



WHAT MADE OPERATION ZERO TOLERANCE POSSIBLE



932 Whales Saved!

Operation Zero Tolerance has been Sea Shepherd's most effective whale defense campaign. Thanks to your support, we were able to send 4 ships, 120 international crew, 1 helicopter and 6 small boats to the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary and send the illegal Japanese whaling fleet home early, saving a historic number of whales.



Every hour, every dollar and every supply donated last year allowed us to sail to a tremendous victory. This is your victory and you should feel proud to be part of the Sea Shepherd team.

Here's an account from the Bob Barker by Captain Peter Hammarstedt of what happened :





WHAT HAPPENED DURING OPERATION ZERO TOLERANCE



After receiving a tremendous outpouring of support from the people of windy Wellington the Bob Barker left New Zealand for the colder waters of Antarctica. It would not take long for the Bob Barker to intercept the whaling fleet, homing in on the Nisshin Maru before a single harpoon was fired for the whaling season. Unfortunately, rough weather resulted in the Bob Barker losing the whaling fleet on radar and left Sea Shepherd with a trailing security ship, the Shonan Maru No. 2, to report on our movements. But the fleet had been found, its harpoon ships scattered, and once again the whalers were on the run from Sea Shepherd. For the Bob Barker, it was then once again time for the annual 'MacQuarie Island Shuffle'.



MacQuarie Island is an Australian Subantarctic island under the governance of Tasmania which, while being a protected marine area for seals and penguins, is also a sanctuary for the Sea Shepherd fleet as Japanese whaling vessels are not allowed to enter Australian waters.



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Thanks to political pressure from Australia the Bob Barker was free to resume the search for the Nisshin Maru, without the Shonan Maru No. 2 aggressively pursuing it. Two weeks and over two thousand and five hundred nautical miles later, the Bob Barker relocated the Nisshin Maru, together with the harpoon ship Yushin Maru No. 2, in Cooperation Sea; meaning that the whaling fleet had been running from Sea Shepherd, leaving little time for whaling, since they were first found before the start of the whaling season.



© Sea Shepherd / Glenn Lockhart



Weather conditions were optimal for whaling and it was clear, based on the Nisshin Maru drifting, that the whalers were waiting for first light to start their bloody business. For several hours, the Nisshin Maru attempted to lose the Bob Barker, but to no avail. With weather conditions perfect for small boat operations, the Bob Barker would not lose the Nisshin Maru a second time, becoming a permanent fixture on the slipway of the factory ship.



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It was inevitable that the whalers would kill at least one whale, to test the resolve and steadfastness of the Bob Barker crew. As the Yushin Maru No. 2 approached the Nisshin Maru, deliberately hiding their port bow from view, it was clear that the whalers had killed a whale and that they were now going to try and transfer that whale onto the Nisshin Maru.



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For six whole hours, the Bob Barker blocked the transfer attempts in several close quarter situations with the Nisshin Maru and the Yushin Maru No. 2. After twelve attempts, and subsequent an attempted ramming of the Bob Barker by the Nisshin Maru, the whale was finally winched on board the factory ship, but the blocking effort had its intended effect – it was not worth it to whale under the guardianship of the Sea Shepherd crew.





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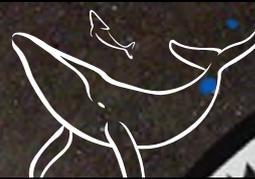
Ten days later, and still the whalers had not resumed whaling, although it was now clear that they would try to refuel illegally from the tanker vessel Sun Laurel. Knowing that stopping the refueling was a surefire way to end the whaling season early, the Bob Barker, together with the Steve Irwin and the Sam Simon made every effort to prevent the fuel transfer from happening. In the course of blocking the refueling attempt, the Bob Barker was deliberately struck several times by the much larger Nisshin Maru.



At one stage, the Nisshin Maru, disregarding the International Collision Regulations, attempted to push the Bob Barker out of the way from blocking the refueling point of the Sun Laurel. The maneuvers of the Nisshin Maru were so reckless that the anchor of the factory whaling ship even struck the wheelhouse of the Bob Barker, destroying three communication masts, one radar and the starboard running lights; at the same time as high-powered water cannons aimed at the main engine exhaust funnel flooded the engine room. Not until the Bob Barker put out a mayday distress call, did the Nisshin Maru abort dangerous actions that could have resulted in loss of power, propulsion and stability for the Bob Barker.



On a second refueling attempt, the Nisshin Maru sandwiched the Bob Barker between itself and the tanker vessel, with several collisions resulting. The collisions caused substantial damage to the helicopter deck, forward starboard plating and the galley was pushed inboard by several inches. Seeing the damage caused to the Bob Barker, and convinced of the fact that Sea Shepherd would not deviate from position, the Nisshin Maru aborted all future plans to refuel.



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At all times, Captain Peter Hammarstedt hailed the Nisshin Maru on marine radio, stating that he had no intention of allowing them to refuel illegally and that the only way to refuel would be to go through him. Since Sea Shepherd's first Antarctic Campaign, Sea Shepherd has made it clear to the whaling fleet that the only way to stop us is to sink us. This year's Antarctic Campaign was an opportunity to actually put the whalers to that test and to show them that zero tolerance of any whales being killed in a designated whale sanctuary means just that – whaling will absolutely not be tolerated on Sea Shepherd's watch.



Sea Shepherd escorted the whaling fleet out of the whale Sanctuary, knowing that due to our persistence, passion and courage, over 932 whales will swim free, escaping the horrendous death of the harpoon. After 3 months at sea, and heavy damage we sustained when the whaling fleet hit us, we need to complete repairs and resupply in order to ensure we will be ready to sail back into harm's way to defend whales. Operation Zero Tolerance may be over, but our mission to defend whales and all marine wildlife continues and we need your support.



The Bob Barker is in Williamstown (Melbourne), Australia to undergo repairs, resupply and raise funds so we can continue defending marine life. The volunteer crew is giving ship tours on weekends and holding special events.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Sea Shepherd recognizes and greatly appreciates the effort you and your company have gone through to support us, and we personally invite you to come down to the ship for a private tour. Remember, without your donation, we wouldn't have been as effective as we were, and without your future support, we will not be as strong and effective.



The entire crew of the Bob Barker sends you a special thank you, and we are sure the whales do as well.

Please email or call the ship with any questions, comments, ideas or just to say hi. We look forward to hearing from you, and we would love to organize a tour for you.

Please email at: BBshipdonations@seashepherd.org

Please call at: 04 5923 1725 (Australia).

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