

PHOTO-IDENTIFICATION

Summary Information for a Catalogue of Photo-Identified Western Gray Whales

Paper SC/58/BRG2 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, May 2006

Submitted by R. Reeves

BACKGROUND

The attached paper is an extract (page 15) from a 165 page document, which accompanies the CD-based electronic catalogue of identification photographs of western gray whales. The CD and accompanying document were presented to the International Whaling Commission Scientific Committee in May 2006.

The citation for the document is:

Weller, D.W., Bradford, A.L., Tsidulko, G.A., Ivashchenko, Y.V., Lang, A.R., Kim, H.W., Rickards, S.H., Burdin, A.M. and Brownell, R.L., Jr. 2006. *Western gray whales off Sakhalin Island, Russia: A catalog of photo-identified individuals*. Paper SC/58/BRG2, presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, May 2006. 165pp.

CATALOG USE AND CONDITIONS

Copyright and Data Ownership

This catalog presents identification photographs of 150 western gray whales collected between 1994 and 2005 off Sakhalin Island, Russia, by the joint Russia-U.S. research program. The overarching objectives of making this catalog freely available are twofold: (1) to facilitate international cooperation and collaboration between current and future research groups collecting data on the western gray whale population; and (2) to provide an individual numbering scheme and standardized images of western gray whales that can be used for comparison by other research groups and organizations. This CD-based catalog is available on request.

The images and data included here have been provided on the understanding that they will only be used with the permission of the authors. Copyright remains with the senior author whom retains ownership of all photographs and data herein. It is envisioned that in most cases, other research groups studying western gray whales will collaborate with the Russia-U.S. research program in producing publications and an updated catalog based on matches made to the present catalog. To encourage this, and protect ownership of data from each current contributor, the amount of auxiliary information provided with the images in the catalog has been minimized. All users of this catalog must agree to the following: not to use data or images provided herein in any presentation, report, publication, product or commercial application without prior permission from the senior author of this catalog.

How to Report Western Gray Whale Sightings and Contribute Photographs

We are interested in sighting reports and photographs of western gray whales, or whales suspected to be western gray whales, from any location during any time of the year. Please contact us (see below) with information including date, location, number of whales and description of animals seen. We encourage people to compare photographs or video of gray whales to the images contained in this catalog and ultimately submit the results to us for confirmation of possible matches to known animals or for inclusion in subsequent updated editions of this catalog. The images contained herein are of optimal aspect and distance for identification purposes. Please do not attempt to closely approach gray whales to obtain photographs of this quality.

For reporting gray whale sightings and to submit photographs and related information, please contact: dave.weller@noaa.gov, alexander_burdin@alaskasealife.org and robert.brownell@noaa.gov. By mail please send to: Dave Weller, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, NOAA Fisheries, 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, California, 92037 USA.

Terms and Definitions

Each page of the catalog contains a right side, and in most cases, a left side and ventral fluke surface for a single individual. The text box associated with each individual whale contains the following information: 1) the catalog identification (ID) number systematically assigned to a whale after photographing its right side for the first time, 2) the name given to the whale by the Russia-U.S. research team, 3) the first and last year the whale was observed on the Piltun feeding ground, and 4) whether or not a genetic sample (biopsy) of the individual has been collected. For example, the text box to the right indicates that Whale No. 002, named 'Chipalina', was first seen off Piltun in 1994 and last seen there in 2005 and a genetic biopsy sample has been collected from this whale.

<p>CATALOG ID NUMBER 002</p> <p>NAME <i>Chipalina</i></p> <p>FIRST/LAST YEAR SEEN <i>1994/2005</i></p> <p>GENETIC SAMPLE? <i>Yes</i></p>
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