

# Entanglement Updates

## #2240 Re-sighted in May, Health Deteriorating

from Center for Coastal Studies

First reported in our Spring 2003 newsletter, right whale #2240 was sighted on May 15 by the NOAA aerial survey team during offshore surveys. The images, taken with high-definition television cameras (courtesy NOAA-Fisheries) show a strong deterioration of overall health and no outward sign that the entangling lines remain. Orange cyamids, or whale lice, often indicative of poor health, can be found scattered in patches around the head, left flipper and tail. This worsening of condition may be surprising considering the apparently simple nature of the entanglement. It cannot be ruled out that the line, originally anchored in the mouth, was not ingested or generally restricted feeding. The whale has not been sighted by surveys since May 15. Any future sightings will be used to further assess this animal's condition. Please keep a close lookout for this whale.



Aerial view of right whale #2240. Photo courtesy - NOAA-Fisheries

## #3120 in Good Condition

from Center for Coastal Studies

Whale #3120 was spotted off Jacksonville Beach in Feb. 2003. This whale was sighted east of Massachusetts by a NOAA-Fisheries aerial survey team on June 17. The whale was found feeding and appears to be in relatively good condition despite the continued entanglement. This animal has been monitored since first being spotted entangled off the coast of North Carolina on April 7, 2002. The whale was only one year old at the time. The condition of #3120 at the time was considered life-threatening because of its age and the nature of the entanglement. MRC will keep you updated as new information becomes available.

## #1424 Re-sighted in Cape Cod Bay in April

from Center for Coastal Studies

On April 14 the Center for Coastal Studies aerial survey team spotted right whale #1424. This whale was first reported in the Spring 2002 newsletter after being spotted off the Georgia coast. The adult male has been spotted several times since the spring of 2002. Recent aerial documentation shows that the nature of the entanglement and the general health of the whale do not appear to have changed. Yet our understanding of the entanglement has become more clear. The whale has two different diameter ropes mostly originating from the mouth. At least one loop of the thinner line wraps around the upper jaw. None of the lines appear to involve the flippers or flukes.

After repeated attempts to tag the whale, the whale dove and was not sighted again, despite a dedicated search by the aerial survey team and the disentanglement team. More assessment of images will be needed before decisions about how to best deal with this entanglement can be made.



Professional disentanglement team on a rescue mission. They hold a permit to approach right whales. Please do not do this yourself. Photo courtesy of Center of Coastal Studies.

According to the New England Aquarium, approximately 67% of the Northern right whale population has scars from entanglements in fishing gear.



Right whale #3120 on June 24. Photo courtesy NOAA-Fisheries