

Project Update: August 2019

This 2019 humpback whale breeding season our research team was able to conduct surveys from 23 February to 16 April, covering three islands: Camiguin Norte, Fuga and Calayan islands. This has been the first time since 2006 that we were able to conduct simultaneous surveys in these three islands. We had a total of 39 cruise days in Camiguin, four cruise days in Fuga and five cruise days in Calayan, covering an on-effort distance of 2,463.5 km or an on-effort time of 189 hours. We had a total of 189 cetacean sightings, 100 of which were humpback whales. We encountered 12 cetacean species: humpback whales, sperm whales, short-finned pilot whales, false killer whales, pygmy killer whales, melon-headed whales, rough-toothed dolphins, Fraser's dolphins, common bottlenose dolphins, Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins, pantropical spotted dolphins, and spinner dolphins. We photo-identified 25 humpback whale individuals and six of which were new in our catalogue. One of these new whales was a female with a calf that has been identified in Kamchatka, Russia. This is to date, the northernmost feeding ground where these whales have been identified.



Fluke photo of "Kamchatka" whale; humpback whale mom-calf off Camiguin Norte; Rough-toothed dolphin encountered in Camiguin Norte.

