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The Dolphin gazette

NEWSLETTER FOR THE DOLPHIN COMMUNICATION PROJECT

The Dolphin Communication Project (DCP) is focused on the dual goals of scientific research and education. Our mission is to promote the scientific study of dolphins and inspire their conservation.

Another Successful Year!

Dear Reader/DCP supporter,

Wow! This year zipped by in a flash! We packed lots into it with 3 visits to RIMS/AKR, numerous conference presentations, several webinars and podcasts, and new KSAs! We even had a couple of publications this year! This issue of the Gazette is jam-packed with newsy updates and details. Thank you to all our student volunteers, ecotour and field course participants, and supporters both virtual and in person! Your support, engagement, and curiosity is very much appreciated and needed for our success! Here's to a prosperous, productive new year, 2025!

Cheers!

~Kathleen



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DCP's Online Store | Kits! | Updates from Roatan | RIMS Oct 2025 Ecotour | Outreach Updates | Meet Lexi & Sierra | Recorded Webinars | More News | Publications | Infographics | New KSAs | New Coloring Page

Mailing Address

Dolphin Communication Project
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USA

FL Solicitation of Contributions
Reg. #: CH42894 (also see page 17)

Thank You for your Support!

Thank you to Catalina & Hannah (CSU), Samantha, Sam, Angelika, Riley, Sophia, & Diego (SHU), and Savanna, Abby, Lexi, & Sierra (NSU) for your help processing video data for varied research projects! Your contributions to our programs are most valuable!!

Internships & Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in interning or volunteering with DCP please note most positions are office-based and do NOT include field work. Check out the DCP website before contacting us at info@dcpmail.org

DCP's Online Store

All purchases support DCP's research & education programs!

DCP merchandise for yourself and as gifts!

Performance Polos

Collar for sophistication, quick-dry material for comfort!



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The mini option from Bali Y'all or the full-size option with special-edition DCP blue/orange bands!



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Long or short sleeved. Limited stock!

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5 colors to choose from!

Trading Cards

DCP Team + Dolphins



Canvas Totes

Convenient + conversation starters

[Click here to head to DCP's online store.](#)

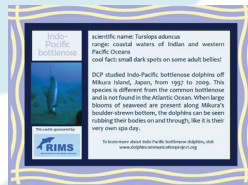
Dolphin Protector Kits!

Declare yourself a Dolphin Protector!

Great gifts with conservation top of mind: Dolphin Protector Kits

Learn about and protect one or more of the dolphin species DCP researchers study

3 species to choose from: common bottlenose, Indo-Pacific bottlenose, and Atlantic spotted dolphins

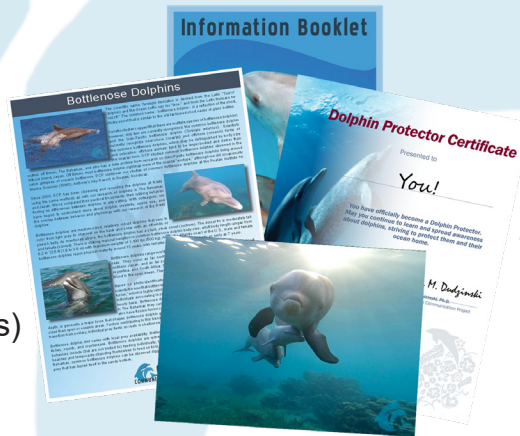


Print kits include:

- species fact sheet
- species trading card
- second surprise trading card
 - species 5x7 photo
 - 2 DCP stickers
- DCP awareness card
 - DCP's info booklet
- thank you letter (with video links)
 - personalized certificate

Just \$39 plus shipping

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E-kits include:

- species fact sheet PDF
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- DCP's info booklet PDF
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Whether across the world or around the neighborhood, a DCP Traveler Kit is adventure ready!



Traveler kits include:

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- DCP bandana (Hoorag)
- 2 travel-sized Stream2Sea
 - 2 DCP stickers
- DCP's info booklet
- Thank you letter
- Choice of DCP Shirt

\$60 - \$75 plus shipping

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Update from the Field: DCP at RIMS/AKR in Jan '24

Submitted by Kathleen Dudzinski, PhD (DCP Director)

Out with the old and in with the new ... New Year, that is! I spent the last two days of 2023 and the first 21 days of 2024 at [Anthony's Key Resort \(AKR\)](#) on Roatan, Honduras, with Manon and three different DCP groups! It was a great way to send off 2023 and welcome in 2024. Our first week included a small DCP ecotour group. Our flights may have needed extra circles before landing and Mother Nature made herself known with a final storm for 2023, but before long the sun was shining, the seas were calm and the underwater visibility clear, and 2024 began! This visit to AKR and the [Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences \(RIMS\)](#) included the DCP ecotour and our field courses with Colorado State University (CSU) and the University of Rhode Island (URI).



On the research front, I was able to collect underwater data sessions #01-20 (~10.5 hours) with the MVA4 and another 10.5 concurrent hours with the top-mounted GoPro10. We followed our existing protocol of collecting data early each morning, between 6:15 AM and 7:30 AM. During underwater data collection sessions, ecotourists or students collected surface data for our ongoing space use study, as well as the surface observation notes related to my underwater data collection.



Some highlights of each program include:

Ecotour: The first data collection session was productive and allowed us the opportunity to make note of new permanent markings on some dolphins and rake marks on everyone. Though rake marks will fade, they are useful for short-term identification and are particularly helpful for our field course students who are new to dolphin photo-ID. During snorkeling, we found the water to be a much more normal temperature than during the October '23 ecotour, hopefully a good sign for the ocean's health. I shook things up a bit and had Manon conduct two underwater data collection sessions – well done! And kudos to Tracy and her hermit crab for winning the hermit crab race at Fiesta Night!



