

# The Dolphin Gazette

Volume 10, issue 2 (April 2006)



From the Dolphin Communication Project,  
Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration  
55 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic CT 06355  
[www.dolphincommunicationproject.org](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org) and [www.mysticaquarium.org](http://www.mysticaquarium.org)

## In this issue:

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### A Note From Kathleen:

Summer is almost here! And, your next thought is, DCP researchers will soon be heading to their respective field sites to begin another season of data collection studying various aspects of dolphin communication and behavior. This summer promises to be an exciting one as we are adding a field site and ramping up educational programs with groups in each country that we visit. I must admit that about two months ago, it seemed that we would have a traffic jam actually getting to the field: three programs begin in May, and almost all begin on 7 May collectively. Justin heads to Japan on May 7th, heading out to Mikura within a couple of days of his arrival. He will spend about two months observing the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins around Mikura. Kelly and I will head to Bimini on May 6th for a class from Alaska Pacific University on the coastal ecology of near-shore odontocetes. Kelly is joined by Darcie at the end of May; they will be on Bimini until early September. And, our newest program of research will be established by Kristy and me on 12 May for a two week session of data collection studying the bottlenose dolphins at Dolphin Encounters in Nassau. More detail on each of the programs beginning this spring is available in this issue of the Gazette. And, we will be updating you daily from the field through our Field Reports page on the DCP web site. We will also return the option of "ask a researcher a question" and hope to post answers to the field report section as well as to the Immersion Presents Dolphins web site.

Thank you for your continued support and welcome to our 2006 Summer Field Season!

Cheers

Kathleen



## Welcome Pine Point Students!!

As you may remember, DCP is now located at Pine Point School in Stonington, CT. We have immersed ourselves into the computer lab and media room in their Library and Technology Center, and are working with some of the seventh and eighth grade students. They are our test group of *Dolphin Research Trainees (DRTs)*.

Working with Kristy, Darcie, and Kathleen three days a week, the *DRTs* are learning the process of dolphin identification from video. Our *DRT* team assists with the identification of dolphins at Roatan

Institute for Marine Sciences (RIMS) from the 2004 field season.

Soon they will be so good at dolphin IDs, they will be able to stop in and work on video-IDs whenever they have free

time - they won't even need our help!

### From the *DRTs*

Have you been wondering about the progression of (and what the heck we are actually doing in) the *Dolphin Research Trainee* program? Well, today must be your lucky day because you are about to find out! We have been checking over IDs of dolphins and making new ones using sketches and photo identification cards. We are now working the 2004 season at RIMS. We have slowed down in our progress because we now have other afternoon engagements such as lacrosse, but we are still getting in to do some work once in a while. We have now begun identifying the dolphins on our own *DRTs* without much help from Kathleen, Kristy, and Darcie. If you have any questions, feel free to email us at [dcp@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:dcp@mysticaquarium.org). Toodles!

**Pierra & Hunter, DCP DRTs**

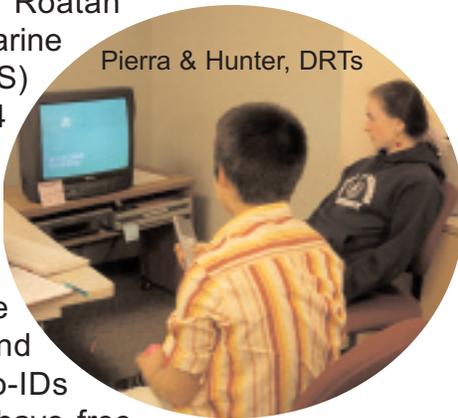
## Sally Cogan in Mikura

On June 23rd I will embark on the trip of a lifetime, my lifetime at least! As a recipient of a Pine Point School Fiore Fellowship, I will be traveling to Mikura Island to learn from, and hopefully help, Kathleen and her husband John as they study dolphin communication with a wild population of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins.

When I first shared this idea with Kathleen, I thought that the Bahamas or Roatan would be great, but she suggested Mikura because that's where she would be this summer. WOW! That was beyond my wildest dreams. Going to Japan, to that beautiful little island of Mikura, experiencing a fascinating and unfamiliar culture, and being in the water with dolphins would itself be an amazing experience. To be able to do it with a gifted and inspired scientist who is actually studying dolphin communication will be a true educational treasure. I must admit that each time I think about the trip a smile explodes across my face, and my feet tend to do a little jig.

