

OJAI VALLEY WHALE SOCIETY

SOUND STUDY PROGRAM

PAST and PRESENT

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The Ojai Valley Whale Society (OVWS) is concerned with protecting whales past, present and future.

Perhaps timely, given the success story of "Moko," the life saving dolphin who was able to communicate to pygmy sperm whales, further guiding them to safety and saving them from certain death, Mahia beach, North Island/New Zealand, 3/12/08.

I appreciate the efforts of specialists in the field trying to help stranded whales. Inspired by their work, a personal devotion to whales, and perhaps a common goal, I am currently deciphering tonal frequencies and vocal passages of various species in hopes of preventing future whale stranding, injury to, and/or loss of life.

The current focal point of the **OVWS Sound Study Program** is to decipher vibrations, study behaviors and interactions, (as well as frequencies produced by whales), enough, so as to send a message signaling, "Stop! Turn Around!! Danger!!! Deadly Area Ahead/DEADLY SONAR!!!!!"

The Goal is to keep whales from swimming into potentially dangerous areas.

The Objective is to play this "Warning Signal," via hydrophones, to whales who wander into those potentially dangerous areas of the ocean, and wherever "Deadly Sonar" is present.

Signaling and sending messages to these creatures using their own vocalization patterns, in their own language, can bridge the gap of communication. Scientific studies have already been conducted with proven results for other mammals such as elephants and wolves, please see further below, **"Study Confirms, Elephants Hear Warnings With Their Feet," by John Roach, National Geographic News, Feb. 16/06; "Elephants May 'Talk' Via Vibrations," July 8/02; and Shaun Ellis, "A Man Among Wolves," National Geographic Channel, April 9/07.** By using vocal frequency patterns of the mammals' own language, specialist's are able to send animals in the opposite direction!

Just as you and I, when properly informed, avoid wandering into "deadly traffic inter-sections," whales could avoid swimming into "deadly water-sections."

If you care about whales past, present or future, and would like to help further our cause to this effect, please give to the Ojai Valley Whale Society Sound Research Program and make a tax-deductible donation today.

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The Sperm whale produces extremely intricate polyphonic and polyrhythmic patterns as well as heterochromatic frequencies to navigate, communicate and locate its food. The clicks/pings and rhythmic/harmonic passages, produced predominantly by Sperm whales, however, also produced by a majority of the 88 species of whales found in our oceans today, function primarily as the “prime mover” for their survival.

The Humpback whale also produces clicks and pings similar to the Sperm whale. However, the Humpback utilizes another set of vibrations by combining rhythmic, harmonic and melodic pitches. This whale uses multiple modes of sound to produce high, shrill shrieks, and low moans and groans, and can produce melodic lines, like singing a song.

Given my background in music, the ancient world, sound and vibration, I am able to imitate and emulate tonal frequencies and vocal passages produced by various whale species, particularly the Humpback, Orca and Sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus/Cachalot*). This is of particular interest to me, as I am an Ethno-musicologist, musical biologist, and recording percussionist (as heard in films such as *TITANIC*).

The frame drum/skin covered drum, (membranophone, approximately 10-15,000 years old), produces the same, in some cases identical, tonal frequencies to that of the Humpback whale. These tones can be produced using a specific hand technique combined with a particular finger position on the skin of the frame drum.

The musical bones, (idiophone), the oldest instrument in the world besides the human voice, (3.5 million years old), produces clicks/pings in virtually the same frequency ranges, in some cases identical, to that produced by a majority of whale species, including the Humpback, Orca and particularly the Sperm whale.

I have begun using musical bones and pitched frame drums to play vocalizations as produced by these whales. The primary goal and objective is to incur dialogue with different species of whale through interaction, via hydrophones.

Successful research has already been carried out in Etosha National Park, Namibia, Africa, to prevent deadly elephant stampedes from taking place. Caitlin

O' Connell-Rodwell, a Biologist at Stanford University has recorded and used the elephants' own "danger calls" to ward off raging stampedes for ten years.

Scientific **“Study Confirms, Elephants Hear Warnings With Their Feet,”** by **John Roach, National Geographic News, Feb.16/06;** and **“Elephants May ‘Talk’ Via Vibrations,” July 8/02.** When played back to a herd of stampeding elephants, the elephants' own calls - which surmount to, "Stop! Danger! Ferocious Tigers Ahead!" stops them dead in their tracks! Use of this specific "danger call" or "warning signal," sends rampaging elephants in the opposite direction, resulting in countless lives saved, (animals, humans and elephants alike). Peter Narins, a Biologist at UCLA, confirms and validates this scientific study.

Similar scenarios with successful results have also been achieved with staving off wolves from killing cattle in North America. **Shaun Ellis, “A Man Among Wolves,” National Geographic Channel, April 9/07.**

That being said, the same case can be made for whales. Mammals share common traits. No different than the elephants in Africa, the wolves in North America, the same set of life saving calls can be deciphered for whales and, likely, other species.

I have begun to analyze the tonal frequencies, dialogue patterns and language systems of the Sperm, Orca and Humpback whales. By interaction and further study of their behaviors and communication systems, I will be able to identify their own “Danger Calls” and play this "Warning" back to them.

Again, if you care about whales past, present or future, and would like to help further our cause to this effect, please give to the Ojai Valley Whale Society Sound Research Program and make a tax-deductible donation today!

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We appreciate and thank you for your time, concern and donations.

Respectfully,
Aaron Plunkett
Founder/Discoverer
Ojai Valley Whale Society
P.o.b. 282, Ojai, CA, 93024
California's oldest and first fossilized, 25-million-year-old, family of toothed baleen whales,
Ojaicetidae, 1/19/2000