

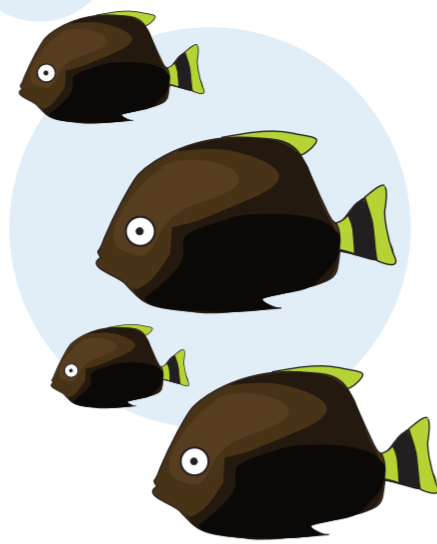
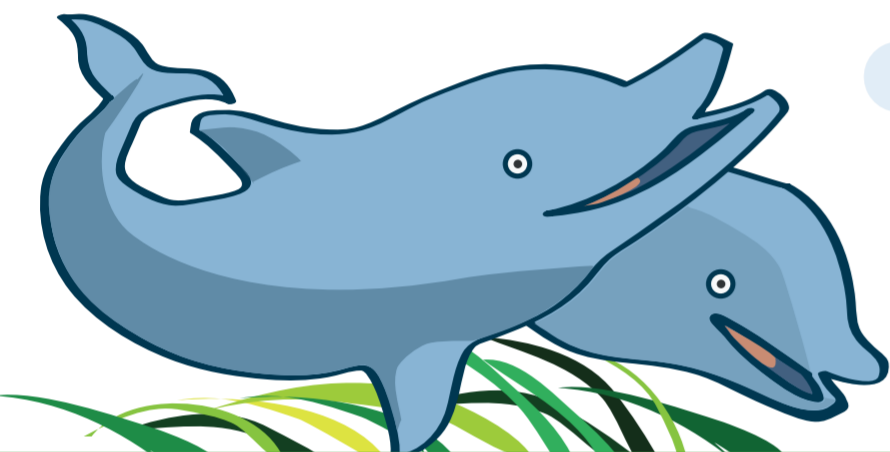
# Dear Friends

For us in Blue World, this year was special – we celebrate our 10th anniversary! On such a jubilee, people usually look back and try to recall everything that marked the past decade, but it would simply be too much for this issue of “Akvamarin” that stands before you – the 9th in a row. Nevertheless, there’s something to say about the ending year. Besides the everyday routine, there are definitely days to remember. But, first things first...

During 2009 the Lošinj Marine Education Centre hosted even more school groups and individual visitors than previous years. Those that visited us could have seen some new attractions in our centre. The biggest of all is definitely the “acoustic chamber” – previously the storage under the stairs – it is now a portal to two audible underwater experiences; the winter experience of waves lapping and micro-organisms crackling in the sea; and the summer experience of irritating noise produced by boat engines. Our information panels now also have multimedia screens that visually and

audibly interpret various subjects, thanks to the EU PHARE project. Besides that, on the blue walls of the centre you can find some sea dwellers – the jolly illustrations of a whale, crab and jellyfish that our regular adopters will remember from last year’s “Akvamarin”. Also, the wall above the stairs is now a beautiful mural showing the 12 whale and dolphin species occurring in the Mediterranean Sea.

There was plenty of work for our research team in Lošinj. Contrary to the previous year when we had difficulties finding dolphins, it was all compensated this summer. During 93 boat surveys we encountered dolphins on 102 occasions, but one weekend will for sure remain deeply carved in our memories. What a weekend! The record breaking weekend! We spent several hours on Saturday accompanied by a group of 58 dolphins. Full of impressions from that day, knowing that it was the most numerous pod ever recorded in our area of research, we couldn’t even dare to think that right the next day dolphins will break that record – 60 dolphins in one pod! Wow!



Besides that, we also saw, what many consider the most beautiful dolphin, striped dolphin; a loner that has been wandering around Vinodolski channel for years now.

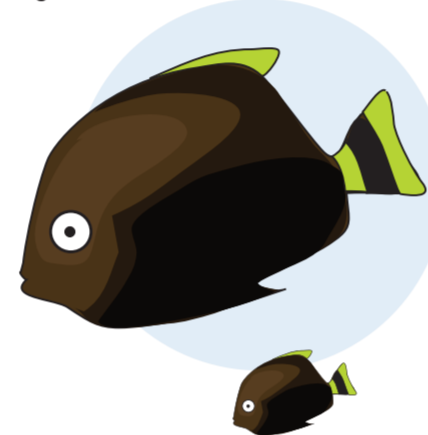
The research in Vis archipelago was also successfully continued, meaning we have our hands full of data to be analyzed during the winter. Luckily, a significant part of the job has already been done with help of our volunteers. Thank you!

