

# Weekly Ocean Report

## **Dolphins dance in large line amid a few minke whales while hunger stalks brown pelicans**

**By CAPTAIN DAVE ANDERSON Special to the Dana Point News**

Several thousand long beaked common dolphins could be found just a few miles from shore this week.

Most of the time these dolphins were in small feeding groups of several hundred individuals, but on Sunday they came together and began to charge offshore in a huge chorus line that was over a mile long.

We also saw lots of common dolphin calves swimming with their mothers.

In fact, the water was so calm and clear I could actually see a calf nursing from its mother.

Common dolphins have their calves all year round but we see the most calves born in late spring and early summer.

We saw two minke whales this week one 2.5 miles off Dana point and the other 3 miles off Laguna. At around 32 feet these small baleen whales aren't much bigger than a male killer whale.

No blue whales were reported this week off Orange County.

On a sad note we are seeing lots of brown pelicans in trouble around Dana Point Harbor: weak and malnourished birds, injured birds with broken wings and some with fishing gear caught on them.

I even saw one of these endangered birds floating face down at the harbor entrance. There have been some rumors floating about the harbor that these birds are sick with some kind of disease.

However, according to The Pacific Wildlife Project's Director Linda McLeod, these birds are not diseased but they are starving. She said most of these birds were born in the Sea of Cortez in Mexico in April or May and, because of changing conditions there, they don't have enough fish to eat and are arriving here hungry.

These young birds are the most at risk of starvation because they are not yet very good at diving for fish.

Julie Tobin, a volunteer at PWP, tells me they have rescued over 60 Pelicans since mid-June -- way more than normal.

The group recently lost its facility and is operating out of Linda McLeod's home in Laguna Niguel. It is seeking donations and volunteers to help with the pelican crises.

For information call 831-1178, or go to the web site [WWW.pacificwildlife.org](http://WWW.pacificwildlife.org).

Till next week -- this is Capt. Dave over and out.

Capt. Dave Anderson runs Capt. Dave's Dolphin Safari out of Dana Point Harbor. He recently completed an award winning documentary film "Wild Dolphins and Whales of Southern California." For a daily log of sightings, see [WWW.dolphinsafari.com](http://WWW.dolphinsafari.com).



Courtesy of **CAPT. DAVE ANDERSON.**

A brown pelican searches for food about two miles off Dana Point's coast.