

THE SOUFFLEUR

YEARLY NEWSLETTER 2017 Vol. 26

Group for Research and Education on Marine Mammals



Greater Understanding for Better Protection





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WHO ARE WE?

Founded in 1985, the Tadoussac-based Group for Research and Education on Marine Mammals (GREMM) is a non-profit organization dedicated to scientific research and conservation education with a focus on the whales of the St. Lawrence and their habitat. The GREMM's mission is based on acquiring knowledge and sharing this knowledge with the general public in order to achieve its main objective: Better understanding for better protection.

First and foremost, The GREMM is a team of researchers, technicians, naturalists and other passionate individuals committed to research and education for the sake of conservation.

The GREMM has succeeded in making its mark with its long-term research programs. In collaboration with its multiple partners, the organization oversees a number of projects focused notably on St. Lawrence belugas and the large rorquals that frequent the Estuary. These projects have made it possible to compile significant data sets. The latter are invaluable for tracking trends in the populations of large rorquals and belugas in the St. Lawrence Estuary. Thanks to the results of these programs, a host of conservation initiatives have been implemented.

Since 2004, the GREMM has been responsible for the Quebec Marine Mammal Emergency Response Network, which coordinates and operates a call centre 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Network brings together a total of 15 Quebec-based private and governmental organizations.

Widely recognized for its interpretive natural science activities, the GREMM excels in bridging the gap between its research and education programs. The outreach activities offered at its Marine Mammal Interpretation Centre in Tadoussac and in the e-magazine and virtual museum whalesonline.org emphasize a long-term approach to research. The "whale tales" that the GREMM shares pertain to individuals that have been known for nearly four decades.

For over 30 years, the GREMM has been proving that it is possible – and important – to continue believing in giants.

Follow us online :

gremm.org/en/
whalesonline.org
cimmtadoussac.org

EYES LIT UP WITH WONDER

It's two in the afternoon. I hear the singing of a humpback whale, followed by the giggles of children and their parents. Through the window of my office I can hear snippets of the whale song class being taught by one of the naturalists of the Marine Mammal Interpretation Centre (CIMM) in the adjacent garden, the Jardin de la Grève. During this fun activity, participants discovered the acoustic environment of whales and their means of communication. The symphony of songs starts up again, as does the laughter. These youngsters will leave with their whale song diploma and, who knows, perhaps a new sense of purpose.

I often hear stories from biologists, naturalists or science communicators that discovered their career choice after a visit to the CIMM. For over thirty years, our educational programs have been helping to inspire youth to work in important fields such as science, interpretation or scientific popularization.

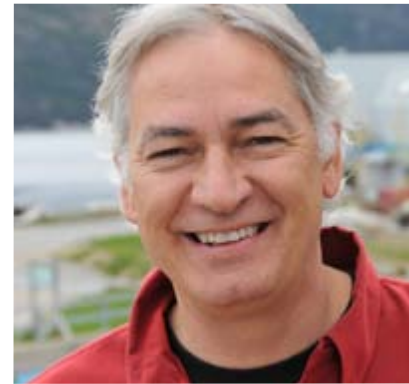
In these times of false information and populist rhetoric, scientific culture is increasingly important. Over the next few years, our choices as a society will have to be guided by science. At GREMM, our role will not only be to plug along with our studies on belugas and large rorquals – a role in which our team excels – but also to step up our education and awareness-raising activities for the sake of conservation.

As director of GREMM's educational programs, I have long been convinced that changes in mentality arise through fascination and wonder... and that people must be awed before they are willing to make the necessary compromises for a sustainable co-existence with marine mammals! Through our e-magazine and encyclopedia Whales Online, our educational bulletin Whale Portraits and, of course, our Marine Mammal Interpretation Centre, we are creating sparkles in the eyes of the public.

Of course, we are fortunate to be able to work for such a captivating cause as that of whales. Their majestic beauty and mysterious aura make them easy to love. However, there's a difference between simple contemplation and a genuine desire to better understand conservation issues. This is why we need tools that are scientifically sound but also fun in order to educate people of all ages.

I must say that it is thanks to our team of passionate workers that continually strive to improve our approaches that we manage to reinvent ourselves as much as we do. It is also thanks to all of our visitors at the Interpretation Centre, our partners and our donors that we are able to maintain our research, conservation and education activities. New partnerships are beginning to take shape, which drives us to continue pursuing our mission and to bring new innovations to the table!

