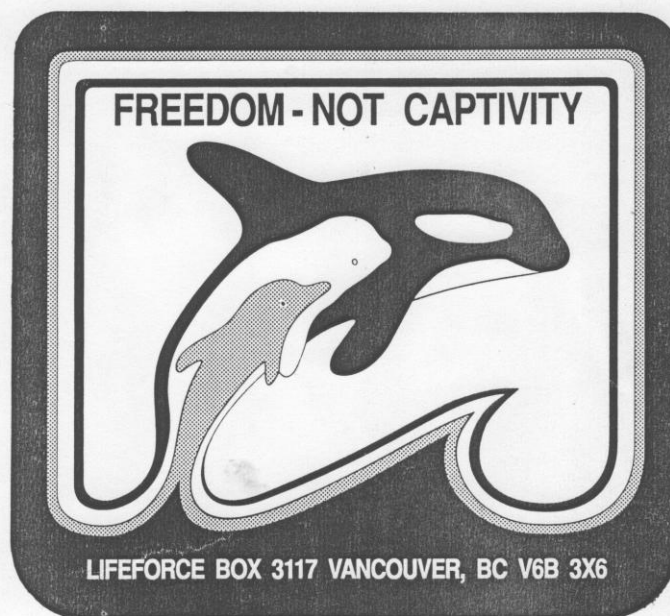


Capture and Confinement of
Whales, Dolphins and other Marine Mammals



Lifeforce Foundation
March 1992

DRAFT

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF KNOWN VANCOUVER AQUARIUM ABUSES

1964: The Vancouver Aquarium Founder Murray Newman hired sculptor Sam Burich to kill an orca and use the body as a model to create a whale sculpture at the aquarium. The unfortunate whale named Moby Doll survived the infected wound and a number of fired shots to kill him, was dragged across the Strait of Georgia and confined in a pen in Burrard Drydocks for 86 days. After the death it was realized that the whale was actually a male.

1964: A male beluga known as Titch was possibly transported from the Vancouver Aquarium to Flamingo Park, UK.

1967: Walter, who was later renamed Skana because sex was incorrectly determined, was purchased for \$25,000 and became the first killer whale to be kept in an aquarium tank. She was kept with a dolphin in the tiny B.C. Tel Pool which formerly housed several dolphins (at least one male and two females). The pool was built in the mid 1960s and is 60 feet x 40 feet x 12 feet deep. Skana died in 1980. This created a booming business to satisfy aquariums in Canada, the U.S., Japan, Europe and Australia. By 1977, 68 whales were removed from BC and Washington waters.

1967: A beluga mother and calf were captured in Bristol Bay, Alaska. Bella, the mother, died in 1976 and the baby, Lugosi, died in 1980. They were held in the extremely small indoor tank (Fred Brown Pool) until 1971. The pool was later used for sharks when the belugas were moved to the B.C. Tel Pool and the orcas/dolphins to a new whale pool.

1968: Skana suffered from numerous cuts and received over 100 stitches when the B.C. Tel pool window broke and the surge of water sucked her headfirst into the opening, raking her over the sharp glass. She was jumping for food during a performance. She frantically thrashed to free herself and staff tied a rope around her and pulled her back over the sharp, broken glass.

1968:: Three males and one female orca were captured at Pender Harbour. One male, Skookum Cecil, escaped; the first, Hyak, was released and the second, Hyak II, and a female were kept. The female orca named Natsidalia died, after seven months of captivity, from heart failure and Hyak died in 1991.

1969: A male dolphin Splasher, captured in 1967 with female Dianne, died of internal injuries either by hitting the pool walls or by being crushed by Skana.

1968: A baby narwhal was captured for the Vancouver Aquarium on Baffin Island but was shot because the rope during the hunt severely cut the tail.

1970: In July the beluga known as Bella was used for roping practice and to test a transport sling for a narwhal hunt expedition at Baffin Island. The whale attempted to evade capture.

1970: Six narwhals were captured and transported to Vancouver Aquarium and all died in less than three months due to starvation and bacterial infections.

1971: Skana fought a move to research pool for training before move to new pool. One trainer was sent tumbling with blow from her tail and another received bites through the wet suit.

1971: Hyak told the world how he felt when moved to new \$1.2 million pool when his furious squeals were loud and long. The new pool is only 92 feet long, 48 feet wide and 18 deep.

1971: On December 15th an abandoned female Pacific Harbor seal pup named Missy was sent to John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago and is still in captivity. Nicki, a male harbor seal who was sent at the same time from the Montreal Aquarium died October 10, 1987. He died of pneumonia and dehydration. The pneumonia was due to "poor water quality".

1971: The Pacific white-side dolphin named White Wing was captured off the coast of California along with possibly three other dolphins. An unconfirmed report claimed that one died during transport, one died shortly after arrival and the other died within months.

1973: A Federal government census revealed that the West Coast orca population was decimated by the aquarium industry and numbered less than 300.

1974: Three-year old whale pool needed \$7,000 refurbishing to fix leaks and cracks.

1975: In August an Aquarium shark-hunting expedition captured three six-gilled sharks in Georgia Strait, BC by using sharp hooks. The male dies shortly after arrival from wounds; one female dies four days later and the other female is believed to have died shortly afterwards.

