



## The Oceania Project's Whale Research Expeditions in Hervey Bay: 1989-2013

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### Long-term Photo-identification survey of Humpback whales in Hervey Bay



Owl Claw was first photographed in Hervey Bay by Trish in 1994 (**Above**).

He was resighted and photographed annually between 1994 and 1998. He was seen again in 2000 and 2003.

In 1995, 1998 & 2003 (**Below**) he was observed in the role of an Escort. This suggests he is a male however gender remains to be confirmed from either observation or through DNA analysis.



The photo-identification survey was commenced in 1992 and is being undertaken by Trish and Wally Franklin to provide data for a long-term study of the behaviour, social dynamics and ecology of Humpback Whales in Hervey Bay.

The study was approved by the Queensland Environment Protection Agency is being conducted under a scientific permit (WISP037498060).

Trish Franklin's observations and photo-id data of the Hervey Bay Humpbacks from 1992 to 2005, plus historical work by Wally Franklin has already made a significant contribution to documenting the recovery of the East Coast of Australia Humpbacks following near extinction by commercial whaling in Antarctica (Paton *et al* 2011) and (Clapham *et al* 2009).

Trish has taken, digitised and analysed over 75,000 Photo Identification data images of the Hervey Bay Whales. Her Fluke Catalogue consists of over 2821 individuals from the Hervey Bay Humpback Group. This is the largest digital data archive available on the East Coast of Australian Humpback Group.

The data from the long-term photo-identification survey is the basis of Trish Franklin's PhD investigating the 'Social and ecological significance of Hervey Bay to the eastern Australian humpback whales'.

Also see Trish's recent publication:  
(Franklin *et al* 2011 Marine Mammal Science)

Source : <http://www.oceania.org.au/expedition/research1.html>