We also contributed in rescuing two sea turtles. Silvester was found on the Silvester night 2008, bearing a severe open wound on its right flipper. The other one, named Michael, was caught on the long line with two fishing hooks stuck in its throat. The experts of the sea turtle rehabilitation centre in Pula successfully operated

on both of them. After several months of rehabilitation, Silvester and Michael were returned to the sea on 25th September.

As a part of the project “NGO capacity building for implementation of NATURA 2000 priority actions” that was conducted under the EU PHARE 2006 programme in cooperation with NGO Natura, three short promotional videos on the threats to the whales and dolphins were made and aired on the Croatian TV. Also, a short documentary was filmed, educational workbooks and numerous leaflets were printed; of course all on the subject of dolphins and marine biodiversity. I guess, you’ve had enough of news from the Blue World by now and you wish to discover what else is hidden in this “Akvamarin”. Our previous supporters will notice that, again, we changed the layout, so this year you’ll find a poster with the picture of bottle-nose dolphin near the island of Vis. We hope that this picture will remind you of summer and will smile at you from your wall, wishing you all the best in the 2010!

Grgur Plesić



# Where are they now?

Mush is an adult male dolphin with an extremely interesting dorsal fin shape which makes him easily recognizable on the sea. He is a very curious animal that enjoys our company and regularly rewards our presence with some of his fantastic jumps. Throughout this year we have often seen Mush in the central part of our study area, especially during the winter months. In the summer, he surprised us with his presence in the vicinity of the islet Dolfin, near the island of Rab. He is often seen in company of his friends Meta, Elmar, Duje and Maestral. During the spring time, when dolphins start socializing more often on the sea surface, Mush and his gang regularly amaze us with some new stunts. We look forward to our new meetings with Mush.



Mush

Meta is a male dolphin well known to our research crew. He is regularly seen in the very core of our study area, especially in the vicinity of the islands Oruda and Palacol. His dorsal fin is also distinctive and he is easy to recognize on the sea, even from the distance. He is a playful animal that often approaches our boat checking us out. Meta is a real athlete capable of performing extreme jumps proving each time his physical strength to observers. We usually see him with Mush, Elmar, Duje and Maestral attending their acrobatic games. Meta and his lively group were regularly seen throughout this year, and in the winter we often enjoyed their presence close to the coast of the island of Lošinj.



Meta

Debby is a female dolphin seen for the first time in 1991. We see her quite often on both sides of the island of Lošinj. So far she had had two calves, Višnja in the year 2000 and Minkie in 2006. Debby is a very responsible mother that takes good care of her youngsters. Seeing Debby became particularly exciting since the appearance of Minkie. This extremely curious calf would come to our bow to whistling invite us to join the game. During our meetings, Debby would always keep her eyes on her playful calf. Since 2009 we started to see Debby alone again. This means that Minkie most likely became independent and that Debby could soon surprise by having a newborn which we quite look forward to. During the past year have been enjoying her company especially around the islands of Ilovik, Oruda and Trštenik where we saw her the most.



Debby

Sonja is an adult female with a very peculiar dorsal fin that looks like a sickle. She is a highly sociable and often seen in big groups of mothers with calves. Sonja is seen on both eastern and western side of the island of Lošinj and along the southern parts of the archipelago around the islands of Silba, Premuda and Ilovik. She also surprised us with her sudden visit to Mali Lošinj harbour. During 2009 we had seen her in the company of Debby, Celina, Quiz and their calves in the central part of our study area. We look forward seeing Sonja again!



Sonja

Written by Nikolina Rako, Blue World’s Head Researcher



# KIDS CORNER

B S T A R F I S H E  
W H A L E O T M T S  
L E A N U T N U O R  
J E L L Y F I S H O  
L O B S T E R S S H  
E D S P O N G E O A  
L P S H A R K L H E  
I O C T O P U S N S

Find the names of marine animals listed below! If you succeed to find them all, the unused letters will give you the name of a marine mammal species in the Adriatic Sea.

