

The Dolphin Gazette

Volume 11, issue 3 (August 2007)



From the Dolphin Communication Project
Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration
55 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic CT 06355

www.dolphincommunicationproject.org and www.thedolphinpod.com

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A Note From Kathleen:

The field seasons are going strong with summer more than half over. We have had a busy & productive summer. In this issue, you'll hear from Maria and Tabby, DCP's two Bimini interns for the summer, about their summer with DCP both in the office and field. You will also hear about the DRT trip to Japan. Thirteen teens accompanied two Pine Point teachers (Mr. Williams & Ms. Cogan) and me to Japan: we spent time on Mikura and in Tokyo. The DRTs impressed me because they accomplished something no other ecotourist has done. Several DRTs recognized individual dolphins on their first swim! We have a group of budding scientists in the making.

Justin provides an update on his last summer field season on Mikura & Kelly details her work on Bimini with a mid-season report. I head to Nassau & DE for a week to teach a class about dolphins to a group from Immersion Presents' Boys & Girls Clubs program (with daily posts to our field reports) & collect data on the dolphins at DE. Additionally, in September, I will lead an ecotour to RIMS for our continued studies.

We greatly appreciate all your support and interest in the research and education programs that are ongoing. We will have several new updates and some exciting news for the autumn issue of the Dolphin Gazette. So, stay tuned and enjoy the rest of your summer!

Cheers,
Kathleen
Director, DCP

The *Dolphin Gazette* is now printed on 100% recycled paper!



Join DCP on a Research Trip!

There is still time to join Dr. Kathleen Dudzinski on an ecotour trip to the Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences to learn about and assist with DCP's dolphin research! This year's trip runs from September 9-16 at Anthony's Key Resort in Honduras. The trip cost of \$1495 per person includes lodging at this five-star resort, three meals a day, two dolphin swims and two dolphin encounters per person, airport transfers, horseback riding, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, Bailey's Key Wildlife Sanctuary, and more. SCUBA divers receive three single tank boat dives daily, two single tank night dives weekly, tanks, weights, and belt; snorkelers receive two daily boat trips. Airfare is **NOT** included.

Trip participants also have the opportunity to assist with data collection from the surface as part of DCP's research on dolphin behavior and acoustics, and with analyses of videotapes for individual dolphin identities and behavioral sampling.



DCP Research to be Presented at International Conference

DCP researchers Kathleen Dudzinski, Kristy Beard, Justin Gregg, and Kelly Melillo will be presenting their research at the 17th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals in South Africa! The conference is in November so we will be preparing until then. For details on specific research projects, visit our website at www.dolphincommunicationproject.org.

Field Sites

Mikura Island, Japan

Mikura end of season summary:

Hello dolphin gazette readers,

This year's research season on Mikura was short but fruitful! I was only on Mikura from May 21 through June 21, but still ended up with 10 video tapes, 26 boat trips (3,212 minutes on the water), 454 minutes of video, and 201 water entries. If you followed along with the field reports, you will have heard me mention that the ocean water was quite cold this season, and FILLED with jelly fish; both are a result of the warm water Kuroshio Current bypassing Mikura this year. Despite the cold, the dolphins were out in force, and I managed to get lots of great video! It was a lot of fun having the DRTs on the island at the end of the field season – I know that the local Mikura kids really enjoyed having the kids from Pine Point visit. Thanks everyone for the great season!

-Justin

Justin Gregg, DCP Research Associate

Dolphin Research Trainees (DRTs) in Japan

From June 16-26, thirteen students from Pine Point School in Stonington, Connecticut participated in DCP's first ever Dolphin Research Trainee (DRT) exchange program to Japan. The team spent four days on Mikura and four and a half days in Tokyo. While on Mikura, the DRTs met students from the Mikura school, learned about dolphins and DCP's research in Japan, joined a trip to swim with the dolphins, and spent much time exploring and learning Japanese cultures. This trip represented the first part of a student exchange program between the Mikura and Pine Point Schools. The DRTs spent 14 weeks - once a week, after school - learning about Japanese culture, food, art, history and DCP's dolphin studies around Mikura Island to prepare for their trip. On Mikura, we spent one day at the school interacting with students from both the junior high and elementary schools. We were greeted with traditional songs and music, presentations and a warm welcome. We witnessed a kendo kata and match demonstration. We played traditional games as well as four rounds of basketball. We also played the whispering game that is known as 'telephone' in the US. We were delighted to share lunch with the Mikura students in their lunchroom.