I'm a fourth grade teacher at Pine Point School, who has always been fascinated by the ocean and all its creatures. Through my 28 years of teaching, I have always managed to bring the ocean into my classroom; no matter what curriculum I was supposed to be teaching. And now, I am truly looking forward to bringing back to Pine Point, to its children, its families, its teachers, the Dolphin Research Trainees (aka DRT crew), and anyone else I can corral into listening, all that I learn. Hopefully, I will be able to give back to others some of what has been so generously given to me.

In the last "Dolphin Gazette," John Anderson wrote, "I have come to believe that we should find work about which we can be passionate, about what we believe in, and which will make ourselves better." Well John, thanks to your wife, Kathleen, I will have the chance to combine my two great passions this summer in the ocean in Japan.



## *Volunteering*

DCP will be accepting *local* volunteers for data analyses during Summer, 2006, in Connecticut. We **DO NOT** accept volunteers for field work at any of our field sites, although Ecotour trips are available for RIMS in September. We are holding a volunteer training session in early June - anyone interested in volunteering *must* be at the training. For more information, contact Kate Cebik, Volunteer Coordinator at MAIFE, at 860-572-5955 x209.

## *Dolphin Sense*

Renew your Dolphin Adoption between January-June 2006, and receive a copy of the DVD *Dolphin Sense*, produced by Terramar Productions. DCP has 25 dolphins available to be adopted - see the full list at the end of the newsletter.

If you would like to Adopt-a-Dolphin found in the waters around Bimini, The Bahamas, you can do so by sending in the form at the end of this newsletter, or by going online to:  
[www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/Adopt.asp](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/Adopt.asp).

## *The Glass Block Wall*

Mystic Aquarium & Institute For Exploration is offering the opportunity to make your mark at MAIFE that will last for years to come! If you are interested in inscribing a glass block to become a part of the glass block wall at MAIFE, please email Deena at [dfabricant@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:dfabricant@mysticaquarium.org).

## *OceanPlanet Film Festival*

The weekend of November 3-5, 2006, will feature MAIFE's first-ever OceanPlanet Film Festival! We are hosting this one-of-a-kind event in celebration of our mission, "to inspire people everywhere to care about and protect our oceans by exploring and sharing their biological, ecological, and cultural treasures." The weekend film festival will showcase student, amateur, and curated films featuring aquatic, conservation, and natural history themes. This film festival will allow young filmmakers to present their work in a professional, juried competition. In addition, we have received permission to show several curated films from well-known filmmakers. We invite you to participate in this exciting endeavor. For details, see [www.mysticaquarium.org](http://www.mysticaquarium.org) under the programs page.

## **Gearing up for DCP's summer field research season - 2006**

We are currently preparing for DCP's summer field season: Darcie and Kelly will once again be heading to Bimini, The Bahamas (May-September); Justin will be on Mikura Island, Japan (May-July); and Kristy will be at Dolphin Encounters in Nassau, The Bahamas, our newest field site starting this May! Kathleen will be bouncing among all three of these locations while the students are there, before heading to Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences in Roatan, Honduras, this September.

In the coming weeks, we will gather all of the equipment necessary for 2-3 months in the field. This means lots of blank tapes, batteries, and electronic gadgetry, which will be packed tightly with our clothing, to keep it safe during the plane rides to and from our field sites. Much preparation goes into fieldwork, but the bulk of the work is conducted once we are back home - this is where most of the data analyses happens. We spend approximately 30 hours analyzing each hour of data collected while in the field, which is why we spend more time in Connecticut than we do out in or on the water.

We will also be spending some time in a local pool, reacquainting ourselves with the array and our masks, fins, and snorkels, as well as in the gym preparing ourselves to carry all of our heavy equipment around all summer!



The MVA, or "array", used to collect data.

Don't forget, beginning in early May (or September for RIMS) you can follow our daily reports from each field site, posted on the Field Reports page of the DCP website: [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp). This is your chance to watch science unfold in real time. Wish us luck!



## Dolphin Encounters, Nassau, The Bahamas

DCP is beginning a new research program at Dolphin Encounters (DE) in Nassau, The Bahamas, to complement the data that is currently being collected in the wild and at RIMS in Honduras. DE currently has 22 bottlenose dolphins in human care, allowing us additional comparisons between wild and captive dolphins, between species and habitats, and even between the same species in human care at two different locations. Kristy Beard will lead the research at DE, focusing on bubble emissions from dolphin blowholes and the potential functions of those bubbles. Kristy and Kathleen will set up this program from 12-24 May, and plan to return in September, January, and May annually thereafter. We will also utilize the Pec Pacs and MOSART tags from Christer Blomqvist on the dolphins at DE. Using the Array and MOSART tags concurrently allows us to collect more signal receiver information, as well as signal and signal sender details for the most information possible when examining dolphin communication. That is, use of the MVA and MOSART tags lets us record both sides of an exchange. Field reports will be posted beginning in early May; check out the website at [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp).