CSU: Dr. Shane Kanatous led a fresh group of CSU students (“Dolphin Dudes”), and the course was joined by long-time DCP supporter Don. All the newbies were in awe of the colors and beauty of the Roatan environment. As the week went on, they noted the impact of learning about something in the classroom or from the literature or a guidebook, and then being able to observe that animal or behavior in real life. One day, after continuing to hone their space use data collection skills, the students had an unplanned opportunity

.....Continued on page 10

...DCP at RIMS/AKR in June '24



Manon and I were back at [Anthony's Key Resort \(AKR\)](#) and the [Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences \(RIMS\)](#) in June for two, 7-night field courses. Both programs were very productive; the first week was with Dr. Shane Kanatous and Colorado State University (CSU) and the second was with Drs. Heather Hill and Melissa Karlin and St. Mary's University (StMU). We were packed with 28 students in total! We conducted 13 sessions of morning observations with underwater video and space use data collection. This yielded 6+ hours of video data each on three different cameras: the MVA4, the front-facing GoPro, and the back-facing GoPro. A big thank you to [DiverMojo Foundation](#) for sponsoring our new GoPros.

During the first week, John was able to collect above-water video with the drone in association with my early morning video data observations. Thank you to the DCP board for supporting this new effort. As a result, we have several views from which to document behavior of the dolphins being observed. Space use data were collected with

the drone and without, but all with panoramic photos at each scan by students from four locations around the main lagoon. All the space use data from both weeks were entered into Excel for processing during the second week (thank you, StMU team!).



Over the next several months plus, we will process the underwater video to log individual dolphin IDs when dolphins are in view. We will also process the space use data to plot distribution of the dolphins around the main lagoon. For the first time, we will compare the drone footage to the space use data to ground-truth the panoramic videos. Preliminary examination of the drone footage suggests we can examine quite a few research questions with that angle and perspective of view. The number of pair swims and other behaviors that were not evident in the MVA or GoPro footage suggests we have two ways to examine these dolphin behaviors/activities. Exciting stuff!

Our gratitude to AKR and RIMS continues, and we look forward to future data collection and education programs. We thank all the students for their participation, their perspectives and conversations, and for helping with our data collection. We thank Heather, Melissa, and Shane for bringing the students with DCP to AKR/RIMS. We hope everyone enjoyed these sessions as much as we did.

Cheers,

~Kathleen

Photos: (top) Kathleen & Manon position GoPros to the MVA; (center) John & Bill prep to land the drone with feline supervision (bottom); Gizmo looks on as Sandy handles a fish.



...and DCP at RIMS/AKR in October 2024!



I returned to [Anthony's Key Resort \(AKR\)](#) and the [Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences \(RIMS\)](#) from 5 – 12 October for DCP's annual ecotour. We were a small but mighty group: two long-time DCP supporters and one newbie! Our arrival was smooth and that first day included a quick hello to some dolphins and staff, MVA4 assembly, and a group dinner. With my MVA4 in hand, with both front-facing and back-facing GoPros, I completed five sessions of morning observations with underwater video. This yielded approximately two and a half hours of video data on the three different cameras.

Over the course of the week, underwater visibility varied, and the water was warm. We observed all the dolphins, some fun sea critters, and plenty of different dolphin behaviors: object play, chasing, whistles, bubbles, and much more. There was some windy weather from the periphery of Hurricane Milton, but we were grateful to be safe and kept all those affected seriously by the storm in our thoughts.

I was also able to have constructive conversations with RIMS about future directions for DCP's research. There is much for you to stay tuned for! And there is no shortage of data for our team of researchers and students to process and ask questions of: space use, object play, relationship quality, and more.



It may seem like I'm on repeat, but my gratefulness to AKR and RIMS never waivers! We look forward to each future data collection and education programs including our new Adult Education Program, which will be in place of our standard ecotour in October 2025. Scroll to page 7 for more information. I hope to see you there!

As always, catch up on all the field action in DCP's blog anytime at <https://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/blog-field-reports/>

~Kathleen

Join Kathleen: New Adult Education Program

Anthony's Key Resort Roatan, Honduras October 18 - 25, 2025

Kathleen has lead ecotours (very casual) and college field courses (very structured). Now, DCP is meeting in the middle: Adult Education Program at Anthony's Key Resort and Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences (RIMS). As always, spaces are filled on a first-come, first-served basis, but we still have a spot for you!

Check out the [RIMS Ecotour page](#) (look under the Knowledge Hub > Ecotours) to learn more about logistics and other details. Or send DCP an inquiry by email: (info{at}dcpmail{dot}org).

Who: You! Join DCP on a trip to Roatan led by Dr. Kathleen Dudzinski. Each trip accommodates up to 16 participants, unless identified as limited space. **Please note: children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian – absolutely no exceptions.*

What: DCP records the behavior and sounds of the bottlenose dolphins at RIMS, Anthony's Key Resort. Participants assist with data collection and analysis of video data to confirm dolphin IDs - as much or as little as they like. This program will have a more structured schedule of educational programming than an ecotour; but all components are still optional for each guest.

Where: Anthony's Key Resort, Roatan, Honduras

When: 18 - 25 October 2025

Cost: Contact DCP by email: (info{at}dcpmail{dot}org)

DCP has reserved Key Superior rooms that include air conditioning and a small mini fridge. Rates provided by DCP *include* 19% hotel tax and are based on double occupancy. Contact DCP for single occupancy options/availability.

Deposit: A \$200 USD/person nonrefundable deposit will be needed to hold your space. After receiving your deposit, your remaining balance can be split into two payments. 50% of balance due April 2025; final balance due June 2025.

