Photo-ID of Killer Whales in Greenland Waters

(*Orcinus orca*)

By Julius Nielsen 2011

juliusnielsen88@gmail.com

This catalogue consists of pictures of killer whales observed in the Davis Strait and the Denmark Strait in Greenland waters. Unfortunately whale photographing onboard a big ship limits the angles from where pictures can be taken. Therefore many of the individuals are only shown from one side. Following three pods have been observed at three occasions. All of the pictures have been taken from RV. Paamiut.

August 2009: Denmark flock, at least 8 individuals.

July 2010: Nanortalik flock, 3 individuals.

July 2011: Disco flock, 4 individuals.

Denmark flock

Picture 1: Some of the whales in the Denmark flock. From the left: DA01, DA02, DA03 and DA04.

DA01.

Picture 2 and 3: DA01-right. The male. Notice distinct mark on dorsal fin.

DA02:

Picture 4 and 5: DA02-right (3stripes). Notice three distinct stripes across the saddle.

DA03:

Picture 6 and 7: DA03-right. No clear marks on the saddle. The saddle is open. This individuals is smaller than 3stripes (see Picture 1).

DA04:

Picture 8: DA04-right. Very dark saddle. Smaller than DA03 and 3stripes (see picture 1).

DA05:

Picture 9: DA05-right. Notice no open saddle and scrapings on the saddle.

DA06:

Picture10: DA06-right. Notice clearly open saddle.

DA07:

Picture 11: DA07-right. Notice open saddle and scrapings across.

Nanortalik flock

NA01:

Picture 12 and 13. NA01-right and left.

NA01-left

Picture 14: NA01-dorsal view. Notice distinct scrapings

NA02:

Picture 15 and 16. NA02 right and left. Notice scrapings across the saddle

Picture 17: NA02-left. Notice marks at eyepatch.

NA03:

Picture 18 and 19: NA03-right and left. Notice three marks on dorsal finn.

Picture 20: NA03-right.

Disco flock

DI01:

Picture 21 and 22: DI01-right. Notice distinct mark on dorsal fin (located higher than on DI02)

Picture 23: DI01 left. Notice scrapings across saddle.

DI02:

Picture 24: DI02 left and right. DI02-right.

Picture 25 and 26: DI02-left and right. Notice distinct mark on lower part of dorsal fin.

DI03

Picture 27 and 28: DI03-right. Male

DI04:

Picture 29: DI04-right.

Picture 30 and 31: DI04-left. Notice very dark saddle and tip of dorsal fin pointing backwards. Smallest individual in the pod.

Individual	Position	Date	Comments	Pictures
DA01	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009	At least 8 indv. Incl a calve.	2,3
DA02	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009		4,5
DA03	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009		6,7
DA04	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009		8
DA05	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009		9
DA06	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009		10
DA07	N64° 42min W31° 31min	31 August 2009		11
NA01	N59°54'47.89 W45°50'30.24	31 July 2010		12, 13, 14
NA02	N59°54'47.89 W45°50'30.24	31 July 2010		15, 16, 17
9NA03	N59°54'47.89 W45°50'30.24	31 July 2010		18, 19, 20
DI01	N69°22min W57°38min	08 July 2011.	Swimming east	21,20,23
DI02	N69°22min W57°38min	08 July 2011.	Swimming east	24,25,26
DI03	N69°22min W57°38min	08 July 2011.	Swimming east	27,28
DI04	N69°22min W57°38min	08 July 2011.	Swimming east	29,30,31

Notes

DA-flock:

At least eight individuals were spotted in this flock including a kalf. The whales were clearly playing. Some individuals were swimming on their side and others were standing in the water with their tails and tailfin above the water. There was also a lot of splashing with tailfins and pectorial fins. This activity was only observed from distance and has been photo-documented.

NA-flock:

NA01, NA02, NA03 represented a small flock spotted offshore Nanortaliq, Western Greenland.. Other killer whales were spotted in the area, but foggy and rainy weather only revealed a short observation of these. The small group consisted of one large male (NA01) and to other whales of undetermined sex. NA03 was the smallest in size.

DI-flock:

DI01, DI02, DI03 and DI04 represented a flock spotted offshore Disco Island, Western Greenland. Apperantly the whales had made a kill since there were a lot of birds fighting for some leftovers in the water. The whales were not affected by our presence and we sailed in close on them three times. From distance we saw the whales where playing in the water splashing their tail and pectorial fins. This kind of

activity was only observed when the whales had distance to the boat. Seals were spotted 150 m from the whales.

Pictures

Picture 1-11: Peter Frandsen
Picture 12-31: Julius Nielsen