



EXPEDITION PROFILE

August 27th, 2018 aboard DISCOVERY Yacht E Cruz

The International SeaKeepers Society partnered with cetacean experts from The University of California Santa Cruz, Southall Environmental Associates, Duke University, and Stanford University aboard the DISCOVERY Yacht, E Cruz, to deploy suction cup tags on blue and humpback whales while using drones to measure body length. Personnel on the expedition included Dr. Ari Friedlander, Jeremy Goldbogen, Brandon Southall, David Johnston, John Calambokidis, Matthew Savoca, and Max Czapanskiy, as well as Larry Moraes, owner and operator of E Cruz.

Disembarking from Monterey, California, the team set out to accomplish several objectives: first, they set out to tag large whale species off the coast of California using suction-cup attached tags to determine the kinematics of maneuvers. They operated in two general locations: Southern California Bight, and Monterey Bay. The aforementioned tags will have cameras as well as several other types of sensors that can sense acceleration, orientation, and rate of rotation of a tagged whale. They also aimed to identify maneuvers and reconstruct 3D trajectories using the sensor technology. Drones were also used to quantify 2D body morphology i.e. the size of the animals. These 2D morphological measurements can also be used to derive 3D body morphologies. Overall, these observations help gather data to answer questions about how these animals move and use energy when foraging and feeding.

The ability to conduct this kind of field research aboard one of our DISCOVERY Yachts was crucial in understanding more about these gigantic marine mammals, as lab tests would be virtually impossible. Rather, observing them in their natural habitat is truly the only way to study and learn more about what are, literally, the largest animals on our planet.

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