Notes:
~A portion of your ecotour trip fee may be tax-deductible. Consult your tax adviser for more details.
~These costs are based on double occupancy and include lodging, three meals a day, SCUBA diving/snorkeling, and more. Contact DCP for more details about trip logistics. Bottled water, alcohol, and soda are available for a small fee. Airfare and Honduran departure taxes are NOT included.



Education/Outreach Update

Submitted by Kel Sweeting, MSc

It felt great to share dolphin science both in-person and virtually:

St. Gregory the Great (Florida, USA): Dolphins!

In April, I was able to visit all 3 kindergarten classrooms. What awesome questions and stories from these littles! As you might imagine our new inflatable dolphin was a big hit.

I had so much fun, I headed back to St. Gregory's in October to visit a new batch of kindergarteners. The inflatable dolphin was once again a popular friend and a great, simple tool to help teach dolphin body parts to youngsters. In April and October, each students received a dolphin trading card, sponsored by DiverMojo Foundation (see below).



This year I was also able to represent DCP with the organization Letters to a PreScientist (LPS). LPS matches STEM professionals with students in science classrooms around the United States with the goal of demystifying STEM and inspiring students to consider STEM careers. It's been an honor to exchange letters with Mark in Ohio and I am looking forward to more letters in the spring.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who makes these programs possible!

~Kel

DiverMojo Foundation

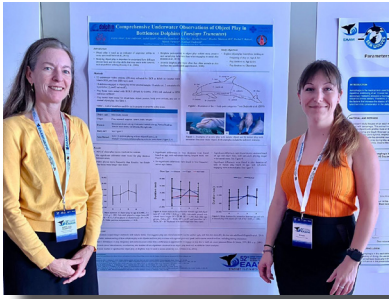


DCP is honored to have received a grant from the DiverMojo Foundation. With their support, we have been able to keep technology subscriptions going, which help meet our education/outreach goals, replenish our stock of stickers and trading cards to share with students, and replace our GoPros for Kathleen's data collection in Roatan. Thank you, DiverMojo Foundation!

Learn more about the [DiverMojo Foundation](#) and their mission to harness the power within their SCUBA community to "provide connection, education and funding for micro game changers to improve our oceans, one project at a time!"

DCP at EAAM Conference

DCP was very well represented at the European Association for Aquatic Mammals' March 2024 conference. Presentations included:



Comprehensive Underwater Observations of Object Play in Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*). (Alvia, K, Anderson, K, Llach, I, Monteforte, D, Sze J, Yeater, D, Manitzas Hill, HM, Walker, R, Themelin, M, Dudzinski, KM)



The Impact of Calves to a Social Group. (Dudzinski, KM, Themelin, M, Gavaghan, B, Manitzas Hill, HM)



Space use by common bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) with respect to human presence at Bailey's Key, Roatan, Honduras. (Karlin, M, Manitzas Hill, HM, Dudzinski, KM)



Delphinid Creativity under Stimulus Control. (Manitzas Hill, HM, Dudzinski, KM, Yeater, DM, Melzer, D, Bolton, T, Brasseur, I, Weiss, M, Sigman, J, Robeck, T.)



Use of pair swimming positions in bottlenose dolphin male-male dyads based on age and kinship combination and social implications. (Themelin, M, Dudzinski, KM)

Stay tuned for publications and webinars on these topics!

After the EAAM Symposium, Kathleen, John, and Manon spent a day to travel to Nausicaá to meet with the California sea lion training team and one of DCP's research partners. The team is training their sea lions as part of DCP's reading study. It was fun to meet the team and the animals ... and to realize that one of their sea lions shares a seabeanle name! Baloo!

January '24 RIMS Update

Continued from Page 4

...to observe trainers complete the last dolphin feed of the day. As for Fiesta Night, Alyssa's hermit crab won the race and Eden won the limbo contest becoming Limbo Queen for the week!

URI: Dr. Justin Richard, TA Laura, and URI students ("Agouti Gang") were excited for a lot of firsts – for some, that included international travel, snorkeling, seeing dolphins up close, and more. It might be hard to pick, but perhaps the night snorkel and the dolphin interaction left the biggest impressions. Then again, maybe there are just too many from which to choose. And of course, there was Fiesta Night where John was the big winner at the hermit crab races!

All the groups visited Maya Key during their programs, with snorkeling, visits to the replica ruins, and lots of cool animals. There were many snorkeling opportunities, classroom sessions, lectures, and discussions. And, of course, plenty of good food!

And yes! Bill G.'s granite dolphin sculpture is complete! Woohoo!! Thank you to all the DCP participants, all RIMS and AKR staff, and of course, the dolphins.

~Kathleen

DCP Gear @ Stuart SCUBA



Thank you to [Stuart SCUBA](#) (Stuart, FL) for featuring DCP gear in your shop. Now local water lovers can see and purchase DCP polos, rash guards, and tanks in person. Thank you, Stuart SCUBA team!

Not in the Stuart, FL area? No worries. All our gear is in [our online store](#) too!

Student Reflections: Lexi

Submitted by Lexi Crass (NSU)

My name is Alexis Crass, I am an undergraduate senior at Nova Southeastern University and I just began working with the Dolphin Communication Project this past August. I am working towards my bachelors in Marine Biology. What started me on this track was actually my love and fascination with dolphins that I have had since I was young. My professor, Dr. Amy Hirons introduced me to DCP back in April when I asked her about research and working in her lab and I am so grateful for that everyday since.



I have been working alongside Sierra Rafacz (a fellow undergraduate) and together we have been working on video logging the underwater footage from the Roatan Institute of Marine Sciences, RIMS, while working on our dolphin identifications and have also been given the wonderful opportunity to help start and troubleshoot logging the space use data from drone footage also taken at RIMS. I am so grateful to Dr. Kathleen for being so welcoming and allowing me the opportunity to work with the animal that led me to where I am today (even if it's through a screen). She is absolutely wonderful and her passion for these animals and her research is so clear anytime you talk to her about it. I look forward to working on logs all the time (which is surprising for me) and can't wait to continue working with the DCP and whatever comes after senior year.