### Bimini, The Bahamas - 2006

#### DCP and APU

DCP is gearing up for its first official collaboration with Alaska Pacific University (APU), where Kelly Melillo is currently attending graduate school. Part of Kel's Master's Degree work will be continuing DCP's research off Bimini, The Bahamas. Portions of APU's curriculum are "block" courses. These 2-4 week, intensive courses occur three times a year (Sept, Jan, and May) and often have field components. So, it only seemed natural to build a course around the Bimini field site. APU graduate and undergraduate students will complete this new course titled "Coastal Ecosystems" with a focus on coastal cetaceans (off Bimini, the Atlantic spotted and bottlenose dolphins). Led by Dr. Leslie Cornick of APU and DCP's own Dr. Kathleen Dudzinski, students will participate in lectures at APU's campus 1-5 May and then head to Bimini until 14 May! Course topics will include coastal processes and development, dolphin behavior (including mating and other social interactions), photo-ID, and underwater video. In addition to readings, lectures, and discussions, students will join DCP researchers onboard Bimini Undersea's ecotour vessel. DCP and APU are both very excited about this collaboration; hopefully, it will be the first of many!

#### DCP and Bimini Undersea

Darcie will be joining Kelly in Bimini on 28 May, where they will be collecting dolphin data until 15 September. From May to September, Bimini Undersea will offer *Wild Dolphin Adventure Weeks*. Trips are run by Bill & Nowdla Keefe's Bimini Undersea; more information is available on their website, [www.WildDolphins.com](http://www.WildDolphins.com). Darcie and Kelly also hope to spend time with the students on Bimini, teaching them about the dolphins living in the waters around their homes.

#### Bimini, Here We Come!

DCP is preparing for its sixth field season studying the Atlantic spotted dolphins off Bimini, The Bahamas. Darcie Blanding (University of Rhode Island) and Kelly Melillo (Alaska Pacific University) are again leading the research and can't wait for it to start. They will continue to gather data on this population while onboard Bimini Undersea's ecotour vessel ([www.WildDolphins.com](http://www.WildDolphins.com)). The Bimini field season runs from 7 May – 15 September. We have many new things to look forward to this year, including a new apartment. Stay up to date on us and the dolphins with field reports posted regularly from Bimini! <http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp>

Some of this year's highlights include:

- \* Identifying individual dolphins from both the boat and under water, including through still photography
- \* Gathering video and acoustic data using Kathleen's MVA. This video will be logged (individuals identified, times, behaviors, etc.) as preparation for future analysis

Bimini, continued on next page



Bimini, continued...

- \* Working on data analyses for our individual Master's theses (details on DCP's website!)
- \* Chatting with Bimini Undersea passengers, both while on the boat and during "formal" weekly presentations ("formal" because it is still Bimini after all! Shoes are optional!)
- \* Visiting with students at the three island schools in an effort to promote community-based education and conservation
- \* And of course, enjoying island life! It isn't ALL work...

## Mikura Island, Japan - 2006

In just a few weeks, DCP will return to the far flung isle of Mikura in Japan to continue our long-term study of the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins that call the waters around Mikura home. This year, Justin Gregg will return to Mikura unaccompanied by his trusty translator and guide, Kathleen. He must brave the airports, ferries, taxis and frenetic world of downtown Tokyo on his own. We have full confidence in him. He will arrive in Tokyo on 8 May, where he will spend two days before stepping onto the ferry to Mikura on 10 May. He is scheduled to arrive on Mikura on 11 May, marking the official start of the research season. This year, Kathleen will join Justin on Mikura at the end of June, for the last week or so of the field season. She will be accompanied by John Anderson (esteemed husband and accomplished filmmaker) and Sally Cogan. Sally, a 4th grade teacher from Pine Point School in Stonington, CT, was awarded a Fiore Fellowship which will allow her to travel to Mikura to assist Kathleen and Justin with the last week of data collection. Sally is very excited about the trip, and as a PADI advanced open water diver, she will be more than capable of holding her own in what can become strong currents around Mikura. Justin is looking forward to heading back to Mikura - he tells us there are "many individual dolphins that it will be fun to swim with again, including some of the more curious characters like Sekapun (#309) and Ketsushakure (#404)". We are all interested to see what has become of little Hamlet - Hamu-chan's (#086) calf who survived a nasty shark-bite in 2004. Justin is also excited to see his new human friends from the island, as well. He has been working very hard on his Japanese, but says he is still only able to say rudimentary phrases like: "The weather is nice. Would you like some tea, Mr. Tanaka?" This is a huge improvement over last year, and while immersed in Japanese culture this summer he is sure to learn more. Start watching for Justin's Field Reports in early May, at [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp).