Patrice Corbeil
Vice President, GREMM
Director CIMM



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GRIM SUMMER IN THE GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR NORTH ATLANTIC RIGHT WHALES?

Interview with Robert Michaud

The year 2017 marks a sad record: the highest number of North Atlantic right whale deaths since whaling ended in the 1930s. A total of seventeen right whales were found dead: twelve in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and five off the US east coast. Nine entanglements, two of which were fatal, were also reported. To make matters worse, a mere five newborns were observed last summer. What does the future hold for right whales? GREMM scientific director Robert Michaud offers a few insights.

What does such a mortality event mean for the survival of this endangered species?

It's an absolute disaster. In June, just as we were receiving calls concerning a first carcass drifting at sea, our American colleagues published a series of reports indicating that the population was once again declining and was estimated to number 458 individuals. The population models developed by our colleagues clearly indicate that at the current rate, the species could become extinct in less than 20 years.

Why have fewer newborns been observed?

The state of health of females has deteriorated in the past few years. Approximately 80% of them have gotten caught up in fishing gear at least once in the course of their lives. These entanglements take an immense toll on the animals in terms

of energy, which in the case of females can affect their ability to give birth or care for their young. Further, recent studies note that the intervals between births are getting longer, which translates into fewer calves per female.

Are the threats faced by right whales the same in the Gulf of St. Lawrence as elsewhere on the coast?

The carcasses examined this summer showed traces of the same causes of mortality as those that have been well documented since the 1980s: entanglement in fishing gear and ship strikes. The presence of right whales in the St. Lawrence is not new, but their numbers seem to be on the rise and they seem to be sticking around longer. It appears the animals are abandoning their feeding grounds on the east coast to come feed in our waters. However, we weren't ready for them! Ecosystems are changing rapidly and climate change is forcing us to rethink our conservation strategies. No longer can we rely on data from the past ten years to develop measures for the next ten years. We need to react much more quickly, as we saw this past summer.

Can the right whale still be saved?

I believe that it is still possible. Conservation measures – notably speed restrictions for commercial vessels and rerouting shipping lanes in certain critical areas in the US and in Canada's Bay of Fundy – helped reduce the risks of collision. I am confident that we will succeed in identifying effective measures in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The region boasts an encouraging history of collaboration between the shipping industry, government agencies and researchers.

Reducing entanglements in fishing gear presents an even greater challenge. Although fishermen's associations have clearly indicated their willingness to actively seek a solution, tremendous creativity and audacity will be needed to reduce the number of traps. Our neighbours in the US have not yet managed to do so. Will we be ready for next season? I hope so.

Recap of events

- **June 6** : The Quebec Marine Mammal Emergency Response Network receives a report of a right whale carcass adrift in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Six other carcasses would be found in the month of June.
- **June 29 to July 1** : 3 necropsies performed in the town of Norway, Prince Edward Island.
- **July 5** : A disentangling operation results in the release of a right whale entangled in fishing gear.
- **July 9 and 10** : 2 necropsies performed in the town of Corfu, Magdalen Islands.
- **July 10** : The successful release of an entangled right whale was overshadowed by the death of fisherman and whale rescuer Joe Howlett, a member of the Campobello Whale Rescue Team. Following this fatality, the Canadian and US governments impose a moratorium on rescue activities.
- **July 19** : A 7th carcass is discovered.
- **July 20** : Fisheries and Oceans Canada prematurely closes the snow crab fishery to reduce the risk of entanglement.
- **July 21** : Discovery of 8th carcass; 6th necropsy performed.

- **July 27** : 9th and 10th carcasses found in Newfoundland.
- **August 11** : Transport Canada imposes a reduced speed limit of 10 knots in most of the Gulf of St. Lawrence for ships measuring over 20 metres.
- **August 14** : A carcass is found on the US east coast, the third one for this sector of the Atlantic.
- **September 15** : An 11th carcass is discovered in Canadian waters.
- **September 19** : 7th necropsy performed, this time on New Brunswick's Miscou Island.
- **October 5** : Report on first 6 necropsies released: the mortalities were likely the result of ship strikes and entanglements in fishing gear.
- **October 24** : A 16th carcass is found, this time off Cape Cod.
- **November 27** : A 17th carcass washes ashore on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts.
- **January 11** : Speed restriction lifted and results of last necropsy revealed: the whale perished as a result of an entanglement.