~Lexi

Student Reflections: Sierra

Submitted by Sierra Rafacz (NSU)



My name is Sierra Rafacz, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to work with the Dolphin Communication Project this year. I am currently a senior at Nova Southeastern University pursuing a degree in Marine Biology. I was first introduced to dolphin behavioral research during an internship with the Navy Marine Mammal Program last summer and when my professor, Dr. Amy Hirons, introduced me to DCP, I knew it would be a great chance to further my skills in assisting with research.

Currently, I am working on video logging the underwater footage from the Roatan Institute of Marine Sciences (RIMS) with a fellow undergraduate student, Lexi Crass. We are quickly learning how to identify the various dolphins. I am also learning how to log space use data from drone footage taken at RIMS. Working with DCP has already been so rewarding and I appreciate the immense care that Dr. Kathleen not only puts into her research but also developing her undergraduate volunteers. I am looking forward to continuing my senior year working with DCP and furthering my career working with dolphins.



~Sierra

Online Dolphin Education

Great additions to our recorded webinar archive!

DCP webinars: We continue to offer live programs in addition to recordings of each program.

(Live Dolphin Lessons and Deep Dives have different passwords; contact DCP if you have not already received them.)



A huge thank you to everyone who joins live and to those who catch the recordings. We are grateful to all of our guest speakers, too!

[Webinars on DCP Website](#)

[Webinars on DCP's YouTube Channel](#)

[Webinars on DCP's Vimeo](#)

Below are direct links to just some of our individual talks:

DEEP DIVES:

- [Sperm Whale Reproduction & Society](#)
- [Mother/Calf Contacts](#)
- [Right Whales, What's Wrong?](#)
- [Risky Interactions](#)
- [Creative Dolphins - Killer whales vs Dolphins](#)
- [Quieting Noise in the Sea](#)
- [Do Narwals Have Names?](#)
- [Vaquita: The Most Endangered Marine Mammal](#)
- [Beluga socio-sexual behavior](#)
- [Drone & Underwater Data Perspectives](#)

DOLPHIN LESSON:

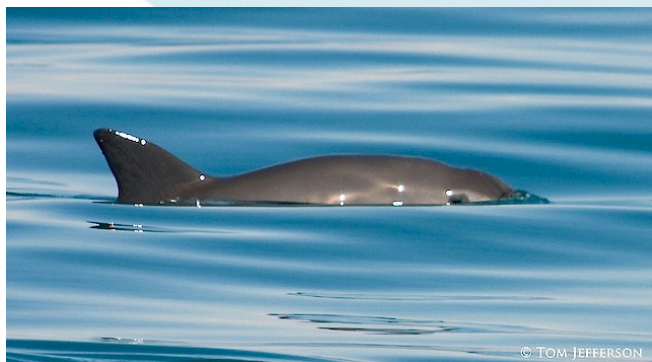
- [Shhh! Keeping the Ocean Quiet for Whales](#)

More kid and kid-at-heart friendly activities are under the Knowledge Hub on our website.

[Click here to head straight to our free Kids Science Activities!](#)



Did You Know?



There may be as few as 10-12 *individual* Vaquita left in the WORLD?

Learn more in the [DCP Deep Dive recording](#). Educate yourself. Tell your friends. Ask them to tell their friends.

Consider supporting [VIVA Vaquita](#).

More Options to Support DCP!

We are proud to offer a variety of ways to support our mission - and spread dolphin joy!

Give the Gift of Membership!

What to get that person who is just so hard to shop for?

A DCP membership, of course!

With options from \$20 - \$500 and monthly or one-time payments, there is something for everyone. [Just click here.](#)

Donate

Whether it's a gift in someone's honor or part of your end-of-year giving plan, please consider making a donation to DCP to support our research and education efforts. [Just click here.](#)

Stream2Sea: More than just reef-safe sunscreen!

[Stream2Sea](#) specializes in reef-safe sunscreen, but they now offer a wide range of products, from hair care to hand sanitizer. They are also great supporters of ocean research and conservation. Use coupon code **dolphincomm** and DCP will receive a donation based on your purchase - at no additional cost to you!

Sponsor A Classroom - Dolphin Classroom Connection

By Sponsoring a Dolphin Classroom Connection, you support DCP's research, education, and conservation efforts financially, AND you bring DCP directly into a classroom of your choosing!

Anyone can Sponsor a Dolphin Classroom Connection. Have a child? Sponsor their classroom! Homeschool your kids? Sponsor your own classroom! Have a niece, grandson, neighbor who is a student or a teacher or a student teacher? Sponsor their classroom!

Want to Sponsor a Dolphin Classroom Connection, but don't know any kids or teachers? That's okay! We'll find a classroom for you!

Dolphin Classroom Connection kits come in print versions (\$250) and electronic versions (\$125). Choose what works best for your chosen classroom. Both options include a 45-minute Internet connection with a DCP scientist!

[Click here to start your sponsorship.](#)

Print Version

- *Welcome Letter
- *DCP USB drive with Educational Materials
- *30 DCP Info Booklets
- *45 min. Internet Connection with a DCP Scientist

E-Version

- *Welcome Letter with Links to:
 - **Educational Materials*
 - **PDF of DCP Info Booklet*
- *45 min. Internet Connection with a DCP Scientist

Other News!

The DolphinPod: Stay Tuned!

DCP's podcast, *The DolphinPod*, remains available directly on DCP's website, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts.

We're currently working toward funding new episodes for 2025.

If you or your company is interested in sponsoring an episode, let us know!



