

Editorial: an issue on Cetaceans

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Dear LAJAM readership,

It is a great pleasure to present the first issue of LAJAM in 2022, following its new schedule of releasing one issue in April and the second one in October. In this issue we have five articles and four notes, exploring a varied array of themes, all dealing with cetacean species, and spanning geographically from the Mexico to Argentina.

Bordin and colleagues present abundance and mortality data for Guiana dolphins (*Sotalia guianensis*) on the coastal waters of Cayenne (French Guiana): aerial and boat-based surveys between 2013 and 2019 estimated the presence of 128 dolphins in the area; bycatch stood out as the major cause of death based on stranding data 2014-2020. Density estimates were also provided by Bélanger et al. for the freshwater species of the genus (*S. fluviatilis*) – along with the other river dolphin of South America (*Inia*) in the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve, Peru in the period 2016-2018. The authors identified confluences as the preferred habitat by both species, likely related to feeding activities. Vidal et al., working in the Brazilian Amazon, analysed the relationships among male Amazon River dolphin specimens engaged in a tourism activity where food was provided from a floating house. Abundance and group size were examined for bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) off Sinaloa (Mexico) 2007-2012, under the light of sea surface temperature and chlorophyll-a changes, by Zepeda-Borja and collaborators. The authors concluded that both parameters may be influenced by hydrographic conditions, particularly during extreme events such as El Niño and La Niña. Courtin and colleagues used photo-id techniques to examine movement and residency status of pantropical spotted dolphins (*Stenella attenuata*) between Guadeloupe and Martinique, Lesser Antilles, and concluded that both populations present relative high site fidelity. Ortiz-Wolford et al. provide the first list of cetaceans present in the Caribbean Sea, or the Atlantic side, of Guatemala, based on unpublished accounts of opportunistic sightings between 2007 and 2020, in addition to historical data. The authors present records of at least

five odontocete species (bottlenose dolphin, pantropical spotted dolphin *Stenella attenuata*, spinner dolphin *S. longirostris*, Atlantic spotted dolphin *S. frontalis*, Delphinidae, and short-finned pilot whale *Globicephala macrorhynchus*) and at least two mysticetes (fin whale *Balaenoptera physalus* and humpback whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*). In the Venezuelan state of Aragua, Cobarrubia-Russo et al. produced a note on two cases of body deformities in bottlenose dolphins suggestive of scoliosis, during long-term photo-id studies. Whereas one animal was only documented once, an adult female was repeatedly recorded over the years, allowing to accompany the progress of the anomaly. During six months of 2019 and 2020 each, Morete and collaborators observed humpback whales off Ilhabela Island, southeastern Brazil. Due to the presence of competitive groups and calves, the authors suggest that as a mating and calving area. Finally, Padula et al. bring us the record of predation by orca *Orcinus orca* on franciscana dolphin *Pontoporia blainvillei*, based on stomach contents of a stranded orca in La Caleta, northern Argentina.

I would like to conclude reminding our readers that this is LAJAM's 20th anniversary and we are planning a Special Issue on advances on the study and conservation of aquatic mammals in Latin America in the past two decades, due to come out in December 2022. More celebration should occur during the upcoming XIII RT, to take place in Praia do Forte, Bahia, Brazil, 11-15 September. LAJAM shall have a booth during the meeting and I hope to see you there.

Enjoy your reading.

Sincerely,

Miriam Marmontel
LAJAM Editor-in-Chief
