# Aarluk News

## 2009-Γ ベント・dc もトトムテトトc 2009 Summer Fieldwork

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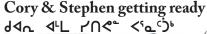
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The past summer was a great success thanks to the help of many organizations, communities, and people. This issue of the Aarluk News will share what was learned. In August 2009, killer whale researchers went to Admiralty Inlet to observe and satellite tag killer whales. Before going to the field camp, researchers had a productive meeting with the Ikajutit HTO to show them the equipment being used and to seek advice and knowledge about killer whales. The team spent three weeks at Kakiak Point with other researchers who were studying narwhal and bowhead whales. They were able to approach killer whales on several occasions and during those opportunities were able to deploy two satellite tags (see pages 2-3) and collect one biopsy sample, as well as many photographs for photo identification (see page 4).

To everyone who helped make 2009 a success, THANK YOU!

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Left Lancaster Sound - Oct. 12th ᢣᢀ᠘᠙᠘ᢗ᠘᠘᠘᠘᠘ ᡔᡄᡝᠴᠬᡃ᠂᠘ᡩᠣᢂ᠂ᡖᡙᠲᠴᢥᡫᠴᢅ Entered Prince Regent Inlet - Sept. 1st Left Admiralty Inlet - Aug. 29th Arctic Bay Fag attached - Aug. 15th







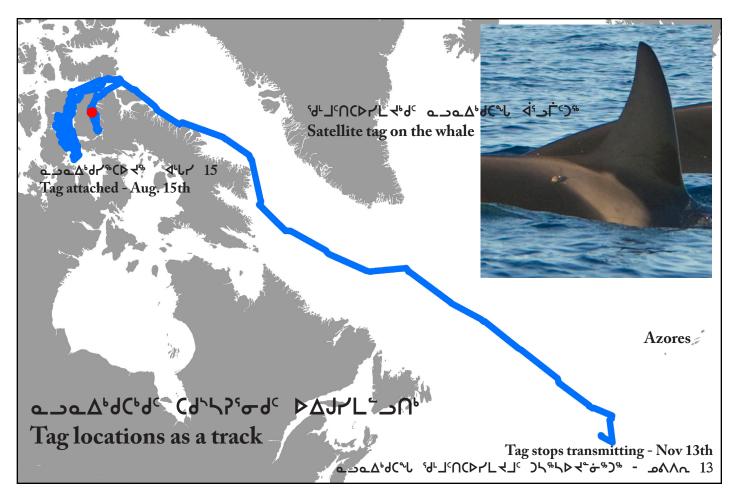


Cory, Nataq, Stephen

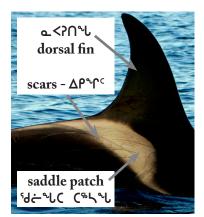
A large group of people supported the killer whale team. This included members of the Arctic Bay community and researchers working on narwhal and bowhead projects in Admiralty Inlet. The killer whale research team consisted of Cory Matthews (University of Manitoba researcher), Stephen Petersen (DFO researcher), Nataq Levi (boat captain), and Gretchen Freund (photographer). They approached the whales by boat and then used crossbows to put satellite tags onto two whales. The tags are designed to stay attached for a limited time before they fall off the whale and were programmed to collect location information each day for two months and less often after that.

#### First Killer Whales to be tagged in the Eastern Canadian Arctic

The group of killer whales that was observed in Admiralty Inlet had 18 to 20 members. Two satellite tags were deployed in this group and one tag lasted 90 days. It tracked the whales from summering areas to their possible wintering grounds – a trip of over 5100km. A few days after the whales were tagged in Admiralty Inlet, they left and spent time in Prince Regent Sound and the Gulf of Boothia. When the winter ice started to form in Prince Regent Sound, they started their journey out of the Canadian Arctic. They left through Lancaster Sound on the 12th of October, traveled down the coast of Baffin Island, and arrived in the mid-Atlantic west of the Azores in early November. The final satellite locations were from an area that was known as the 'western whaling grounds' during the 1800s because of the many large whales that could be caught there.



### Killer Whale Photo Identification

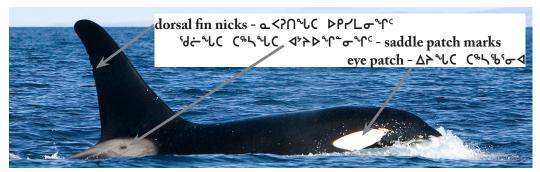


#### $A_{c} = A_{c} = A_{c$

An important part of research to date has been using photographs sent in from northerners to identify individual killer whales. Each animal has a set of unique characteristics that include the shape of the dorsal fin, saddle patch, and eye patch, as well as other marks like scars or nicks. Information from photo identification can be used to follow animals through their lives and learn about their movements, reproductive success, and survival. Photo identification can also be used to calculate population estimates. This year Gretchen Freund, a photographer who specializes in photo identification, was able to take many photos and this made it possible to identify 18 animals in the group from Admiralty Inlet.

If you have the opportunity to photograph killer whales, please try to get pictures that show the dorsal fin and saddle patch.

This past summer we also received photos, sightings forms, and reports from people in Qikiqtarjuaq, Repulse Bay, Arctic Bay, Arviat, Chesterfield Inlet, Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove, and Kugaaruk. If you see killer whales, please tell us - sightings forms can be downloaded from the OCA website or obtained at your HTO or conservation office.

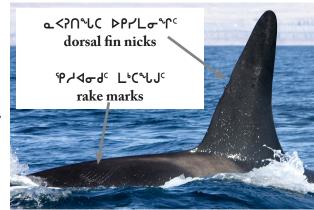


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#### Next Issue Killer Whales in Hudson Bay **Bowhead Whales** Killer Whale IO http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/science/zoology/faculty/ferguson/OCA/OCA.htm