Award Finalist American Humane Kiessling Prize



In September, Kathleen was honored as a Finalist Recipient of the Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation for her research into dolphin behavior. Celebrations were in Washington D.C. and sponsored by Global Humane. Well done, Kathleen, and congratulations to all the finalists and this year's winner!

For more information, visit <https://humaneconservation.org/kiessling/>

Kathleen on *Fur Real*

Dolphins may not have fur, but they do have complex communication systems and scientists are learning more about them with every research study. Kathleen joined the *Fur Real* Podcast for a Episode 27 with Mark!



AVAILABLE NOW ON     

2024 Publications!

Duda, S, Themelin, M, Hirons, AC, Dudzinski, KM (2024) Contact exchanges in bottlenose dolphin mother-calf pairs. *Aquatic Mammals*, 50(1), 19-29. <https://doi.org/10.1578/AM.50.1.2024.19> or Contact DCP to request a PDF

Yeater, DB, Dudzinski, KM, Melzer, D, Magee, AR, Robinette, M, Guerra, G, Salazar, K, Bolton, T, & Manitzas Hill, H. (2024). Training the Concept of Innovate in Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) is Both Creative and Cognitively Stimulating. *Animals*, 14, 896. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani14060896>.

Manitzas Hill, HM, Themelin, M, Dudzinski, KM, Felice, M, & Robeck, TR. (in press) Individual Variation in Activity Budgets of a Stable Population of Killer Whales in Managed Care Across a Year. *Behavioural Processes*.

Plus several manuscripts in revision, review, or prep for publication consideration. Stay tuned for their acceptance and publication!



Great Grant News!

In December 2024, DCP was awarded a grant from the Loro Parque Fundación to continue our study of *in situ* and *ex situ* killer whale behavior in comparison to the bottlenose and Atlantic spotted (smaller) dolphins we've been studying for decades. This study will begin in early 2025 and continue for a few years. Exciting news and updates will be shared in the coming months!

DCP's Winter Coloring Book

Whether you are young or young at heart, in a busy airport or relaxing with a cozy drink, we're pleased to offer all of DCP's winter coloring scenes in one, FREE PDF.

[Click here to download your copy.](#)

The 2024 coloring page is now included and can be found on the last page of this issue of the Gazette.

Enjoy!

Thank you Ranke!





Winter Coloring Book

For the young, and the young at heart, to inspire you all year round to respect and protect dolphins and their ocean home.

Enjoy more with DCP's free [Kids Science Activities](#).

Drawings by Ranke de Vries.
References to religious holiday present.

Want to know about DCP's research but don't have time for a whole peer-reviewed journal article? Check out two infographics full of juuust enough information.

 **dolphin**
COMMUNICATION PROJECT
 **RIMS**
Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences

How do Dolphins Interact with their Pectoral Fins?

BACKGROUND & GOAL

- Contact is used by many social species, such as lions, primates, and elephants for social bonding
- Dolphins create and maintain relationships that last for decades
- Dolphins often initiate contact using their pectoral fins

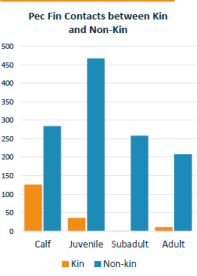
Goal – To better understand why & how dolphins use their flippers to share contacts

What do we want to know?

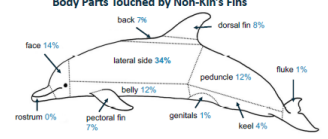
- Do dolphins use their pectoral fins for social bonding?
- Do dolphins use pectoral fin contact to reduce tension?
- Is this contact used more between family members (kin) or non-family members (non-kin)?

RESULTS – What did we find?


Pec Fin Contacts between Kin and Non-Kin



Body Parts Touched by Non-Kin's Fins



Example: Elli using her pec fin to rub Alita's belly area. These 2 dolphins are adult, non-kin females.



DISCUSSION

- All age classes of dolphins used pectoral fin contact with non-kin more often than kin
- Non-kin dolphins were more likely to reciprocate contact
- Most contacts were on the central body and included sensitive areas such as the face and belly
- Pectoral fin contact may play a larger role in relationships between non-kin
- Touching different body parts could have different functions
- Future research on pectoral fin contact preferences is needed to gain a better understanding of dolphin social networks

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Thank you to the Roatan (from CSU, URI, StMU), and Institute for Marine DCP ecotourists for help. Sciences, Anthony's Key collecting and processing Resort for allowing DCP to data over our 20+ years. study the dolphins. Thank you, Hannah Martz, you to the numerous for helping create this poster interns, volunteers, field during an independent study course student participants in the Kanatous Lab at CSU.



DATA COLLECTION


Who – 41 Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*)
Neonate to 30+ years old
19 Females & 22 Males

Where
The Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences – Anthony's Key Resort
Roatan, Honduras

When
2003-2018 – Underwater observational video subset


How
Video data recorded using a mobile video/acoustic array (MVA)



www.dolphincommunicationproject.org

RESEARCH > PUBLICATIONS



How do Dolphins Interact with their Pectoral Fins?



[Download here](#), by clicking on the image, or scanning the QR code.



How do Dolphin Moms Interact with their Calves?

[Download here](#), by clicking on the image, or scanning the QR code.



 **dolphin**
COMMUNICATION PROJECT
 **RIMS**
Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences

How do Dolphin Moms Interact with their Calves?

BACKGROUND

- On average, dolphin moms raise their young for 2 to 4 years
- Calf bonds with mom are essential to survival as they provide comfort, security, and aid in development of social and foraging skills
- Dolphins use touch and vocalizations to share information

Goal – To better understand how dolphin moms use touch with their calves

What do we want to know?

- What types of contact do moms use with their calves?
- How do moms initiate contact with their calves?
- Do dolphin moms have unique parenting styles?

