

Hebridean Whale & Dolphin Trust

research education conservation

28 Main Street
Tobermory
Isle of Mull
Argyll PA75 6NU

Silurian – 10 years of surveying success and research results

This year the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust's (HWDT) research vessel *Silurian* completed her tenth survey season. Over the years *Silurian* has travelled a distance of over 61,000km surveying waters throughout the Hebrides and visiting the local schools when she is transformed into the "floating classroom".

In the last 10 years, HWDT have found that 55 bottlenose dolphins live in Hebridean waters; the smallest resident population of bottlenose dolphins in the UK. We have also discovered that the Hebrides hosts one of the highest densities of harbour porpoise in Europe. Through our photo identification work we have 1) catalogued 125 minke whales - some animals are thought to stay in Hebridean waters all year round, 2) found that the Hebrides supports the only resident population of killer whales in the UK, consisting of just nine individuals - their conservation status is thought to be critical and 3) we have helped to catalogue over 10,000 basking sharks. Through this work two basking shark hotspots where feeding and breeding occurs have been identified.

Silurian has surveyed 61,953km of west coast waters and 810 volunteers have been trained in the acoustic and visual field survey techniques we use onboard. Through the education programme we have engaged 1,962 school pupils in outdoor learning onboard the floating classroom and given 19 youths and teens the opportunity to join a short survey;

Think of what we could achieve in the next 10 years...

Cally Fleming, HWDT Project Director added "We are extremely grateful to all of our supporters who have helped us in many ways over the years. This support has contributed to a greater understanding of marine mammals in the Hebrides and has helped HWDT become one of the most established cetacean research and education organisations in Scotland."

To celebrate *Silurian's* 10th birthday, HWDT are offering one lucky winner the chance to name their very own minke whale!

To enter, simply answer the following question: how many minke whales are in HWDT's minke whale photo-identification catalogue? All entries must be emailed to info@hwdt.org with your answer, name and contact details listed. The winner will be announced in at the end of November and a pack delivered to the winner thereafter.

Main Office:

Tel/Fax: 01688 302620

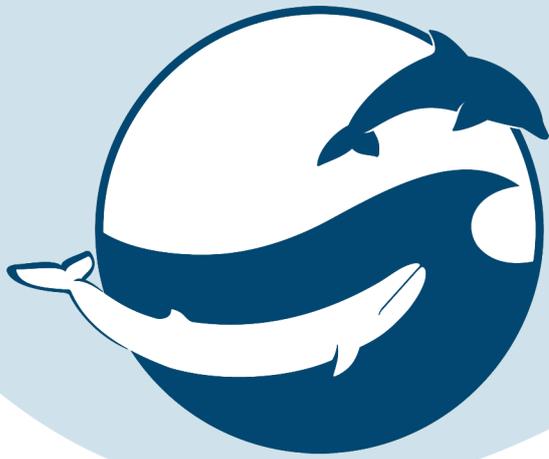
Education, Research and Sightings Office:

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If you are not the winner, you can still name one of the remaining minke whales for £150 for yourself or even the perfect gift for someone special. Or if you would like to just simply make a £10 donation to help HWDT continue their work for the next 10 years text **'HWDT12 £10'** to **70070** and see your name appear on our website 'roll of honour' page, our way of thanking you for your contribution.

Terms and Conditions for the minke whale naming competition: Only one entry per person. Employees of HWDT and their families are not eligible to enter. The closing date for entries is Friday 30th November 2012. There will be one winner chosen at random from all entries received by midnight on the closing date. The prize will consist of the opportunity to name one of the unnamed minke whales in the HWDT minke whale photo-identification catalogue. The winner will receive a naming pack and the new name will appear on the HWDT website. The cash value of this prize is £150.

END

EDITOR'S NOTES

- The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust (HWDT) is dedicated to enhancing knowledge and understanding of Scotland's whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans) and the Hebridean marine environment through education, research and working within local communities as a basis for the lasting conservation of local species and habitats.
- For more information please contact HWDT on 01688 302620

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