

Celebration of Conservation

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SEAMAIL™

FROM: Jake, the SeaDog
TO: Virtual Team Leaders and Science Team
SUBJECT: Test your Skills 1: Identify Some Gray Whales

Dear Virtual Science Team Members,

Identifying individual gray whales through photo-ID isn't always easy. As Dr. Dave mentioned, sometimes a whale earns special nickname because of memorable patterns or scar – like the Pirate because of the skull and cross bones pattern on her tail.

Dr. Dave also included a “catalogue page” in his Seamail. Scientists use a special numbering system to catalogue the whales. When they photograph a whale, they must compare that whale with the thousands (yes thousands!) of whales they've catalogued. No computer program can do the job. It takes the well-trained eye of a scientist.

Do you have what it takes to identify whales? Attached are photos of some whales with memorable markings. Their nicknames are:

- Doorknob
- Shamrock
- Eagle Eye

Can you match the nickname with the whale?

See if you're correct. I'll send a second Seamail with the identification of the whale on the photo. Maybe you can make your own gray whale, then come up with a nickname for it. We'd love to see them!

Jake, the SeaDog
Team Gray Whale
WhaleTimes, Inc.
seamail@whaletimes.org



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