



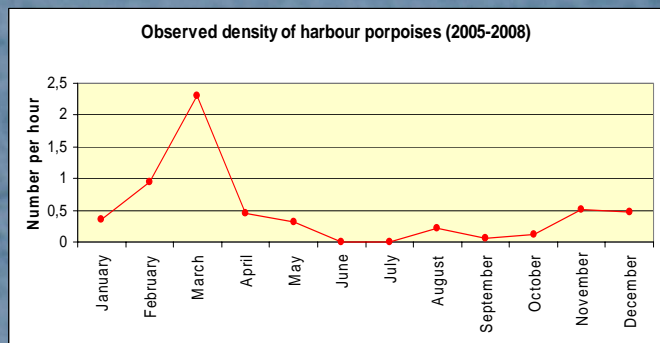
Frank Zanderink

# OCCURRENCE OF CETACEANS IN THE NORTH SEA BETWEEN HOOK OF HOLLAND (NL) AND HARWICH (UK)



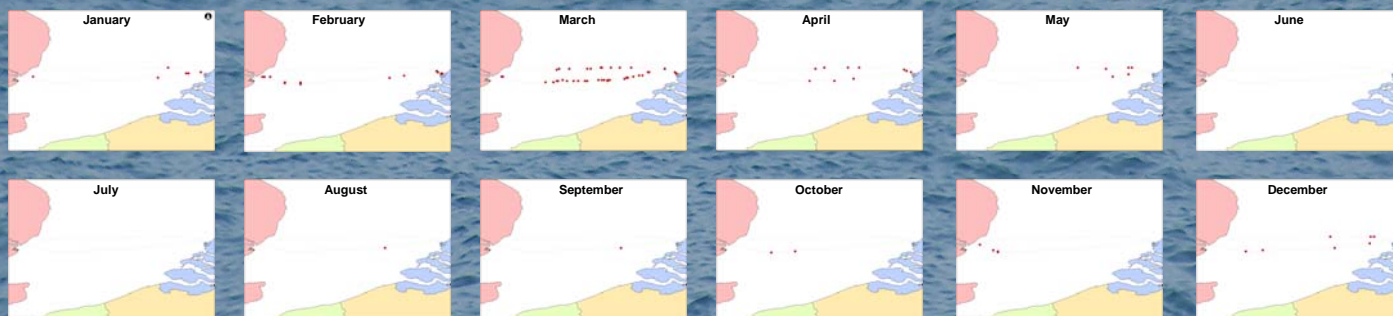
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In 2005 a project was launched under the name of Project Rugvin in order to investigate the occurrence of cetaceans in the Dutch North Sea. For the first time surveys are carried out on ferries operating between Hook of Holland (NL) and Harwich (UK). On a monthly base with a total monitoring time of 13 hours per survey researchers make use of the Stena Line ships Britannica and Hollandica.



The Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) is the most numerous species in the southern North Sea, also the White-beaked Dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*) is observed regularly. The abundance of both species strongly fluctuates with season, with the highest densities in spring (February-April). These seasonal variations are in line with those found in aerial surveys carried out by the Dutch National Institute for Coastal and Marine Management (Osinga, 2005). In 29 survey days, 137 sightings of cetaceans were recorded with in total 228 individuals.

Monitoring cetaceans in the southern North Sea by means of ferry surveys proved to be successful, therefore the work is continued under the name of an independent foundation. The Rugvin Foundation is part of the Atlantic Research Coalition (ARC). ARC was established in 2001 as a pan-European collaborative approach to the monitoring of cetacean status using platforms of opportunity.



For more information:  
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