To learn more
http://baleinesendirect.org/en/right_whale_mortalities_2017/

NEWS FROM AFIELD

EYES GLUED TO THE WATER

Memorable moments from one season to the next.

January to March 2017

"Beluga-watching in winter!", exclaims a Whales Online subscriber upon reading that approximately one hundred belugas have been spotted in Les Bergeronnes. Inspired, he decides to drive all the way from Montréal to try his luck at seeing these white whales. Well worth the effort! Soon after arriving, he discovers about twenty belugas not far from shore.

Winter influx of large rorquals on the North Shore

In the town of Franquelin, a birdwatcher spots four humpback whales pointing their pectoral fins to the sky; meanwhile, another resident describes two blue whales gorging themselves opposite her home. In Godbout, a snapshot captures the presence of the blue whale Slash, a male that has been known since 1985.

April to June 2017

Whales meet birds Along the coasts of Charlevoix, belugas are swimming amongst the rafts of common eiders. In the dark waters of the Saguenay, various avifauna – including northern gannets, long-tailed ducks, scoters, razorbills, gulls and kittiwakes – cross paths with large ocean dwellers, namely nearly a dozen minke whales.

Strange-looking dolphins Dark skin, long pectoral fins, a round head resembling that of a beluga, and a short beak: the pilot whale does not really have the typical appearance of the more familiar dolphins. More than a dozen of them are seen off L'Anse-à-Valleau on May 13.

Bambinos in the Gaspé Bay Five humpback calves were spotted there in June, which is "already more than all of last summer", points out a MICS researcher at that time. A few mothers are identified: Tingley, Bad Chemistry, La Souffleuse (a.k.a. Le Souffleur) and Irisept. In 20 years of encounters, this is the first time the latter is observed with a newborn. Not far from there, in the Estuary, Tic Tac Toe is spotted with her third calf in tow.

July to September 2017

Heavyweight nurses featherweight A whale-watching boat in the Marine Park encounters the fin whale Caiman and her calf. At one point, the animals draw closer to one another, swimming belly to belly. The naturalist on board spots a white substance. Could this female be nursing her calf? Possible, but hard to say for sure. In Les Escoumins, naturalists from the Marine Environment Discovery Centre also suspect that they observed nursing in harbour purposes: one individual remains motionless at the water surface and then, a few minutes later, a second smaller animal appears at its side.

Unexpected return On August 20, at the mouth of the Saguenay, two GREMM research assistants are dumbfounded to see a narwhal swimming amongst a herd of belugas. Thanks to their photos, they are able to confirm that it is the same young animal discovered last summer in Trois-Pistoles.

Giant Loafers and Sea Torpedoes Almost nonchalantly, a basking shark glides by the boat of a resident of Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé. Its high dorsal fin betrays the animal lurking beneath the surface. Measuring 10 m long, the basking shark is the second largest fish in the world. Basking sharks are also seen in Mingan, Percé, Gaspé and in Chaleur Bay. Off the coast of Cap-des-Rosiers, a school of Atlantic bluefin tuna is spotted. Lightning fast, they hunt sand lance, herring and mackerel.

In the Marine Park area, a naturalist and a captain happen upon bluefin tuna in full high flying prowess. These fish are also noted in Percé and in the Magdalen Islands where they are swimming amongst other "torpedoes", that is to say white-sided dolphins.

October to December 2017

Tons of whales (literally!) are found west of Longue-Pointe-de-Mingan. On October 4, the MICS team tallies 80 whales including 10 blues, 4 right whales, 30 fin whales and 30 humpbacks! It's completely understandable that they're having a hard time leaving the research station for the winter!

Race of heavyweights In Sept-Îles, a pair of two fin whales swims at full throttle (these "greyhounds of the sea" are capable of attaining speeds of 40 km/h), the forepart of their body emerging more than usual from the water and their exhalations being stronger and louder than ever. These behaviours in fin whales are poorly understood and recall to some extent the "rumbas" of blue

whales described by the MICS team in which a female swims out in front and two bulls compete to be the closest to her. After this frantic shoving match, one of the males abandons the contest and the other one becomes the female's escort.

End of season with tireless minke whales Many of the cetacean sightings at the mouth of the Saguenay were of this species. They surface with a loud crash, snatching in a single gulp any shoaling fish in their path, including sand lance, capelin, and herring. Other times, krill is on their menu. Other predators are arriving in the area en masse: flocks of gulls and kittiwakes circle the skies above the tide rips where gray seals and harp seals are on the prowl.



