

# Editorial

**Miriam Marmontel**

Instituto de Desenvolvimento Sustentável Mamirauá

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Dear LAJAM readership

I am proud to present to you our second issue of the year 2024. It is full of information on species ranging from the South America subantarctic region to the Caribbean, heavily focused on cetaceans - both freshwater and marine - but also including pinnipeds.

The manuscripts this time around could be presented in tandem. An article and a note deal with gross anatomy and histology: Vega et al. inform us on sexual maturity of Burmeister's porpoise in Peru, while the heart of the leopard seal is described by Diaz et al. The health and disease theme is approached by Loch and Marmontel as they explore pathology and wear in teeth of freshwater dolphins from the Amazon, and on the southeastern coast of Brazil Antonelli and colleagues present us with a case of sepsis on a neonate Franciscana dolphin caused by a pathogenic bacterium. The issue of strandings is featured in the work by Martinelli et al. with cetaceans in São Paulo under a temporal perspective, and by Iñiguez and colleagues with Franciscana in Argentina under three methodological approaches. The Caribbean region is highlighted in two manuscripts, one by Riou et al. on pilot whale population parameters and site fidelity, and the other by May-Collado and colleagues describing the first record of humpback whale along the Costa Rican coast. Finally, technology takes the center stage in two manuscripts: Oliveira et al. show how AI can improve the identification of fur seals in Southern Brazil, while Pivari and collaborators used a dipping hydrophone to record sounds by sei whales off the São Paulo coast. And then we have the closing manuscript of our issue, a single, sole, sad one, an in memoriam to our colleague Dr. Armando Jaramillo-Legorreta for whom a number of his close collaborators produced a well-deserved eulogy. Armando's untiring work for the conservation of vaquita is inspirational and his legacy shall survive. Armando was also a dedicated member of LAJAM's editorial team. Our hearts are with his family and friends.

Our LAJAM team has seen other changes over the current year. After four years of dedication Dr. Daniel Gonzalez-Socoloske is stepping down as our Managing Editor due to other professional commitments. Thus,

after eight years in the Editorial Board, Dr. Eduardo Morteo gracefully accepted the task to assume this role and has worked on this issue with the help of Dr. Gonzalez. We wholeheartedly thank Dr. Gonzalez for his service and welcome Dr. Morteo onto his new position. Similarly, our former Layout Editor, Aileen Arango worked alongside with our incoming Layout Editor José Miguel Ríos Millán. We thank both for the past and future work.

This time, the cover image features a mother-calf pair of pilot whales provided by Dr. Benjamin de Montgolfier as part of his research project on cetacean populations in Martinique. The picture was taken, last April on a group of 40 pilot whales along the Caribbean coast (Nikon D7100, 70-300mm lens).

Last year me and my team were in the middle of an UME of Amazonian River dolphins in Central Amazon. This year we prepared and braced ourselves for a possible new episode, but fortunately water temperatures did not get up as high as last year, even though the water level dropped even further. Even though we did not have a massive mortality associated with the heat, we did lose a considerable number of dolphins and manatees due to the close interaction between the aquatic mammals and humans. The drought was also much more widespread throughout the Amazon region, while we had great floods in the South, and fires along all ecosystems in Brazil and the region. These are wake up calls as we should be prepared for more frequent, longer, and more severe of those events. And we should monitor all aquatic mammal populations and prepare for when these events hit in our areas, so we can intervene and reduce the damage to the species we work with.

I wish you enjoy the papers herein contained.

Happy reading!

*Miriam Marmontel*  
LAJAM Editor-in-Chief

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