## *Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences, Roatan, Honduras*

Kathleen will return to RIMS, at Anthony's Key Resort in Honduras, this September for another season of data collection. This year, there will be more than two dolphins wearing Pec Pacs, allowing us to record both sender and receiver communication signals. More information on this field site will be available in the July edition of the *Gazette*. Keep an eye on the Field Reports page of our website for start dates: [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/FieldReports/default.asp).

There is still space available for DCP's Ecotour trips, assisting Kathleen with data collection and entry. Dates for the 2006 Ecotours are **10-17 September & 17-24 September**. These trips run from Sunday to Sunday, when there is a direct flight from Miami to Roatan. If you are interested in joining our research at RIMS, contact Deena Fabricant ([dfabricant@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:dfabricant@mysticaquarium.org)) or Bill Sperling ([bsperling@idyllwild.com](mailto:bsperling@idyllwild.com)). Of course, the trip won't be all work - you'll also get to observe and interact with dolphins! Please note: children under 18 *must* be accompanied by a parent or guardian – **absolutely no exceptions!!** More details are available at: [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/ecotours](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/ecotours). We look forward to seeing you in Roatan!



## Marine Animal Rescue Program

The 2006 Stranding season at Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration has been an unusual one, with only five seals and one harbor porpoise receiving rehabilitation so far. The season officially began on 22 January, with the arrival of two seals at our Seal Rescue Clinic (SRC).

On this day, we brought in a yearling male harp seal. Harp seals are a type of "ice seal" that migrate to our area during the winter months. Ice seals prefer to live where there is ice and snow, and the colder temperatures to support this. In the absence of ice and snow, the juveniles will ingest sand and rocks and become dehydrated. An example of this was another juvenile harp seal later this winter that was found with 5 pounds of rocks in its stomach during the necropsy! The seal on 22 January had been reported taking in mouthfuls of sand on Charlestown Beach in Rhode Island. The animal was brought in and a radiograph was taken of the abdomen to see how much sand was in his stomach. Luckily, we received the call early on and the radiograph did not show a stomach full of compacted sand. The animal remained in the Seal Rescue Clinic for five days to make sure that it was indeed healthy and was able to eat on its own before being released.

The other seal brought in on that day was a male gray seal pup from Little Compton, RI, with a full lanugo coat. This white coat helps the animal to retain body heat since it lacks blubber for the first few weeks after birth. Two to three weeks later, the lanugo is shed leaving it with a shorter coat similar to an adult. The gray seal pup we had picked up was shedding its lanugo, and based on its size was determined to be two weeks old! The animal was too young to be eating solid food and so we began by tube feeding him fish gruel five times a day. Once he became larger, we introduced whole fish into his diet and taught him how to swallow it. Two weeks later, fish were tossed into his pool and he slowly began to figure out how to position fish in his mouth to swallow

them whole (seals do not chew their food). About a month after being admitted into the Seal Rescue Clinic, the gray seal was released.

During this stranding season, we have also rescued a seal with fishing net wrapped around its neck! Luckily, the animal was still in the area when we arrived. We were able to remove the net, and there were no wounds on the seal where the net had been.

Currently, we have a female gray seal pup that arrived very thin and had some bite wounds on her back and chin. The wounds were



believed to have been caused from her trying to nurse from another mother. She has been gaining weight, and her wounds are healing slowly.

With the arrival of spring, we are starting to receive our first dolphin and porpoise calls. Unfortunately, there have been three Atlantic white-sided dolphins that were dead when they washed ashore. On April 7th, a 4ft. live male harbor porpoise stranded alive, and was brought to the SRC for the night. The next day he was transferred to The Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research & Preservation, a stranding facility in New York, and is doing well. He isn't out of the woods, but the trail to rehabilitation has begun.

### ***Animal Parent Program***

Thank you to all Animal Parents! Renew your Animal Parent adoption and receive a FREE thermal travel mug from MAIFE! For information on the Animal Parent program, please contact us at [animalparent@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:animalparent@mysticaquarium.org) or (860) 572-5955 ext. 553.