THANKS TO OUR COLLABORATORS FOR THEIR SIGHTINGS.



FIND OUT WHAT'S BEHIND THESE PHOTOS ON
www.whalesonline.org





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GREATER UNDERSTANDING

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

With the Belugas

On the St. Lawrence...

This summer, the *Bleuvert* once again plied the waters of the St. Lawrence Estuary to study belugas. The crew made trips out to sea on 56 days. In addition to those photos taken from the boat, there were those shot from atop the tower installed in Baie Sainte-Marguerite, for a total of 10,697 images. Thanks to photo-identification, we are adding pages to individual beluga stories, which helps us better understand their social and reproductive lives as well as their use of the sector.

in New Brunswick...

In June, one beluga strayed quite far from home, ending up in the Nepisiguit River in New Brunswick. With the animal trapped by lowering water levels, we undertook an unprecedented relocation operation. The beluga was taken out of the river, transported by truck and then by plane to Rivière-du-Loup, where it resumed its journey to the port of Gros-Cacouna, after which it was finally towed on a floating pontoon by the *Bleuvert* to a group of belugas off Trois-Pistoles. Thanks to a satellite tag placed on its back, we were able to receive GPS readings from June 15 to July 4. Since then, we have not heard anything. Perhaps analyzing photos taken throughout the season will enable us to identify it.

For further details, visit : whalesonline.org/en/nepisiguit_beluga.

in Baie Sainte-Marguerite...

Another highlight of our season was the tower we installed in the heart of Baie Sainte-Marguerite in the Saguenay Fjord in order to carry out two research projects.

The project entitled "Mom, can you hear me?," conducted in collaboration with researcher Valeria Vergara of Ocean Wise, is studying the contact calls between mothers and calves. Using a drone, beluga movements are monitored from the air while a hydrophone

records the animals' underwater communication. Photographic surveys of the surrounding area are also used to identify any watercraft present. This new information will help fine-tune strategies to protect the beluga and its habitat.

Master's candidate Jaclyn Aubin of Newfoundland's Memorial University is attempting to document allomaternal behaviour in belugas, i.e. care provided to an offspring by any female other than its own mother. Even if this cooperative behaviour has been documented in several species of dolphins, it has yet to be demonstrated in belugas. Will those of the St. Lawrence be the ones to prove it? Data analysis holds the answer!

...even in Alaska!

For the second consecutive year, the GREMM team served as a consultant for the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to launch the biopsy program for the endangered beluga population of Cook Inlet in Alaska. Two research teams also made the journey from Alaska to observe how the GREMM works with belugas and to discuss and compare techniques. A rich collaboration!

Large rorquals

From June 1 to September 15, 2017, two volunteer research assistants put their cameras to work as they captured portraits of the large rorquals that visit the Marine Park. Since 2014, the GREMM has been taking advantage of whale-watching boats in order to pursue its photo-ID program of large rorquals, which it initiated in 1985. This way, by limiting the number of vessels on the water, we can reduce the pressure we are putting on the animals.

Following preliminary analysis, the number of fin whales observed in the Marine Park appears to be in line with that of previous years, with about fifteen individuals. But it was humpbacks that caused the greatest stir, with the presence of over a dozen individuals, including three newborns. Stay tuned for updates!

FOR BETTER PROTECTION

Marine Mammal Emergencies

A crucial network in need of expansion

With over 540 alerts handled, the year 2017 will go down as the busiest year of the 1-877-7baleine call centre since the Quebec Marine Mammal Emergency Response Network (QMMERN) was created. The unusual series of right whale mortalities evidently made for a greater work load, but several other complex incidents involving dead and living marine mammals were also handled.

Over 500 hours were logged by the volunteer network for various types of response efforts, notably sampling and securing carcasses for diverse scientific research projects. Notably, Magdalen Islanders helped document two carcasses of an extremely rare species: True's beaked whale!

In 2017, 22 beluga carcasses were documented, including 8 newborns, which makes another year in the downward spiral that began in 2010 for this endangered population.

Humpback whales also made the headlines. The carcass of a calf washed up on the shores of Godbout in May. Its skeleton will be added to the collection of the Marine Mammal Interpretation Centre. Three humpbacks were found tangled up in fishing gear in the Gaspé and in Sept-Îles. Two others were observed with obvious injuries related to incidental catches. At the present time, in Quebec, we have very limited resources to respond to such incidents.

