately, the same financial drought that is hurting the students is also drying up our funding sources. Our chapter relies on generous donations from individuals and small businesses to fund our research grants program. We will continue to look for other larger funding sources, but it's also time to call on our members to help us help the whales!

No other organization is positioned to fill the void that would be left if ACS/PS were to stop awarding grant money.

Please help us to continue this vital contribution to the research and conservation of cetaceans! Rather than watching our grants program dry up, help the Puget Sound chapter to build the fund to its highest level ever. Our goal is to have \$2000 available for grants every year. We would then be able to help two to four students annually to continue their work to help the whales. Contributions of any amount would be greatly appreciated and your donations are 100% tax deductible to the extent of the law (please see your tax advisor). Confirmation of 501 (c)3 status available upon request.

American Cetacean Society Puget Sound Chapter  
Grants Fund  
P.O. Box 17136  
Seattle, WA 98127-0836



## Preventing Pollution

*Excerpted from the October Shore Stewards News a program of WSU Extension, Jefferson County*

*editors note: Recently the mainstream media has published a great deal of information about the contaminants found in Puget Sound, in part to educate the public on the poor health of the sound, as surveys found most people believe the Salish Sea is much cleaner than it really is. This article provides reliable, timely information and resources on some simple things you can do to reduce your personal impact on the waters we, and our beloved wildlife live in and around.*

There are actions that you can take to ensure that you do not inadvertently release mercury into the environment. Mercury can be found in a number of consumer products and making sure that these products are disposed of properly (i.e. at your local hazardous waste drop-off) is important in limited the further contamination of our waterways with mercury. According to the EPA, mercury may be found in the following products:

- Button cell batteries (used in calculators, watches, lights, cameras, etc.)
- Fluorescent light bulbs
- Thermometers
- Jewelry (There are some necklaces, imported from Mexico, which have a mercury-filled pendant)
- Paint produced before 1991
- Thermostats
- Athletic shoes, toys and cards which light up or make noise may contain mercury

If you need to dispose of any of these products, or are unsure whether an item you have contains mercury, contact your local hazardous waste department.

Another example of potential pollutants from our households is pharmaceuticals. When we take medicine, a portion of that medicine is excreted in our urine. Sewage treatment plants do not filter out these chemicals so they eventually make their way into our waterways. These chemicals don't generally bioaccumulate (i.e. stay in the body) but because they are constantly being released, long-term exposure can occur.

The only thing we can do to limit the amount of these chemicals our bodies excrete is to take medicine wisely, meaning that you take only as much as you need (following your pharmacists recommendations), and only when you really need it. However, properly disposing of expired or unneeded medications is an im-

portant action in preventing further contamination of our water. Pharmacies used to recommend flushing old medications down the toilet (to prevent ingestion by children). However, this means that all the medication winds up in our waterways since they cannot be removed by our current sewage treatment plants. If you have medication to dispose of, it is best to contact your local hazardous waste facility to see if they will take the medication; otherwise, it is best to put them in the garbage.

### Resources

Puget Sound Action Team, "Toxics in Puget Sound: Review and Analysis to Support Toxic Controls" <http://www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/toxics/CaseStatementToxics0306.pdf>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mercury website <http://www.epa.gov/mercury/> <http://www.epa.gov/mercury/consumer.htm>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, PCB website <http://www.epa.gov/pcb/> <http://www.epa.gov/pcb/pubs/effects.html>

Washington Department of Health, press release on Puget Sound Chinook [http://www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/2006\\_news/06-172.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/2006_news/06-172.htm)

Washington Toxics Coalition, Mercury website <http://watoxics.volcano.onenw.org/issues/mercury>

Washington Toxics Coalition, PBDE website <http://watoxics.volcano.onenw.org/issues/pbde>

### Don't miss these great upcoming events:

November 15th— see the article at right →→

— December 20th: —

**Michael Rylko, US EPA Region 10**

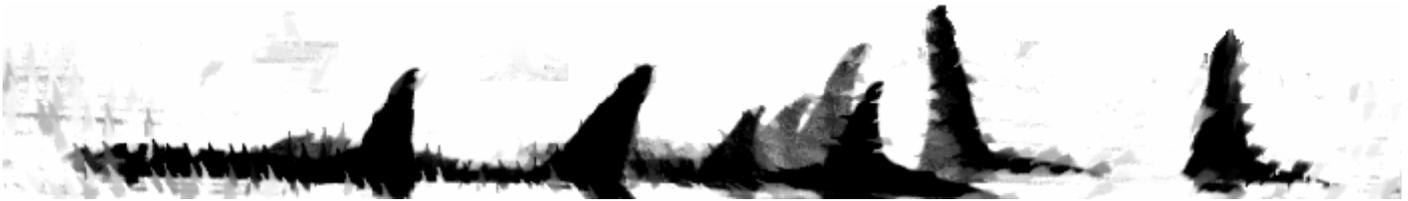
— January 17th —

**David Helvarg, of the Blue Frontier Campaign**

— February 21st—

**Toni Frohoff !!**

see [www.acspugetsound.org/speakers/](http://www.acspugetsound.org/speakers/) for details



## Vashon Hydrophone Project Update: K and L Pods Blow into Town—continued

*(Continued from page 1)*

goes to researchers Mark Sears, a VHP associate, along with Candi Emmons and Brad Hanson of NOAA Fisheries. Candi is our ACS/PS board secretary. We value her expert visual and acoustic ID skills.