The next day, the DRTs boarded three boats (Kisshoumaru, Umitonchoumaru, and Sirius) to observe the dolphins. The students impressed both Justin and me because they readily identified several individual Mikura dolphins! A shared BBQ at the park for the students from both groups as well as the teachers completed our dolphin day. On Wednesday, led by Kanayama-san, Kogi-san and Ichiro-sensei, we hiked to Nango to see the Shi no Ki (or giant trees). The weather was perfect, and we witnessed spectacular views from the east side of Mikura to the sea and to Oyama. We learned much from our three guides and enjoyed every minute of our hiking trip. Dinner this evening was spent at Yamaya with delicious food from Kazoku at Yamaya. (... continued next page)



Photo: DCP



DRTs in Japan ... continued ...

Our last morning on Mikura was Thursday and began very early at the pier helping to remove fish from several nets. The students had a great experience and enjoyed their time with the senchoo (captains and fishermen) assisting with the fish and nets. We rode the ferry back to Tokyo that afternoon and spent the next several days sightseeing and learning more about Japan. We visited many sites including the Edo Museum, Tokyo Tower, The East Garden of the Imperial House, Yodobashi, Meiji Jinja, Kanaan Temple, the Diet Building, Tsukiji Fish Market, and more. We participated in a tea ceremony and had sukiyaki for dinner one night. We even did karaoke!

Our trip was more than we could have hoped for and everyone had a very good time. We look forward to hosting the Mikura students when they visit Pine Point School and Southeastern Connecticut in 2008.

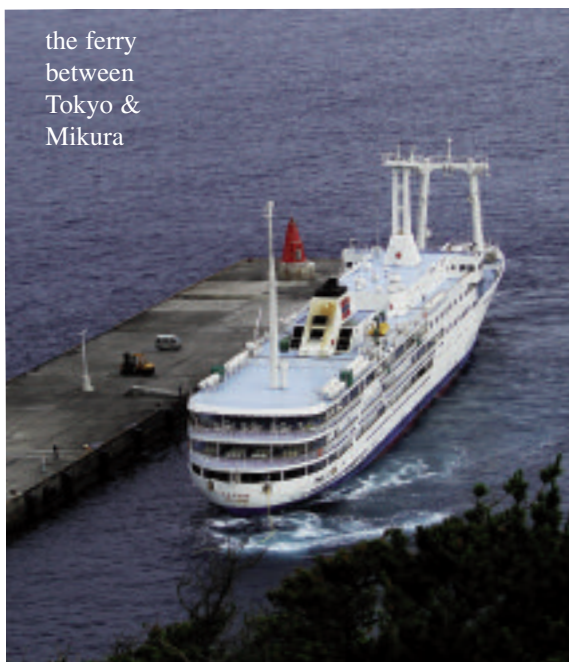
In September, at Pine Point School the DRTs will host a presentation about their trip for their peers, parents and teachers. Supporters of the program will be invited as well. So, in the next issue of the Gazette, you might just get a few more personal stories from some of the first DRT team members. Nina Sheffield shares her thoughts below.

Cheers,

Kathleen Dudzinski, DCP Director & DRT field trip leader

Letters from DRTs on their return from Japan:

The entire trip to Japan was amazing, but I would say that Mikura Jima was the best part. My first sight of the island and I knew we were gonna have a wonderful time with the people and especially the dolphins. There were two particular parts of the trip to Mikura that stood out for me, swimming with the dolphins and the BBQ. Swimming with the wild but oh so friendly dolphins was something I will never forget. Being that close was surreal and it was great being able to learn about dolphin communication and the ways they interact. Second was the BBQ. Being at the school and getting to know the Mikura kids there was great but I felt that being at the BBQ was an experience I also will never forget. We found a symbol of playing that we both understood and that was a simple game of tag! We all knew how to play and that game brought us so much closer. I also met a young girl named Misumi who seemed very interested with me and fortunately she knew some English. We held hands as she showed me to all her friends and she had this happiness to her that shined. The trip to Mikura Jima was an experience I will NEVER forget and I hope to go back as soon as I can. ~ Nina



At the top of the hill after our arrival on Mikura
... at the dolphin watching spot.



The Dolphin Gazette is also available on-line at www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/newsletter.

More photos of the DRT trip ...



Learning everyone's names!



Ty ready for action on our dolphin watching trip.



Searching for Dolphins!



The DRT team at the Diet (Government) Building in Tokyo.