The death of whale rescuer Joe Howlett, who lost his life while releasing a right whale from its ropes in New Brunswick on July 10, serves as a reminder for how risky and complex these disentanglement operations are. There is a real need for such expertise, however, and we continue to work with our colleagues at Fisheries and Oceans Canada to implement sustainable solutions to fulfil our mandate.

On November 25, three white-sided dolphins were discovered on the shores of the Magdalen Islands. The attempt to return one of the specimens to the water revived discussions on the importance of acquiring the necessary material to move, stabilize and release cetaceans whose chances of survival are considered good.

Eco-Whale Alliance

Ever since it co-founded the Eco-Whale Alliance in 2011, the GREMM has continued to offer ongoing training to the captains/naturalists of the Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park. Two days of classroom and on-site training, continuous learning with Whale Portraits (see Page 13) and conferences throughout the season: a wide array of activities! In exchange, whale-watching outfitters participate in the Eco-Whale fund for research and education on the marine mammals of the Marine Park. Vessels operated by Eco-Whale Alliance members are also boarded by volunteer research assistants involved in the large rorqual tracking program (see Page 10). This collaboration helps foster dialogue between research, interpretation and education.

GREMM Publications and Presentations

- (2017) Chion, C., D. Lagrois, J. Dupras, S. Turgeon, I. H. McQuinn, R. Michaud, N. Ménard and L. Parrott. Underwater Acoustic Impacts of Shipping Management Measures: Results from a Social-Ecological Model of Boat and Whale Movements in the St. Lawrence River Estuary (Canada). *Ecological Modelling* 354: 72-87.
- (2017) Starr, M., S. Lair, S. Michaud, M. Scarratt, M. Quilliam, D. Lefavre, M. Robert, A. Wotherspoon, R. Michaud, N. Ménard, G. Sauvé, S. Lessard, P. Béland and L. Measures. Multispecies Mass Mortality of Marine Fauna Linked to a Toxic Dinoflagellate Bloom. (Canada) *PLOS ONE* 12: e0176299.
- At the 22nd Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals of the Society for Marine Mammalogy, two scientific posters and one oral presentation in which we collaborated were presented.
 - Poster by Jean-François Ouellet: Habitat use and connectivity assessed using movement patterns of endangered St. Lawrence Estuary beluga whales.
 - Poster by Sara Wing: Development of a correction method for St. Lawrence beluga counts during aerial surveys.
 - Oral presentation by Marie Guilpin: Foraging energetics and prey density requirements of western North Atlantic blue whales in the Estuary and Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada.

EDUCATING AND FASCINATING



MARINE MAMMAL INTERPRETATION CENTRE

Last year, over 31,000 visitors entered our doors! Not too shabby for a museum that is only open from mid-May to late October. Thousands of curious visitors from around the world found themselves under the sperm whale skeleton, discovering the fascinating world of marine mammals. Proof that the CIMM is appreciated not only by its visitors: nearly all of our guides/naturalists have already worked at least one season with the GREMM!

Naturalists presented a new, family-oriented activity entitled "In the Shoes of a Researcher". Children and adults had the chance to test their "matching" skills, in other words identifying individual whales in photos. Another popular activity with our visitors is the Marine Mammal Emergencies capsule. Presented daily by an individual from the Marine Mammal Emergencies call centre, this brief informative capsule accompanied by images of the day features the most recent incidents handled by the team.

Evidently, the whale song class was once again enjoyed by many. Carried out in the garden adjoining the CIMM (Jardin de la Grève), this activity introduces participants to the acoustic universe of cetaceans while giving them the opportunity to try to imitate it using the whimsical instrument known as a "balei-nophone". Over 3,000 people have received their whale song certificate!

CIMM naturalists also continued their activities at Parks Canada's land-based Pointe-Noire Interpretation and Observation Centre, where entry was exceptionally free of charge in commemoration of Canada's 150th anniversary. This site registered twice as many visitors in 2017 as the previous year. Located in the municipality of Baie-Sainte-Catherine, Pointe-Noire offers a breathtaking view of belugas entering the mouth of the Saguenay Fjord and even sometimes an exceptionally rare observation: a narwhal!

Our senior naturalists offered custom interpretation services on charter trips out to sea as well as on board river and international cruise liners. These services help reach a wider audience.

Psst! The CIMM is preparing to expand in order to make room for the display of 4 new skeletons, including the right whale Piper. Plan a visit in 2019 to see our new giants and follow our crowdfunding campaign this winter!

