

**Research Activity Report**  
**Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”**  
(Please be sure to submit this report after the trip that supported by PWS.)

2023. 5, 22	
<b>Affiliation/Position</b>	Wildlife Research center M1
<b>Name</b>	Shimei Shirasawa

<b>1. Country/location of visit</b>
Japan, Hakodate
<b>2. Research project</b>
Field Training on marine mammals
<b>3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)</b>
2023. 04. 21 – 2023. 04. 24 (4 days)
<b>4. Main host researcher and affiliation</b>
Kyoto University WRC, Oshoromaru Hokkaido University, Dr. Yoko Mitani
<b>5. Progress and results of your research/activity</b> (You can attach extra pages if needed)
Please insert one or more pictures (to be publicly released). Below each picture, please provide a brief description.
<p>The main purpose of this field work was to observe and learn the species diversity of marine mammals inhabits the seas around Japan. Moreover, the aim of this field training is to understand the method of observation conducted from a ship.</p> <p><b>Overall schedule</b></p> <p>4/21 Kobe harbour ~ Wakayama offshore Departed Kobe harbour at 16:00. The observation was conducted from 16:30 to 17:00.</p> <p>4/22 Kii peninsula ~ Izu peninsula The observation was conducted from 6:30 to 16:30.</p> <p>4/23 The Japan trench ~ Fukushima offshore The observation was conducted from 8:00 to 17:00.</p> <p>4/24 Sanriku offshore ~ Hachinohe offshore The observation was conducted from 5:15 to 17:30.</p> <p>4/25 Tsugaru channel ~ Hakodate harbour Arrived at Hakodate harbour at 8:00 No observation was conducted.</p> <p><b>Method</b></p> <p>The observation shifts for the following day were prepared the day before, and it was organised so that each person gets 7 to 8 hours of observation time a day. The observations were generally carried out by three (or more) people at the same to ensure that no target was missed. The observations were carried out visually/binocularly mainly at the upper deck of the vessel, using Splash (waves associated with water surface movement), Blow (respiration at the water surface) and Fluke up (diving where the tail fins could be seen) to distinguish the species. The range of the observation was 0° at the bow and 90° from there to the left and right respectively. When a subject was found, a detailed record was made of the number and species as far as it was possible to ascertain. Sea conditions (weather, visibility, sea ice, range of visibility, glare, wind speed) were recorded every 30 minutes from the start of the observation. Any sudden changes in sea conditions were also recorded.</p> <p><b>Results</b></p>

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4/21

Nothing could be observed due to the short observation time of an hour. Also, the strong glare caused by the sunset, which limited the area that could be observed.

4/22

Nothing could be observed. Observation was made from the cockpit as the weather started to break around noon and the wind became stronger. As the wind died down, we immediately returned to the upper deck to restart observing. Observation was difficult due to poor weather conditions, whitecaps and poor visibility.

4/23

Good weather and visibility throughout the day. A school of Risso’s dolphin was encountered around midday (Figure 1). At around 17:00, Dr.Mitani spotted a splash beyond the horizon (8 – 9 km away). Due to my lack of observation experience, I couldn’t distinguish whether it was a wave or a splash.

4/24

Good weather and visibility throughout the day, and a fur seal was seen swimming about 200m in front of the bow at 13:00 (Figures.2-1, 2-2). At the end of the observation, around 17:20, a group of Dall’s porpoises were encountered (Figure.3). It swam towards the vessel from about 60° left of the bow, crossed the vessel and was lost.

**Photos**



Figure.1 A school of Risso’s dolphin.



Figure.2-1 Fur seals swimming 1.

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Figure.2-2 Fur seals swimming 2.



Figure.3 Dall's porpoise crossing the front of the vessel bow.



Figure.4 A view from the upper bridge.

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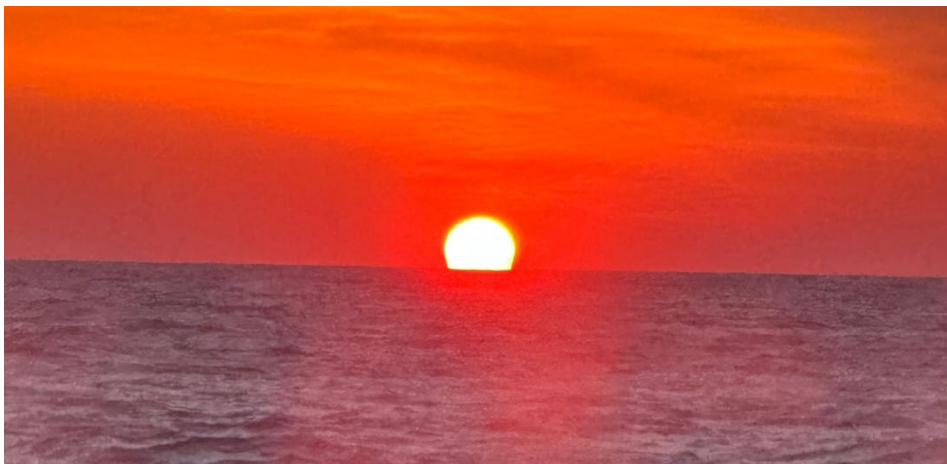


Figure.5 The sunrise seen from Oshoromaru

**6. Others**

I would like to take this opportunity to appreciate the crew of the Oshoromaru as well as Professor Mitani for the guidance.