1976: When the shark tank system failed, too much chlorine entered the tank and burned the sharks' gills.

1976: Two female belugas were captured in Curchill, Manitoba in a joint hunt with the New York Aquarium. Kavna was pregnant when captured and her baby, Tuaq, died within four months of captivity. While Kavna survives Sanaq died in 1985.

1977: At a November 9, 1977 press conference Murray Neuman announced a 15-year plan to merge the Vancouver Public Aquarium with the Stanley Park zoo to create "one big aquatic garden". Presently they continue to promote zoo/aquarium expansions.

1977: Three Harbor seals were sent to the appalling Wild Kingdom Game Farm and Zoo in Northern Manitoba. They were confined in a pool no larger than a portable family swimming pool. This zoo is also linked to the National Animal Association which travels across the country with exotic animals in small cages to sell photographs of customers with lion/tiger cubs.

1979: In August a mola mola (sunfish) arrived at Aquarium and died a few days later.

1979: In October five stranded Harbor seals were sent to Sea World in Australia. Two died within two weeks of "unspecified" causes. Wilbur died of cancer in October 1987, Blackie died of acute enteritis in December 1990 and Spookie is still in captivity.

1980: Two male orcas and two female orcas were captured in Iceland. One male, Finna, and one female, Bjossa remained at the Vancouver Aquarium while the other male Benkei II was sent to Adventure World, Japan and the other female, Vigga, was sent to Marine World/Africa U.S.A.. While the others presently survive, Benkei II died shortly afterwards in 1983.

1983: Clamchops the sea otter died but his death was not reported until several months later.

1984: Hyak became ill: details of treatment were not reported to the public. He stopped eating, was lethargic, short of breath and had an elevated white-blood-cell count. They guessed that it was a gastric disorder and administered massive doses of the anti-ulcer drug cimetidine.

1985: The Parks Board Commissioners and the Vancouver Aquarium officials approved the present lease agreement. Clause 8 states that "The Aquarium shall not suffer, cause or permit any expansion of the Aquarium beyond the expansion presently under construction [the present Killer whale pool]."

1985: A male and a female beluga were captured in Churchill, Manitoba. While female Allua survived, the male Churchill died in 1989.

1986: An investigation by the provincial environment ministry discovered that water discharged by the Aquarium after a tropical fish kill contained copper levels exceeding recommended limits for marine life.

1986: Two sea turtles---a hawksbill and a loggerhead---were sent to a Tokyo aquarium to free up space in the reserve tank for new fish. The holding tanks in Tokyo are approximately 4 feet x 8 feet.

1986: Belugas Allua and Churchill were put on public display after arrival in July, 1985 and confinement in research pool. Kavna was also moved; she returned to the B.C. Tel Pool.

1986: A \$5 million orca pool expansion opened with Hyak, Bjossa and Finna. More of Stanley Park forest sanctuary for people and indigenous wildlife was destroyed.

1987: Three Harbor seals were sent to the Melbourne Zoo and then to Sea World (Australia) on March 19, 1990. They were part of the zoo/aquarium collection.

1987: A 1987 Equinox article revealed that the aquarium had established solid contacts with hunters to live-capture narwhals.

1988: Bjossa gave birth to her first baby who died of starvation within four weeks.

1988: The Vancouver Parks Board breached public trust/1985 lease agreement by allowing the Aquarium to add nearly one acre to their present two-acre site. After the last expansion in 1984 the Board had previously stated that they would not allow any further expansions and lease changes. This was the seventh expansion since the Aquarium opened in 1956.

The trees and ponds which created habitats for hundreds of waterfowl were destroyed. The beauty and serene atmosphere of a 1910 duck pond were also lost.

1988: A 1988 letter from the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans revealed that in spite of the Aquarium's claim that the money was to do "things" in the Arctic, \$200,000 was given to the aquarium for a beluga and narwhal pool.

1989: In January Stanley Park was declared a National Historic Site in part as a result of a Lifeforce campaign. But in March the Aquarium started the beluga pool expansion even though the Minister of the Environment instructed them to wait until an environmental impact study was completed.

1989: The \$6.5 million Arctic Canada pool opened with the aid of provincial and federal funding (including Native Indian funds which should have been spent on helping northern communities).

1990: Three more belugas were captured---the male Nanook, the male Imaq and the female Aurora.

1991: Bjossa gave birth to her second baby. The Aquarium turned the baby's life-and-death struggle into a \$75,000 fund-raising campaign for food and named the whale K'yosha. K'yosha died within 13 weeks. Lifeforce called for a Marine Mammal Memorial Service in which people had a personal 82-second period of silence to reflect upon the 82 deaths resulting from the capture and captivity of marine mammals in BC alone, 19 of which died at the Vancouver Aquarium (six orcas, six narwhals, five belugas and two dolphins).

1991: Aquarium opened a larger shark pool but got rid of four Atlantic species sharks and one sawfish who had been at the Aquarium for ten years. The nurse shark and sawfish were kept in holding for over one year at an undisclosed location until Marineworld/Africa USA built a shark exhibit. They were replaced by Australian black-tipped sharks.

Note: See also Marine Mammal Mortality Rates for the Vancouver Aquarium in Part V - Section 30. A more comprehensive list of whale and dolphin captures, births and deaths is provided.

See also "Experiments on Marine Mammals," Part V - Section 43.