WHALES ONLINE

Whales Online welcomed a new "captain" this year. Since March, Marie-Ève Muller has served as editor-in-chief for our e-magazine and living encyclopedia and is responsible for managing the social networks. Upon her arrival, she worked with the team to develop a survey with the aim of better understanding our readership and their appreciation of the site.

Our 200 respondents sent us an avalanche of accolades while also proposing a number of excellent ideas. Several new activities are in the works for the summer 2018 season.

Two big "headlines" kept the team busy this summer: the relocation of a beluga from New Brunswick's Nepisiguit River to off the coast of Trois-Pistoles, Quebec, and the sad right whale mortalities in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In each of these two stories, you'll find a recap of events, comments from experts, photos, videos and a detailed analysis.

In October, the Whales Online team also covered the 22nd Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals that was held in Halifax from October 23 to 27. We were able to conclude that marine mammal research will continue to provide material for countless articles to come!

whalesonline.org



TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATORS

Through its educational mission, the GREMM has decided to develop an internship program open to students with a Bachelor's in journalism, biology, professional writing or communications in order to promote scientific culture and its dissemination to the widest

audience possible. In this regard, we welcomed our first popular science intern aboard the Whales Online crew in July and another intern in September.

WHALE PORTRAITS

For a 16th season, the GREMM team authored 18 Whale Portraits inspired by the stories of those who work with cetaceans. If you've ever visited the Côte-Nord region, you may have seen them on display on ferries, at campground receptions or on board a whale-watching boat. Whale Portraits feature an individual whale recently observed in the Saguenay-St. Lawrence Marine Park while also providing news on current research, species-specific information or observation stories "Express".

Whale Portraits were also emailed to captains and naturalists to keep them up to date on the most recent observations in the sector. At the end of the season, captains, naturalists and members of the tourism industry were requested to complete a survey: once again, they were extremely satisfied with the product. "As a naturalist, I always make use of the information contained in the Whale Portraits," points out one reader.

YOUR GENEROSITY IN ACTION

...SO THAT OUR SHARED DREAMS MAY COME TRUE

Do you believe in giants like we do? Help us continue our mission for the next generation of whales and their offspring, too!

A donation for the present

Whether you wish to donate to the GREMM's overall mission, exclusively to its research program or you want to help support Whales Online, you can do so via CanadaHelps.org. A tax receipt will be provided at the end of the transaction. You can also mail us a cheque. For example, \$50 allows us to determine a beluga's sex through a biopsy, a \$70 donation enables us to travel 10 kilometres with our research vessel the *Bleuvert*, and a contribution of \$500 allows us to spend a day at sea with belugas. And with \$2,400, we can purchase a new drone to peer down on whales from the air.



A donation that keeps on giving

Did you know that it is possible to make a monthly donation for each of the GREMM's funds and even to adopt a beluga? Through the secure site CanadaHelp.org, you can choose the amount that you will offer the GREMM every month. This amount will be automatically deducted from your bank account or charged to your credit card and you will receive a cumulative tax receipt at the end of the year.

Monthly donors are an inspiration: like us, they are persevering in their efforts to better understand and better protect the marine mammals of the St. Lawrence. And, they help make things that much easier when it comes to projecting our budget!

A donation for the future

Whales have a life expectancy comparable to our own. To understand them, they need to be monitored from generation to generation. Their protection requires concrete actions sustained over the long term. Because, like us, you also believe in the importance of long-term research, we ask that you help support our Research and Education endowment fund managed by the Fondation Québec Philanthrope.



Thanks to these funds, we are able to:

- Ensure the long-term pursuit of our research and education programs;
- Consolidate our permanent team as well as ensure succession; and
- Host master's or doctoral students.

We also accept donations in the form of shares or material as well as pre-planned donations. Contact donation program manager Marie-Ève Muller at memuller@gremm.org or at 418-780-3210 #4041 for more information. As a registered Canadian charitable organization, the GREMM provides receipts for tax purposes.

Giant Partners

Is your company or foundation interested in partnering with the GREMM? Write us to learn how to obtain the status of «Minke Whale» or «Blue Whale» partner, sponsor a fin whale skeleton or help create a scholarship for our interns.

One Big Family of Belugas

Did you know that you can adopt a beluga? Alone or as a group, in your own name or on behalf of your company or a loved one, choose your beluga in the family album and support the quest for solutions to protect this endangered species. Find out how you, too, can be part of the family: adoptabeluga.org.

