American Cetacean Society Encyclopedia Article

American Cetacean Society

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Contents

American Cetacean Society Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

American Cetacean Society.....3

American Cetacean Society

The American Cetacean Society (ACS), located in San Pedro, California, is dedicated to the protection of **whales** and other cetaceans, including **dolphins** and porpoises. Principally an organization of scientists and teachers (though its membership does include students and laypeople) the ACS was founded in 1967 and claims to be the oldest whale **conservation** group in the world.

The ACS believes the best protection for whales, dolphins, and porpoises is better public awareness about "these remarkable animals and the problems they face in their increasingly threatened habitat." The organization is committed to political action through education, and much of its work has been in improving communication between marine scientists and the general public.

The ACS has developed several educational resource materials on cetaceans, making such products as the "Gray Whale Teaching Kit," "Whale Fact Pack," and "Dolphin Fact Pack," which are widely available for use in classrooms. There is a cetacean research library at the national headquarters in San Pedro, California, and the organization responds to thousands of inquiries every year. The ACS supports marine mammal research and sponsors a biennial conference on whales. It also assists in conducting whale-watching tours.

The organization also engages in more traditional and direct forms of political action. A representative in Washington, DC, monitors legislation that might affect cetaceans, attends hearings at government agencies, and participates as a member of the International **Whaling** Commission. The ACS also networks with other conservation groups. In addition, the ACS directs letter-writing campaigns, sending out "Action Alerts" to citizens and politicians. The organization is currently emphasizing the threats to marine life posed by **oil spills**, toxic wastes from industry and agriculture, and particular fishing practices (including commercial whaling).

The ACS publishes a quarterly newsletter on whale research, conservation, and education, called *WhaleNews*, and a quarterly journal of scientific articles on the same subjects, called *Whalewatcher*.

Resources

Organizations

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