Hidden words:  
JELLYFISH, LOBSTER, MUSSEL, OCTOPUS, SEA HORSE, SHARK, SPONGE, STARFISH, TUNA, WHALE



# The best days on the sea

This year we have had many interesting encounters with dolphins which we will remember for a long time. Groups of mothers with calves always induce a special feeling and excitement in us, especially if a newborn is among them. Newborns are extremely cute when rising up to the surface. They seem to be really trying hard and using all her strength in those moments, always putting almost half of their body above the surface. We had a several encounters like that this year. That fact fulfills us with joy and awakes optimism in us.

Then again, groups of playful ‘teenagers’ that astonish us with their performances every time are also something special. In the beginning of summer we found one of these groups not far away from the small island of Oruda. That encounter we’ll undoubtedly remember for a long time. It was a group of young male dolphins. Dolphins were very active and from the commotion they were causing on the sea surface we noticed fish jumping out. Clearly, we had interrupted their lunch. As we didn’t want to disturb them we kept a greater distance than usual. But, in the group there was one dolphin that obviously wasn’t hungry anymore and found our boat more interesting than his meal. He approached the boat several times, curiously swam around it and then returned to the others. Once, when he approached us and we noticed a fish in his mouth. All of a sudden, he dropped it right next to our boat! It seemed as he is saying: “Here guys, you have this one - I’m not hungry anymore!”. We knew this dolphin from before, but we hadn’t yet given him a name.

After that, we named him Santiago – from the fisherman of Hemingway’s novel “The Old Man and the Sea”.

Another unforgettable day with dolphins occurred in the middle of August while researching area around island Trštenik. There, we found a group of 60 dolphins. Among them were several mothers with calves already known to us. They kept their distance from our boat, from time to time allowing their calves to relax and do a jump or two. The bravest among them were Mali’s and Raissa’s calves. They approached us few times to bow ride, and were whistling so loud we could hear them above the surface. In that large group, there were also the ‘old’ dolphins, Debbie, Taba, Vuk, Phil, Mida, Inja, Sonja and about ten other dolphins that are very familiar with our boat.

However, none of us was as impressed as when a larger group of young dolphins began to perform shows which would have envied by the best acrobats of the world. It was really the kind of playing rarely seen. In every direction we’d look, at least one dolphin would be “in the air”. Mush, Anna, Duje and Lily carried out such synchronized jumps that were reminiscent of the well-rehearsed ballet. Others were showing their skills by jumping five meters in the air. Regardless of previous knowledge about the undoubted high intelligence and well developed social structure of dolphins, from time to time, they still find a way to leave us breathless. They amaze us with their playfulness, curiosity and affection. Some of their actions, for example what Santiago did, place a question in our minds about how much we really do know about their life in the wild, and remind us why it is necessary to devote additional attention to them and protect them.

Alena Sprčić



Santiago with a fish

# Dolphin day

The 17th Dolphin day was held on August the 1st in Veli Lošinj. As is tradition it started with the putting up of the exhibition of children’s drawings. Veli Lošinj bay was covered with drawings of cheerful sea creatures with our research boat and crew. All of the 350 drawings were done with a lot of imagination and hard work. Our drawing committee along with public vote decided that Emily Cunjak’s drawing was a real masterpiece and awarded her for the best drawing of this year’s exhibition. Her beautiful work you can see on the cover of Akvamarin.

Besides the traditional “Treasure hunt” game and artistic workshops for children, in front of Lošinj Marine Education Centre, this year we organized a water polo tournament in Rovenska bay with a great help from “Lošinj” water polo club. Also, this year we organized a small Eco fair representing organizations like “Idem i ja”, “Žerna”, “Ultramarin”, “Garden of Fine Scents”, and “Lush”. In cooperation with “Lush” we started the action “Lush donates money from soaps!” – money earned from the “Blue world” soap made by Lush from 01.08.2009 until 30.09.2009 was donated to Blue World for research and conservation of the marine environment as well as education. In the evening, all visitors of 17th Dolphin Day could enjoy the music of Alen Čelić and friends. For the fans of the 7th art we organised a small projection of movies about sea in Timi Beach Bar, also the place for the after party.

After we gathered our impressions we concluded we organised yet another successful Dolphin day. We hope you had fun as well and see you next year!

Vlasta Pavičić

Blue World would like to thank all the sponsors and donors that enabled our work in 2009:

P.Z.AUTO



Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of Croatia



Special thanks to all our volunteers and dolphin adopters whose support in 2009 was of great help to our work!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Front page:

Detail of the winning drawing on 17 Dolphin Day - 9 year old Emily Cunjak from Jušići Jurdani Croatia.

# Akvamarin

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2009





