

# FOR WHALES' SAKE

By Jackle Hilderling



Looking for a "wild" Christmas gift? Symbolically adopt one of BC's killer whales! You can even adopt a whale from the birth year of the recipient for an extra personal touch. The gift package includes: A picture of the whale; its life

story; a certificate that tells you're wonderful; an annual research update and a CD with killer whale vocals and the commentary of leading acoustics researcher, Dr. John Ford. But that's not all! The recipient gets a canvas bag they can use over and over again, for further earth-friendly joy. Of course . . . you, the sender, get a tax receipt and the great satisfaction of knowing this is a gift with a difference. All this for just \$54!

Why adopt a killer whale? All 4 discrete populations of killer whales in British Columbia's waters are in trouble and hence, there is an acute need for further research. Government funds are, not surprisingly, limited.

The transients and northern resident populations of killer whales are listed as "threatened." The offshore population is "of special concern" and the southern resident population, is "endangered" (COSEWIC listings.)



The Wild Killer Whale Adoption Program strives to fund the much needed research and education. Examples:

- o The photo-identification begun by Dr. Michael Bigg. The understanding of killer whales hinges on being able to recognize them as individuals.
- o DNA research that led to the confirmation that the populations do not mate with one another and therefore must be protected as different populations, not as one species

## *Killer Whales for Christmas!*

(Dr. Lance Barrett-Lennard).

- o The acoustics work of Dr. John Ford that led to the understanding that different populations have different languages and that inbreeding in residents is avoided by the matriline (families) having distinct calls.
- o The diet studies of residents (Dr. Ford and Graeme Ellis)
- o Transient echolocation studies (Dr. Barrett-Lennard)
- o Research on the interaction between sea otters and transients (Katie Kuker).
- o A scholarship . . . and the list goes on and on!

Help the killer whales, not only for whales' sake but because they serve as highly effective ambassadors of the very state of our oceans.

Yes – increase the "fa la la la" in your Christmas with the satisfaction of giving a gift with this much meaning. **To adopt a killer whale go to [www.killerwhale.org](http://www.killerwhale.org). Further information about BC's killer whales can be accessed via [www.econauts.org](http://www.econauts.org). See "marine education pages."**