Even on their first seasonal visit to our waters, the Southern Residents were not free of vessel impacts. As we watched from Maury Island, a blue-hulled charter boat sped over from Tacoma, obviously pursuing the whales. Confronted by a wall of underwater noise from a tug and barge, a passing recreational fishing boat, and the leap-frogging charter boat, the orcas made a long sounding and disappeared for about 15 minutes. In an apparent evasive maneuver, those smart killer whales switched direction and gave the slip to the annoying charter boat.

Near Point Defiance, the Tacoma Police boat got an eyeful when dozens of whales erupted into a round robin of synchronized breaching. A few minutes later at the convergence of Dalco Pass, Colvos Pass, and the Narrows, the orcas broke into another round of synchronized spy-hopping before congregating to enter the Narrows.

At that point, Mark, Brad, and Candi picked up the trail, following the whales down to Ketron Island. Mark said

the orcas were going north when the researchers departed around 5:00 PM. I was reluctant to leave my post by the hydrophone on the 18th, but Donna Sandstrom, our ACS/PS speaker that night, is a good friend.

Our joy in seeing the Southern Residents was tempered by somber news from the Center for Whale Research (CWR) that four members of K and L Pods are missing and likely dead. These orcas were in their prime. Raven (K28) was only twelve, her calf K39 was four months old, Hugo (L71) was twenty, and Jelly Roll (L43) was thirty-four. CWR staff noted that L71 and K28 looked emaciated and were probably starving. L43, a grandmother, leaves behind a family of four. The Southern Resident killer whale population has dropped to 86.

Threatened by depleted salmon stocks, persistent bioaccumulative toxins, stress from underwater noise and other vessel effects, Puget Sound's endangered killer whales are struggling to survive. Observe a moment of silence for the lost relatives of K and L Pods. Consider what you can do to ensure that these extraordinary orcas live on for generations to come. Then take action for the whales, because "they're not saved yet."

### November 15th Meeting Preview

**Dr. James Ha**

## *Social Behavior of Resident Inshore Killer Whales in the Pacific Northwest: Natural and Human Influences*

The southern resident inshore population of killer whales in the waters of Washington and British Columbia has recently undergone a 20% decline in numbers, followed by a more recent return to typical population size. This fluctuation has triggered a number of efforts to learn more about the human and natural influences on the behavior and population dynamics of this population. Our studies have focused on the influence of whale-watching vessel traffic and changes in natural prey (salmon) abundance on social behavior across both a long-term and short-term time frame. We have results from an analysis of a 25 year database of killer whale affiliation patterns as well as the results from four seasons of detailed behavioral data from

a project in which human observers track the animals for 6-12 hours per day.

Dr. James Ha has a 1989 Ph.D. in Zoology/Animal Behavior from Colorado State University and has been on the faculty of the University of Washington since 1992. He is actively involved in research on the social behavior of Old World monkeys, Pacific Northwest killer whales, local and Pacific island crows, and domestic dogs. He is also certified as an Applied Animal Behaviorist by the professional Animal Behavior Society and has his own private practice in dealing with companion animal behavior problems in the Puget Sound area.

# AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY



Puget Sound Chapter  
P.O. Box 17136  
Seattle, WA 98127-0836

www.acspugetsound.org  
info@acspugetsound.org  
206-734-4737

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address correction requested

## SAVE THE DATE—Wednesday November 15, 2006

Please join us at 7pm at the Phinney Neighborhood Center, Room 6 (just north of Woodland Park Zoo)

Dr. James Ha will speak on the Social Behavior of Resident Inshore Killer Whales in the Pacific Northwest: Natural and Human Influences



Photo courtesy Mark Sears © 2002 All Rights Reserved

***PLEASE JOIN US — SAY “YES!” — ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE PUGET SOUND CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN CETACEAN SOCIETY!”***

|   |                                |                        |
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| Address: _____                              | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 | Contributing           |
| City: _____                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75  | Supporting             |
| State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> \$45  | Family                 |
| E-mail: _____                               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35  | Active                 |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25  | Student/Teacher/Senior |

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