The GREMM's Gift Shops

The GREMM's gift shops, located at the CIMM as well as on the Baie-Sainte-Catherine wharf, stand out from the rest with exclusive and educational products. This year, the CIMM boutique revamped its design and visitors loved it! With record sales this year, more

profits will be reinvested into our scientific programs.

Precious Partners

The strength of our network of partners is what allows us to carry on with our mission. Each year, we focus on one of them in greater detail.

Shedd Aquarium

Since 2016, the reputed John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago has been supporting the work of the GREMM and the St. Lawrence Beluga Project, both for beluga research and for support during incidents involving belugas in distress or public outreach efforts with regard to these animals. Executive VP of Animal Care Tim Binder explains:

"For nearly 20 years, I personally have been following the tremendous work the GREMM has been doing on behalf of the imperiled beluga whales in Canada's St. Lawrence Estuary. I am proud of Shedd Aquarium's partnership supporting the GREMM's unparalleled body of work to help save this population from extinction. Their contribution to understanding these remarkable animals, in an environment incredibly unique to this species, is paramount to the future of the St. Lawrence belugas."





A part of the 2017 GREMM team

THE STRENGTH OF OUR NETWORK ALLOWS US TO PURSUE OUR MISSION : "GREATER UNDERSTANDING FOR BETTER PROTECTION"

Thanks to

ALLIANCE DE L'INDUSTRIE TOURISTIQUE DU QUÉBEC ✎ AMPHIBIA-NATURE ✎ AQUARIUM DU QUÉBEC ✎ BDO CANADA ✎ BLEUOUTREMER
 ✎ CANADA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ✎ CANADIAN HERITAGE ✎ CANADIAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION ✎ CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION
 ✎ CENTRE D'ÉDUCATION ET DE RECHERCHE DE SEPT-ÎLES ✎ CENTRE QUÉBÉCOIS SUR LA SANTÉ DES ANIMAUX SAUVAGES ✎ CENTRE
 DE RECHERCHE EN TOXICOLOGIE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT OF UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL ✎ CHLOROPHYLLE ✎ DEPARTMENT OF
 BIOLOGY OF SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY ✎ DÉPARTEMENT DES SCIENCES NATURELLES OF UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC EN OUTAOUAIS ✎ DONNER
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 ✎ FONDATION DE LA FAUNE DU QUÉBEC ✎ FONDATION QUÉBEC PHILANTHROPE ✎ FONDATION PRINCE-ALBERT II DE MONACO ✎ HABITAT
 STEWARDSHIP FOR SPECIES AT RISK OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA ✎ NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM ✎ MÉRISCOPE ✎ MINISTÈRE DE LA
 CULTURE ET DES COMMUNICATIONS DU QUÉBEC ✎ MINISTÈRE DES FORÊTS, DE LA FAUNE ET DES PARCS DU QUÉBEC ✎ MUNICIPALITY OF
 TADOUSSAC ✎ NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM ✎ OCEAN WISE ✎ PARKS CANADA ✎ PARK FOUNDATION ✎ QUÉBEC MARITIME ✎ RÉSEAU
 D'OBSERVATION DE MAMMIFÈRES MARINS ✎ SHEDD AQUARIUM ✎ S. M. BLAIR FAMILY FOUNDATION ✎ ST. LAWRENCE BELUGA PROJECT
 ✎ ST. LAWRENCE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ECOTOXICOLOGY ✎ SOCIÉTÉ DES ÉTABLISSEMENTS DE PLEIN AIR DU QUÉBEC ✎ SOCIÉTÉ DES
 MUSÉES QUÉBÉCOIS ✎ MINGAN ISLAND CETACEAN STUDY ✎ TOURISME CÔTE-NORD ✎ TOURISME QUÉBEC ✎ TRENT UNIVERSITY'S
 WILDLIFE FORENSIC DNA LABORATORY ✎ WHALE STEWARDSHIP PROJECT ✎ YOUNG CANADA WORK ✎ THE SPONSORS OF THE ADOPT A
 BELUGA PROGRAM ✎ WHALE NEWS NETWORK COLLABORATORS ✎ THE POPULATION AND BUSINESS OWNERS OF TADOUSSAC ✎ CIMM
 VISITORS ✎ CUSTOMERS OF OUR BOUTIQUES, AND OUR DONORS.