

Project Update: October 2014

The 2014 season was another productive year in the Babuyan Islands. The cetacean boat-based survey around Camiguin Island from March to April 2014 resulted in 29 cruise days covering a total distance of 1,342.46 km. The team documented 126 cetacean sightings and 87 of which were of humpback whales. Preliminary analysis indicates that there were 21 humpback whale individuals photo-identified with five re-sights from previous years. Seven other cetacean species were encountered, namely: Fraser's dolphins, pantropical spotted dolphins, rough-toothed dolphins, false killer whales, dwarf sperm whale, pygmy killer whales and short-finned pilot whales. The Calayan boat-based survey which was conducted simultaneously with the survey around Camiguin resulted in 2.5 cruise days with only two cetacean sightings, both of which were humpback whales. On the other hand, the pilot shore-based survey on Pamoctan Island in Camiguin resulted in 4 survey days, equivalent to 17 tracking hours with four sightings of humpback whales.

Photos:



PH016 is a known male humpback whale in the Babuyan Islands and has been sighted for 7 seasons including 2014. © Jo Marie Acebes.



A pod of Fraser's dolphins encountered in Camiguin Island. © Jo Marie Acebes.



The research survey boat docked on Pamoctan Island with Mount Camiguin in the background. © Jo Marie Acebes.