

Garrigue et al 2011\_J.Mamm

Knowledge of the local and migratory movements of humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) from New Caledonia is very limited. To investigate this topic, we attached satellite-monitored tags to 12 whales off southern New Caledonia. Tag longevity ranged from 1 to 52 days ( $\bar{X} = 22.5$  days). Tagged whales generally moved to the south or southeast, with several spending time in a previously unknown seamount habitat named Antigonah before resuming movement, generally toward Norfolk Island or New Zealand. However, 1 female with a calf traveled the entire length of the western coast of New Caledonia (1,450 km) and then west in the direction of the Chesterfield Reefs, a 19th century American ("Yankee") whaling ground. None of the New Caledonia whales traveled to or toward eastern Australia, which is broadly consistent with the low rate of interchange observed from photo-identification comparisons between these 2 areas. The connections between New Caledonia and New Zealand, together with the relatively low numbers of whales seen in these places generally, support the idea that whales from these 2 areas constitute a single population that remains small and unrecovered.