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## Earlier Sightings of Humpback Whales in Antarctica

Nigel Bonner has documented sightings of humpbacks *Megaptera novaeangliae* off the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula which seem to indicate some recovery of stocks (*Oryx* 16, 3: 231-232). It may therefore be worth placing on record the following sightings of this species made from Argentine Islands for 1970/72, when I was stationed at the British Antarctic Survey base.

Daily watches were kept for whales in the course of maintaining bird records. The 12 records of cetaceans in 1970 and 23 in 1971 were all confined to the period January-June, and all but four to March-May. None of the 1970 records were thought to involve humpbacks, but in 1971 there were four positive sightings in the period 21-30 April. On 21 April, of five whales seen in Penola Strait at least two were humpback. They

breached on several occasions, waving their long black and white fins in the course of playful behaviour. The following day I spent about an hour watching three humpbacks only a few hundred yards off the island group. On 23 April, ten whales were seen but were lost in fog before positive identification could be made. None were seen on 24 April but the following day two humpbacks were present with a group of four small rorquals. The humpbacks remained motionless on the calm surface side by side, so that through a telescope the knobs in front of the blowhole were easily visible. My final sighting was on 30 April, when again two individuals spent a considerable time resting side by side at the surface. These four records could have involved only three individual humpbacks, or, if there was a steady southward movement, at least nine. Late summer movements of whales into this area of the Antarctic Peninsula waters appears to be a regular phenomenon.

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## Protection for Olive Ridleys

President Carazo of Costa Rica has declared the beach of Ostional, Guanacaste, a protected breeding area for olive ridley turtles *Lepidochelys olivacea*. Along with the neighbouring, already protected Nancite beach, Ostional was considered second in importance of 38 nesting areas by the World Conference on Sea Turtle Conservation in 1979.