DATA COLLECTION

Who – Adult female bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*)

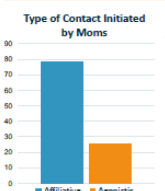
Where – The Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences
Anthony's Key Resort – Roatan, Honduras

When – 2003-2024
Underwater observational video subset

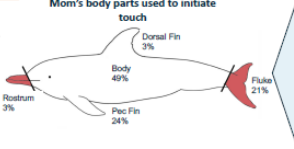
How – Video data were recorded using a mobile video/acoustic array

RESULTS – What did we find?

Type of Contact Initiated by Moms



Mom's body parts used to initiate touch

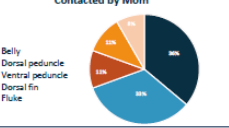


Differences in Pec Fin Contact

Group	Number of dolphins	Mom-calf contacts	Probability of initiation
High contact group	5	261	38% chance
Low contact group	5	64	16% chance

Note: 43 of these contacts were from one mom-calf pair!

Percent for Each Calf Body Part Contacted by Mom




DISCUSSION

- Dolphin moms mainly used affiliative contact with their calves
- Moms initiated contacts mostly with their body, Pec Fin, and Fluke on their calf's belly and dorsal peduncle
- Different moms had different amounts of contact with their calves – i.e., different styles!
- Individual personality may play a role in different parenting styles
- Studying the use of different body parts to initiate contact can give us a better picture of how mothers interact with their calves
- Future research is needed to look at the roles of different types of contact to gain a better understanding of mother-calf relationships


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Thank you to the Roatan (from CSU, URI, StMU), and Institute for Marine DCP ecotourists for help. Sciences, Anthony's Key collecting and processing Resort for allowing DCP to data over our 20+ years. study the dolphins. Thank you, Hannah Martz, you to the numerous for helping create this poster interns, volunteers, field during an independent study course student participants in the Kanatous Lab at CSU.



www.dolphincommunicationproject.org

RESEARCH > PUBLICATIONS



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[Long sleeve t-shirts](#)

[Performance polos](#)

[Tanks](#)

[Rash guards](#)

[Limited edition, DCP-banded dolphin bracelets](#)

[Mini-dolphin bracelets](#)

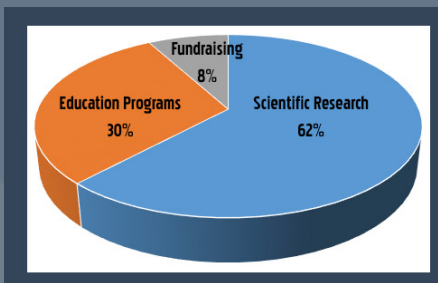
[Hoo-rags](#) (bandanas)

All items subject to availability.

And, it's easy to [add a donation](#) to your online order!



Where does money raised from donations, Protector & Traveler Kits, and field courses go?



The purchase of new research equipment (e.g., cameras, underwater microphones)

Conservation and education programs in the US and around the world

Publication and dissemination of DCP's research results to the scientific community and the general public

Maintenance of the DCP website, blog, and our podcast The Dolphin Pod

Classroom education programs for school-aged children including Classroom Connections

Volunteer, ecotour, and internship opportunities for the public

Support DCP's research efforts by purchasing some of the many products that we offer for sale and/or making a tax-deductible donation! All profits from the sale of products will directly fund DCP's research and education efforts. DCP is a U.S. nonprofit organization.

See next page for more information.

THE DOLPHIN COMMUNICATION PROJECT CHARITABLE SOLICITATION NUMBER CH42894, MEETS ALL REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIED BY THE FLORIDA SOLICITATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS ACT. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE OF FLORIDA, OR 850-410-3800 WHEN CALLING OUTSIDE THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

In-Kind Donations: Our Wish List

Do you have access to any of this equipment? Contact DCP to make an in-kind donation today! (Yup, in-kind donations are tax-deductible, too. Contact your accountant to learn how.)

* Compact HD Projector (high vis) * Underwater still cameras * SD flash cards * GoPro * Handheld GPS * Office supplies * Frequent flyer miles * Laptop * Giftcards



Donate Online

One Time or Sustaining Donations:

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Your generosity is the lifeblood of our organization, and we could not operate without the donations we receive. Every scientific article we've published and every student mentorship opportunity we've provided has been made possible by financial support from people just like you.

Visit www.dolphincommunicationproject.org to become a member today!

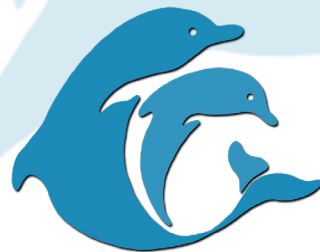
Membership

Sustaining Memberships:

Donate from \$5 to \$100/month to receive a special gift such as a pack of notecards, DCP water bottle, or a mini-dolphin bracelet (style varies).

Annual Memberships :

Student: \$20
Individual: \$30
Family: \$45
Supporting: \$75
Contributing: \$150
Patron: \$500



Supporting, Contributing & Patron Members can select a copy of *Dolphin Mysteries*, *Are Dolphins Really Smart?*, or *22 Fantastical Facts about Dolphins*. Contributing and Patron members also receive a mini-dolphin bracelet (exact style varies).

