



PROMOTING STEWARDSHIP OF WHALES AND THE SALISH SEA ECOSYSTEM THROUGH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

December 2011

Greetings from The Whale Museum! We are so grateful for you and the support you gave this past year to further our mission of promoting stewardship of the whales and the Salish Sea ecosystem through education and research.

For the most part, this was an amazing year with our Southern Resident orcas. Naming new calves is incredibly exciting and good news for this endangered population. The biggest low was the loss of Ruffles (J-1). As the whales returned for the season, it became increasingly apparent that he was missing. As you know, Ruffles was estimated to be 60 years old and has been the iconic whale in this population for many years. While we always suspected it, through research we now know that Ruffles was the father of many of the Southern Resident orcas including, Blackberry (J-27), Rhapsody (J-32), Mako (J-39), Eclipse (J-41), Polaris (J-28), Lea (K-14), and Deadhead (K-27). And he is a grandfather! His grandwhales include Star (J-46), Lobo (K-26), Yoda (K-36), Kelp (K-42), and the newest Southern Resident orca K-44. Ruffles will never be forgotten! Many of us have wonderful memories of him as well as photos to remind us. As we watch his offspring, we will make new memories and be better stewards for having known him.



Ruffles travels with members of J Pod near the Pender Islands. July 2010.



Granny and Spieden swim together with Turtleback Mtn. in the background.

inspiring to know that this great-grandmother and the other elder members of the community still play a significant role in their community. They teach all of us important lessons, one of which is exemplified by the relationship of two brothers.

Riptide (J-30) and Se-Yi'-Chn (J-45) remind us that we are in community with these whales and have a responsibility to act as their stewards. In a naming ceremony with the Samish Nation, Se-Yi'-Chn was given this name which means younger sibling. It symbolizes that the community has the responsibility to care for the younger ones, giving them every opportunity to grow into healthy, strong whales.

You may have heard that his closest companion, Granny, is estimated to be 100 years old this year! She carries such a legacy and wealth of knowledge. We are certain that she is teaching her family members strategies for success and survival. It is



Se-Yi'-Chn and big brother Riptide swim through a riptide.

(please turn letter over ... more on reverse side)

We have a lot of work to do. One of the main things The Whale Museum does is tell the stories of the whales and help people learn how they can be better stewards. This is an important thing we all do as it helps others connect with the whales. **When a person develops a bond with the orcas, they are motivated to help.** This past year, more than 30,000 people visited The Whale Museum and spent time learning about the orcas in our Exhibit Hall. Over 86,000 people representing 142 countries visited our website. Nearly 6,000 students and teachers participated in our educational programs. Soundwatch contacted 4,600 boaters to educate them on the Be Whale Wise Guidelines and new federal regulations. The Stranding Network responded to nearly 2,000 calls about stranded marine mammals. Our Whale Hotline received over 6,000 new sightings reports. The hydrophones continued to stream live from the Lime Kiln Lighthouse as part of the OrcaSound listening network. All of these activities and more combine to tell the story about the orcas, the health of the ecosystem and the impacts we have.

We all have a responsibility to do everything we can to help our Southern Resident Orcas become a thriving population! **As a supporter, you understand and have shown your commitment to the orcas and our mission.** Through our work at the museum, we have the opportunity to be a voice for the orcas, inspiring change every day. With your help, the Whale Museum's programs will continue to work directly on behalf of the whales and other marine life in the Salish Sea. Our focus is on: the Museum Exhibit Hall & Gallery, educating visitors and students year-round; our Education team, connecting people with orcas through tours and programs; our Research team, operating programs like SeaSound which lets us all listen in to the underwater sounds; Soundwatch, helping boaters and kayakers "Be Whale Wise"; and the Stranding Network, aiding injured marine mammals and gathering information about the health of the Salish Sea.

Please donate today. There are lots of ways to contribute. Support a specific activity or program of the museum. Adopt an orca, giving yourself or a loved one the chance to get to know the orcas better. Shop in our store – there are many unique items that will please whale lovers of any age (www.whalemuseum.org).

Thank you for your continued support. **We truly appreciate you.** With your help, the work we do on behalf of the orcas and Salish Sea has a greater impact. Together, we are making a positive difference for the whales. Peace to you and yours from all of us at The Whale Museum.

Sincerely,



Jenny L. Atkinson
Executive Director



Clark Gilbert
President of the Board

Please use the enclosed card and envelope to share your special gift with us. Any amount will help. If you prefer to designate a specific program(s) or item, below are some possibilities. (Updated regularly: www.whalemuseum.org/sponsorship.html)

The Whale Museum's Programs/Departments:

- Education (includes Research Lectures, School Tours, Pod Nods, Marine Naturalist Trainings – help sponsor a program for \$100)
- Exhibit Hall & Gallery (open year-round – averaging 28,000 visitors each year – help sponsor a month for \$500)
- Marine Mammal Stranding Network (operates year-round, busiest June-Sept. – help fund responses by becoming a \$100 sponsor)
- Research (focus includes sightings database and acoustics through SeaSound – keep the hydrophones streaming by becoming a \$100 sponsor)
- Soundwatch (educating boaters and kayakers year-round, busiest May-Sept. – sponsor a day's work on-the-water for \$500)

Specific Needs:

- Exhibit Hall Refurbishment: This January, we will close from Jan. 1-13 for our annual refurbishment. On this year's wish list: replace text panels (\$250); replace & add costumes (orca, salmon and gray whale; \$150 each); new exhibit on Gray whales (\$1,500); and new exhibit on Steller Sea Lions which includes an actual skeleton (\$5,000)
- SeaSound Maintenance & Upgrade: Maintenance of the hydrophone network (listen in on www.OrcaSound.net) requires regular work, including dives. In 2012, we hope to upgrade the listening station at Lime Kiln. (10 dives at approximately \$400 each).
- Store: Window blinds – we need to replace the blinds (three sets est. at \$375 each)
- Monthly Exhibit Hall/Museum Sponsor: In 2011, we hope to have sponsors of our Museum each month (sponsorship cost is \$1,500/mo in the off-season months of Oct-Apr; \$3,000/mo in high season months of May-Sept.)