At the Imperial Palace

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Bimini, The Bahamas

Mid-Season summary:

Hello all! I cannot believe that the 2007 Bimini field season is more than half complete. As always, it has been a busy season ...

Most of my time here is spent aboard a local swim-with-dolphins boat (www.WildDolphins.com). May was filled with boat time but the weather was windier than usual, so many boat trips were spent watching the dolphins surf waves. June started with rain from Tropical Storm Barry, but was followed by a great week of trips. DCP intern Maria Baetti joined me for dolphin trips and preliminary video analysis before heading to the office in Connecticut. July started out quietly but was in full swing by mid-month while I was



Photo: DCP

Photo: DCP



joined by DCP's second summer intern, Tabby Baker. Be sure to read notes from both interns in this newsletter! Now, here I sit, with August upon us. I've completed 31 dolphin trips, with 29 spotted dolphins re-identified, 1 new spotted added to the catalog, 4 bottlenose dolphins re-identified, and 4 new bottlenose added to the catalog. Plus I just returned from an exploratory trip south of Bimini.

The purpose of this trip was to document the Atlantic spotted dolphins that have been reported about 60 miles south of Bimini. The three day trip was exhausting, but very successful. Video & photographs are waiting patiently to be analyzed, but I'm fairly confident that none of the spotted observed were animals from our

Bimini photo-ID catalog. Is it possible that this is another isolated Bahamian spotted dolphin population? We are fairly certain that the Bimini group is separate from the White Sand Ridge group of spotted. So, maybe this group farther south is different as well.

Well, now I need to get ready for dolphin trip #32! Remember to stay up to date with the Bimini field site with my regular field reports: www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/fieldreports/FieldReportsBimini2007.asp

-Kel

Kelly Melillo, DCP Research Associate

Adopt-a-Dolphin

DCP currently has 25 dolphins from our catalog of Atlantic spotted dolphins residing around Bimini, The Bahamas available for adoption. While adoptive parents do not get to take their dolphins home, they will receive a certificate of adoption, a photo of their adopted dolphin, some facts about Atlantic spotted dolphins, information about DCP and our research around Bimini, and a dolphin video. They will also receive the most recent edition of the *Dolphin Gazette*, DCP's quarterly newsletter, with three more issues to be mailed or e-mailed over the one-year adoption period.

All dolphin adoptions through DCP help support our dolphin research throughout the world, as well as the creation and implementation of local, national, and international education programs for students of all ages.

Biographies of the 25 dolphins available for adoption can be read on the DCP website at: www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/Adopt.asp. Adoptions can be purchased via the website or by using the form at the end of this newsletter.



Intern Updates:

I found out about the Dolphin Communication Project last summer when I went to see the Dolphins IMAX film. From then on I knew I wanted to get involved with dolphin communication research. I have always been interested in animal behavior and am pursuing a degree in Psychology at the University of Georgia, but this was my first experience in field research. I was thrilled when I found out I got one of the two undergraduate intern positions with DCP.

The first portion of my internship took place in the crystal clear waters of The Bahamas. Working with Kelly, I spent three weeks on the four-mile long island of Bimini. I enjoyed getting acquainted with the Bahamian lifestyle and most of all, with the population of Atlantic spotted dolphins! I was responsible for keeping track of the weather conditions, the boat's direction changes, and logging dolphin sightings. Once in the water, I was in charge of taking still photographs with an underwater digital camera. Swimming with the dolphins is one of the most amazing experiences. They are such animated and curious creatures. Kelly recorded the video and taught me how to identify dolphins from video using DCP's photo-ID catalog.

After a short break at home in Georgia, I moved up to Connecticut for the rest of my internship. With the guidance of Kathleen and Kristy I have learned about how the data DCP collects at the various research sites is organized and used for individual projects and as an education tool. Along with helping out at the DCP office, I worked as a volunteer at Mystic Aquarium once a week assisting in the classroom for summer camps and reading stories to preschoolers.

Overall, interning with DCP has been a very educational and memorable experience. I recommend it to anyone interested in animal behavior, marine biology, or dolphin research!

~Maria

Maria Baetti, DCP Intern, Summer 2007



It was in February that I learned about the Dolphin Communication Project through a professor of mine at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island. From the time that I learned about this program I was excited; my excitement was only fueled more when I was asked for an interview and offered the internship soon after.

My internship was broken into three parts: the first and last were spent in DCP's office at Pine Point School in Stonington, CT, where I spent most of my time analyzing data. Data analysis consists of reviewing videos to identify dolphins, entering video logs into spreadsheets, and creating still photos of dolphins from video. I also assisted with general office duties such as sending out Adoption and Sponsorship packages to DCP's wonderful supporters.

The second part of my internship was in Bimini, The Bahamas where I was able to get involved in field research and see how the data I had processed in the office was collected. I was able to get out on eight different dolphin trips and each one was unique and special in its own way. Some days we were in deeper water where we observed dolphins feeding and playing with fish; other days we saw the Atlantic spotted dolphins and bottlenose dolphins interact; and lastly there was that special day that we encountered bottlenose dolphins crater feeding. While swimming with the dolphins I took still photos of them, which was exciting because I was able to put my new camera to the test, and also develop better photography skills underwater.

In the end, this summer has been a wonderful experience, from learning about research in the field and the office, meeting new people, and even living in a new country for 3 weeks.

~Tabby

Tabitha Baker, DCP Intern, Summer 2007



Ways to Support DCP

DVDs

Bridging the Ocean Divide ~~\$30~~ \$19.95 + \$4.95 S&H

Dolphin Spirit VHS ~~\$25~~ \$9.95 + Free Shipping!

Note cards \$2.50 each/ 3 for \$6

Postcards \$1.00 each/ 3 for \$2

DCP T-Shirts \$15 + \$4.95 S&H

DCP Long Sleeve Shirt \$20 + \$4.95 S&H

Eco-Tours at Roatan Institute for Marine

Sciences (RIMS) in Roatan, Honduras, and at

Dolphin Encounters, Nassau, The Bahamas.

(See below & the Ecotour page of the DCP site)

Please send check or money order to DCP at 55 Coogan Blvd, Mystic, CT 06355. Products can be purchased online through PayPal at www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/support.asp.

EcoTours

Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences, Honduras:

This year's trip to RIMS will be from 9-16 September 2007. The trip cost has been discounted from \$1,600 to **\$1495** per person per week, which includes lodging and three meals a day at Anthony's Key Resort. Airfare & Honduran departure taxes are NOT included. Information on what else is included in the trip is available at: www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/ecotours.asp. Contact Bill at bsperling@idyllwild.com for more information or to sign up.

Dolphin Encounters, Nassau, The Bahamas:

We are currently planning a new ecotour joining DCP at Dolphin Encounters during January 2008. This trip will be a long weekend, arriving on Thursday and departing on Monday, and joining DCP researchers in data collection Friday-Sunday. Stay tuned to the *Gazette* and the DCP website for more details!

Yes! I want to Adopt a Dolphin!

Buster

Cerra

Cleopatra

Dolphin Dandy

Finn Cusimano

Freckles

Juliette

Leslie

Lil' Jess

Lone Star

Lumpy

Nemo

Niecey

Padre

Picky

Prince William Joseph

of Wyckoff

Romeo

SplitJaw

Swoosh

Stefran

Teardrops

Tim

Tina

Vincent

White Blotch

Circle your choice, fill out the information below & send \$30.00 per adoption.

Learn more about these dolphins at www.dolphincommunicationproject.org

I would like to adopt a dolphin: \$30 for one year. Dolphin name: _____

Please mail your order form, with check, to DCP at 55 Coogan Blvd, Mystic, CT 06355. Credit card payment is available online through PayPal, or by phone at (860) 535-8031 x156.

Please **send** my sponsorship package to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

If this is a gift, please note gift GIVER address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____



Volunteering

DCP accepts **local** volunteers for data analyses any time during the year at our office in CT. We **DO NOT** accept volunteers for field work at any of our field sites. 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 Cherly Lemay, Volunteer Coordinator at MAIFE at: 860-572-5955 x209. All DCP volunteers coordinate their schedule through the Volunteer Coordinator and Kristy Beard, DCP Project Assistant. If you are interested in joining us in the field, check out our ecotours (www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/ecotours.asp).

Internships:

If you are interested in interning with DCP during the Fall 2007 semester, more information is available on our website. Please note, internships are office-based and do NOT include field work. Applications can be found at: <http://www.mysticaquarium.org/index.cgi/788>.

Thank you to DCP Volunteers!!

DCP would like to thank Grace Hernandez, Binti Ackley, Maria Baetti, and Tabby Baker for all of their help. 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!

**Dolphin Communication Project
Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration
55 Coogan Blvd.
Mystic, CT 06355**

To:



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