

Marine Mammal Sanctuary of the Dominican Republic



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Humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*, Borowski 1871)

Mega = Big, Pteros = wings (up to 4 m), Novae = new, Angliae = England : Described it by Borowski on 1781
Max Length : 18 m
Weight : 50 tonnes
Calf : 3-4 m and 1 tonne at birth
Lactation : 10-11 month
Mother and Calf , together 1 year
Only 1 calf, no twins reported
Life span : More than 50 years
Distribution: 3 isolated populations : North Atlantic and Pacific, Southern Hemisphere.



Humpback whales are Migratory Species

- **Marine Mammal groups**
 - Cetaceans: Whales and Dolphins
 - Sirenians (Manaties)
 - Pinnipeds (Seals)
 - Acrobatic
- **Large white wings**
 - 1/3 of body length
- **Respiration rate**
 - 5-15 min, up to 25-30 min
- **Color**
 - Mostly black but belly white
- **Feeding and breeding areas**



Ecological Importance of the Sanctuary



Feeding ground fidelity, migratory mixing

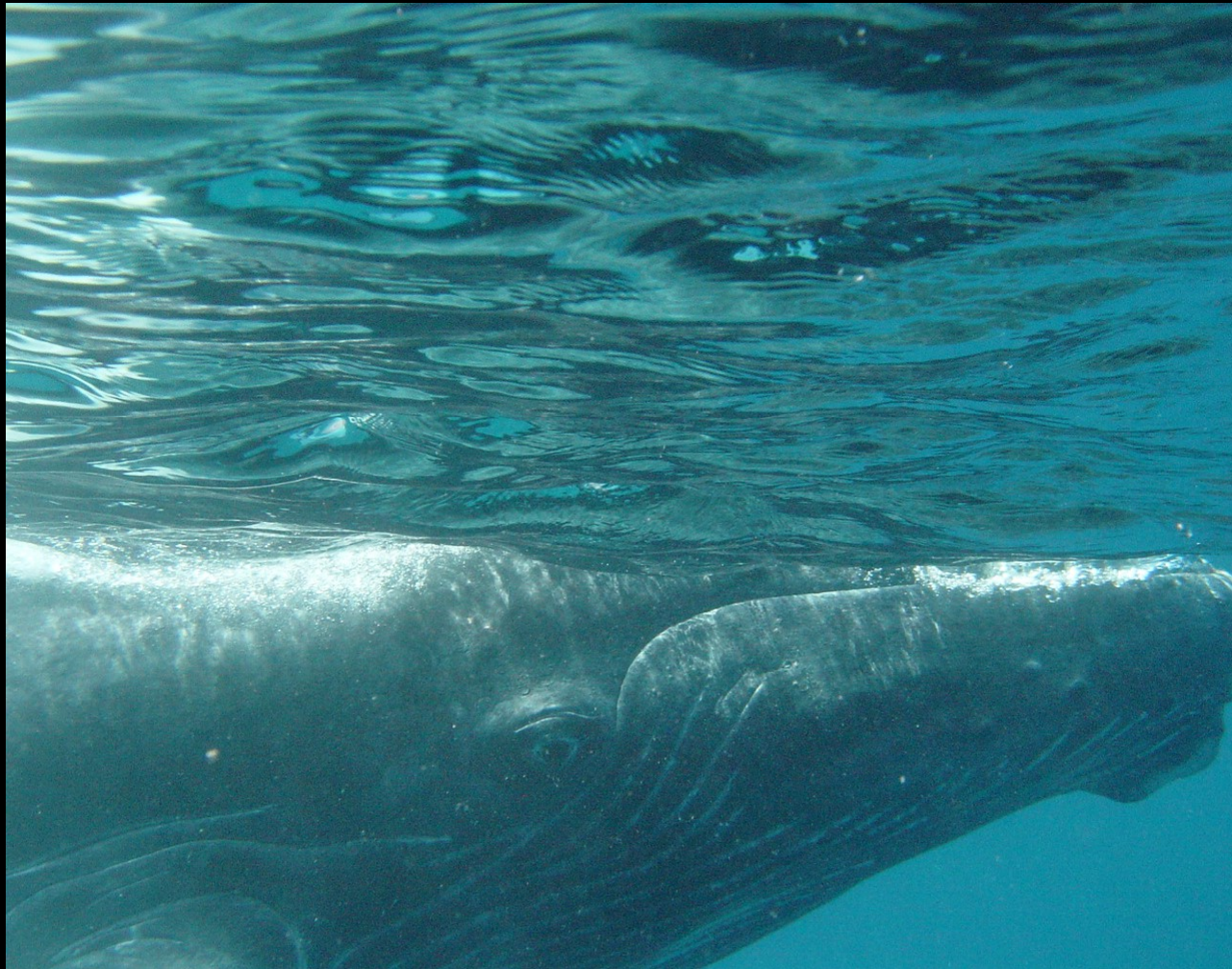


Feeding ground fidelity, migratory mixing



Purposes of Whalewatching

- Science
- Recreation
- Education
- Conservation



Diferent ways

- Scientific vessels
- Sail boats
- Yatchs
- Airplanes
- Land observation



Coral Formations on Silver Bank

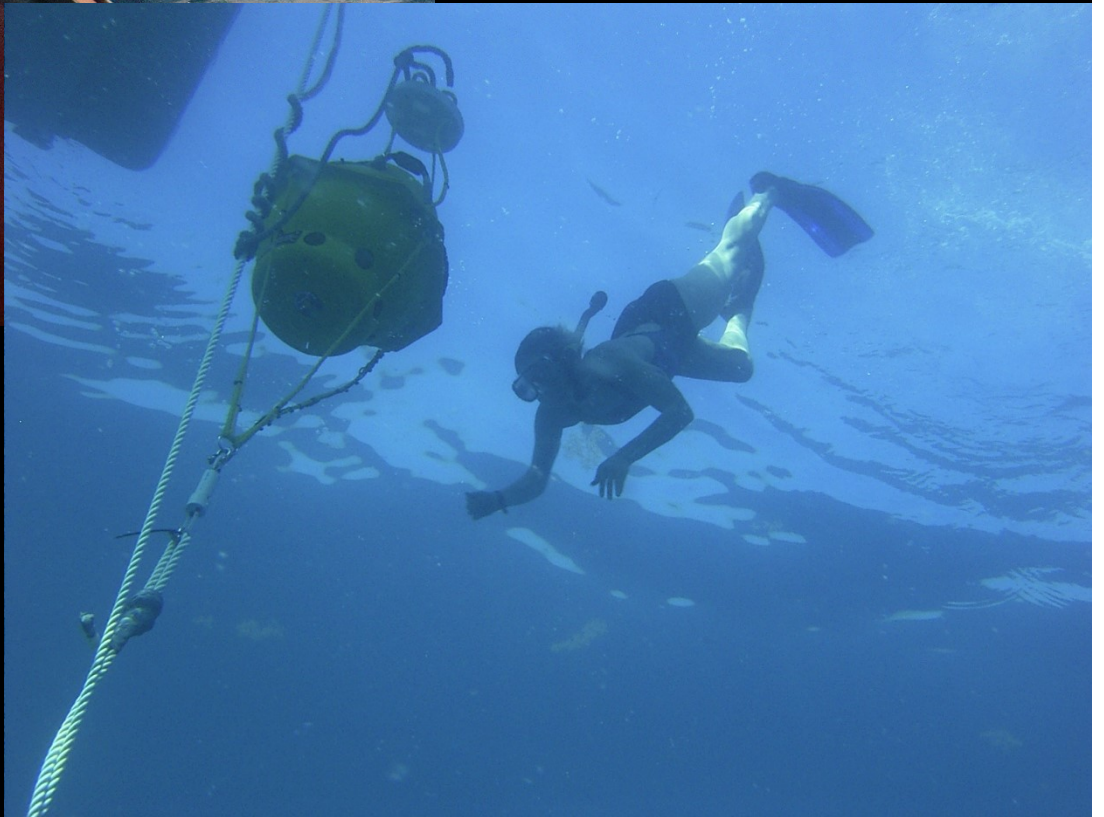


Gordon Gunter - MONAH





Genetical and Bioacoustic Studies





**Local and International Collaboration
ATEMAR - NOAA – CEBSE - FUNDEMAR**



Soft Encounters with
whales Vs Swimming

Education Programs on Boats



Expanding the present borders of the Sanctuary - a Legislative initiative discussed in the Congress



Why to Expand the limits of the Sanctuary ?

THREATS :

- Maritime traffic
- Noise pollution
- Fisheries
- Tourism
- Military Exercises
- Mining and Oil Exploration



Humpbaks are recovering and we need to help them to make it



GRACIAS