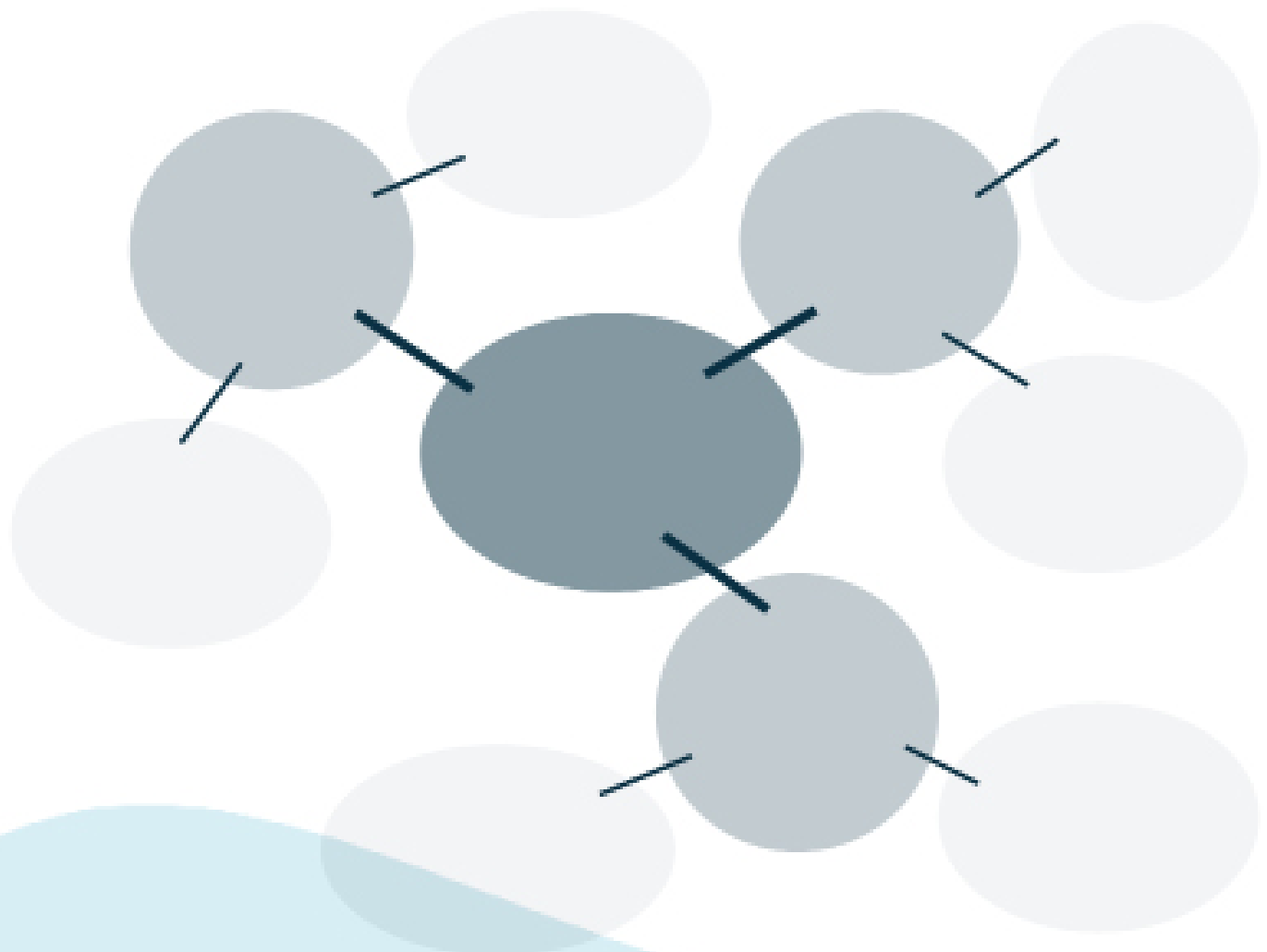
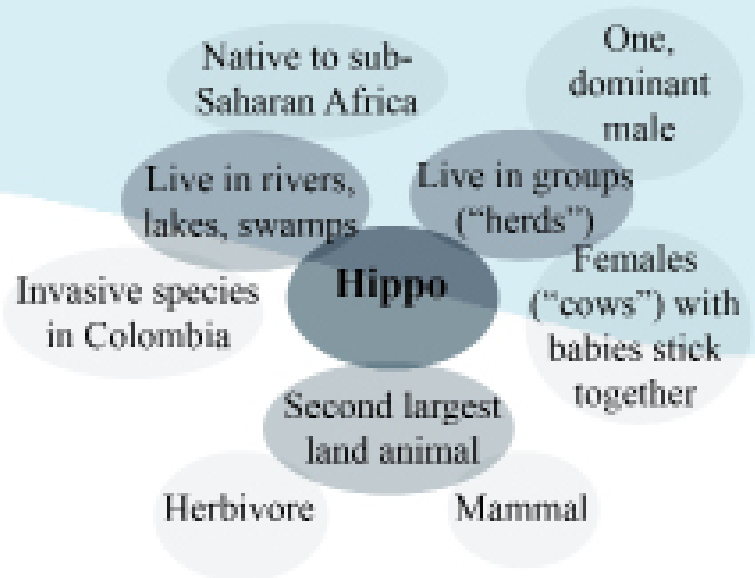
All gifts subject to availability and may change. Visit www.dolphincommunicationproject.org to become a member today!

DCP's Florida Solicitation of Contributions registration number is CH42894.

Dolphin (Fact) Bubbles

Directions: Choose a dolphin species you would like to learn more about. List the species in the largest, center bubble. Then, list three important things about the species in each of the three bubbles connected to the center bubble. Last, list two related pieces of information in the bubbles extending from your three fact bubbles.

An example for a hippopotamuses is provided.