Thanks!

***Deena & Alicia***

Deena Fabricant, Development Assistant, MAIFE  
Alicia Babcock, AP & MAR Adoption Programs



## DCP Sponsorship Levels

The following list defines the benefits for each level of sponsorship of DCP:

**\$15 Student. \$25 Individual. \$35 Foreign.** all include a welcome packet\*

**\$45 Family.** 3 note cards, 3 postcards & welcome packet (note: family sponsors consist of 2 or more individuals living in the same household.)

**\$75 Supporting.** A copy of *Dolphins* video (while supplies last, then a *DCP season summary* or *Dolphin Spirit* video), 3 note cards, 3 postcards & welcome packet

**\$250 Contributing.** 1 DCP t-shirt, copy of *Dolphins* video (while supplies last, then a *DCP season summary* or *Dolphin Spirit* video), 3 note cards, 3 postcards & welcome packet

**\$500 Patron.** Limited edition matted print suitable for framing, 1 DCP t-shirt, a copy of *Dolphins* video (while supplies last, then a *DCP season summary* or *Dolphin Spirit* video), 3 note cards, 3 postcards & welcome packet

**\$1,000 Benefactor.** 20% discount for individual sponsors on a DCP Ecotour trip, limited edition matted print suitable for framing, 1 DCP t-shirt, a copy of *Dolphins* video (while supplies last, then a *DCP season summary* or *Dolphin Spirit* video), 3 note cards, 3 postcards & welcome packet

**\*Welcome Packet:** includes a welcome letter, DCP flyer, one-year subscription to the Dolphin Gazette, and a 10% discount on DCP-related merchandise.

### Yes! I want to sponsor the work of the Dolphin Communication Project.

I am a:  New Sponsor  Renewing Sponsor This is a:  Gift Sponsorship

Please enroll me as a:

- |                                                                         |                                          |                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$15                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$45     | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$500       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Individual \$35 ( <i>outside USA</i> ) |                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$250 |

I would like to offer an additional gift of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to adopt a dolphin: \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Dolphin name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Sponsorships to the Dolphin Communication Project are for one year.*

My check made out to DCP is enclosed. (Credit card payment is available online or by phone.)

Please **send** my sponsorship package to: If this is a gift, please note gift GIVER address:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Yes! I want to Adopt a Dolphin!

- |               |           |                       |              |
|---------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Buster        | Juliette  | Niecey                | Swoosh       |
| Cerra         | Leslie    | Padre                 | Stefran      |
| Cleopatra     | Lil' Jess | Picky                 | Teardrops    |
| Dolphin Dandy | Lone Star | Prince William Joseph | Tim          |
| Finn Cusimano | Lumpy     | of Wyckoff            | Tina         |
| Freckles      | Nemo      | Romeo                 | Vincent      |
|               |           | SplitJaw              | White Blotch |

Circle your choice, fill out the information above & send \$30.00 per adoption.  
Learn more about these dolphins at [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org)!



# Other Ways to Support DCP

## Videos

<i>Dolphin Sense DVD</i>	\$25
<i>Dolphin Spirit VHS</i>	\$25
<i>Bridging the Ocean Divide DVD</i>	\$30

**Note cards** \$2.50 each

**Postcards** \$1.00 each

*Discounts are available for packets.*

**DCP T-Shirts** \$15 + \$2.50 S&H

**DCP Long Sleeve Shirt** \$20 + \$2.50 S&H

**Eco-Tours** at Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences (RIMS) in Roatan, Honduras. See page 5 for more information.

*Please send check or money order to DCP. Products can be purchased through PayPal at [www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/support.asp](http://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/support.asp). For more information, email [dcp@mysticaquarium.org](mailto:dcp@mysticaquarium.org).*

*Thank you to DCP Volunteers!!*

Without your effort and assistance, DCP's office could not run so smoothly throughout the year. You all do a great job processing data and keeping things organized. Well done!

If you'd like to become a DCP volunteer, opportunities may be available for processing data and working with DCP's video and sound files in our office. For more details, see the Education page on the DCP web site, or contact Kate Cebik, Volunteer Coordinator at MAIFE. Kate can be reached at: 860-572-5955 x209. All DCP volunteers coordinate their time through the Volunteer Coordinator and Kristy.

## Internships:

Unfortunately, DCP is unable to offer internships for Summer 2006. Internships are available through MAIFE. Information can be found at: <http://www.mysticaquarium.org/index.cgi/788>.

**Dolphin Communication Project  
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To:

