

## **Project Update: September 2011**

We have just finished the first field season of our project. We had 39 encounters with killer whales, including 34 with resident (fish-eating) and five with transient (mammal-eating) killer whales. We observed the differences in the behaviour of these two ecotypes of killer whales, took photographs for the analysis of the saddle patch pigmentation and social structure, made recordings of underwater sounds to analyse differences in acoustic behaviour and took biopsies for genetic analysis. Now we are ready to start the laboratory analysis of these data, which will allow us to describe the differences between the two ecotypes in Russian waters and test whether these differences are deep enough to recognise them as separate species.