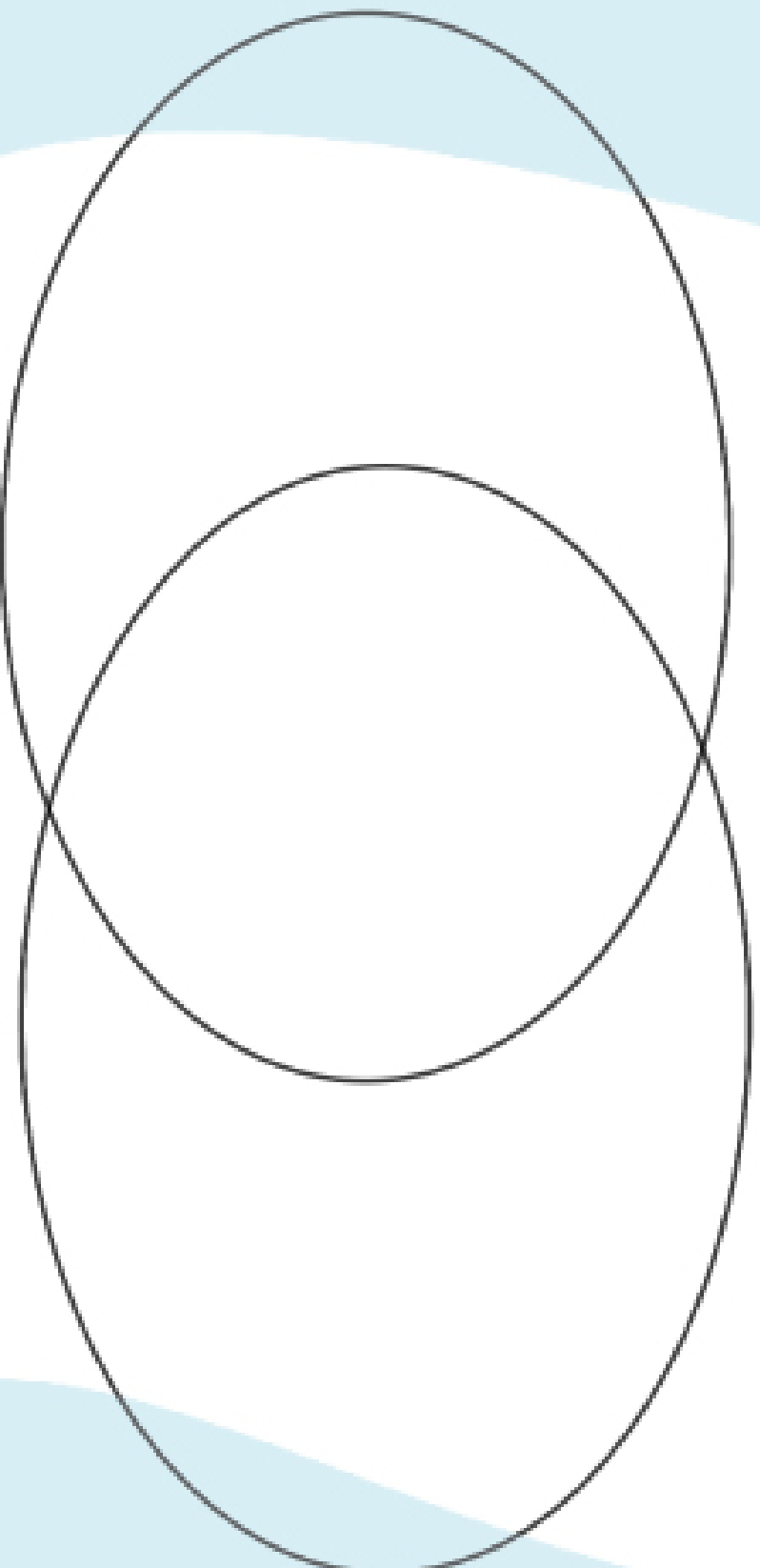
Sharks vs Dolphins

Compare and Contrast

Directions: Use the Venn Diagram to compare and contrast sharks and dolphins. Include 3 characteristics about sharks in the left section, 3 characteristics about dolphins in the right section, and 3 characteristics they have in common in the center section.

SHARKS

DOLPHINS



Tip: Adjust or reuse this worksheet to compare/contrast two different dolphin species!

Check out our Sharks vs Dolphins recorded Dolphin Lesson at

<https://www.dolphincommunicationproject.org/webinars-13/>

Dolphin BINGO: Species Edition



[Click here](#) to download your copy.

Stay tuned for the Vocabulary Edition coming soon!

Website Scavenger Hunt: High School

Directions: Explore the DCP website, www.dolphincommunicationproject.org and try to find the answers to each question *without* using the search function.

Tip: Adjust as you see fit for computer and reading skill levels, time, and interest!

- ~ What is DCP's mission?
- ~ What is DCP's newsletter called?
- ~ What is DCP's podcast called?
Challenge: Listen to an episode and share a summary with your class/clubmates.
- ~ Who founded DCP?
Challenge: When was DCP founded?
- ~ Where and what species did the DCP founder and director study for her PhD (aka doctorate)?
- ~ What species did DCP study off Bimini, The Bahamas?
Challenge: What is the scientific name?
- ~ What species did DCP study off Mikura Island, Japan?
Challenge: What is the scientific name?
- ~ What species does DCP currently study at the Roatan Institute of Marine Sciences (Honduras)?
Challenge: What is the scientific name?
- ~ What main gadget does DCP use to record dolphin sounds and behavior? What do the letters stand for?
Challenge: Why is this a special and helpful tool to study dolphin communication?
- ~ What are the two types of DCP webinars?
Challenge: Watch a DCP webinar and share a summary with your class/clubmates.
- ~ On what website page is the Dolphin Species Song located?
Challenge: Can you sing along?
- ~ Where does DCP currently lead ecotours?
- ~ How can you tell how old a dolphin is?
- ~ In the simplest terms, what is communication?
- ~ What are three definitions of 'language'?
- ~ Where can you find DCP's publications?
Challenge: Choose one publication, download it, read it, and share a summary with your class/clubmates.
- ~ Can you find the "How to Draw a Dolphin" Dolphin Lesson?
Fun: Follow along and draw a dolphin yourself!

Happy Holidays!

Thank you Ranke, for DCP's annual winter festivity coloring page!

