

Report about the introduction of a rescued specimen of Orcinus Orca into the group of animals at Orca Ocean

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ADAPTATION PROCESS



- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Adaption to the management system
- 1.3 Integration into the social group
- 1.4 Integration into the scientific projekt

1.1 BACKGROUND

In previous reports on the introduction process of Morgan to the group of orcas in Loro Parque, dated on December 14 and January 10, 2012, all aspects relating to the Introduction Plan were analyzed in detail and had been structured in 4 phases:

- Adaptation to caregivers and trainers
- Adaptation to facilities
- Adaptation to the management system
- Integration into the social group

The first two phases - Adaptation to caregivers and trainers and Adaptation to facilities - were already considered to have been completed satisfactorily. This third report assesses the progress made during the month of January in the last two phases - Adaptation to the management system and Morgan's integration into the social group.

The amount of food she receives daily has been increasing because in Loro Parque she consumes much more energy swimming and socializing with the other specimens. She is currently eating 90 pounds (a little more than 40 kg) of fish daily (66% herring, 28% capelin and 6% of European sprat).

Morgan trains daily to consolidate and adapt her repertoire of medical behaviors, and thus facilitate their proper management and control by the veterinary team. Currently Morgan is routinely reinforcing the correct execution of a basic repertoire of medical behaviors:

- Voluntary weight
- Voluntary blood
- Voluntary rectal temperature
- Exhaling for respiratory culture
- Parallel and lateral body checks
- Mouth and teeth checks

These behaviors are being consolidated before new ones are introduced, devoting most of the time to socialization with other specimens.

The weights recorded since Morgan has been getting on the scale at Orca Ocean are:

01/01/2012	1.104,5 Kg
08/01/2012	1.111,3 Kg
15/01/2012	1.124,9 Kg
23/01/2012	1.138,5 Kg
29/01/2012	1.163,5 Kg

Weight records demonstrate the animal is gaining weight, as it would be expected in a young specimen.

1.2 ADAPTION TO THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Morgan started eating from the moment she arrived in Loro Parque's facilities. As expected, it was not necessary to have Morgan adapt to the feeding process at Loro Parque, since the feeding of cetaceans is very standardized, both regarding the fish species used, as well as the feeding system, the distribution of food throughout the day, nutritional supplements, the use of complementary foods such as gelatin, etc.



Reinforcement of voluntary weight measuring behavior.

1.3 INTEGRATION INTO THE SOCIAL GROUP

The socialization process is well advanced. Since the last report Morgan regularly spends several full nights (either in pools A, B or C) in the company of Kohana and Tekoa (either together or separately with both). This implies that she regularly spends more than 12 hours with other specimens without the intervention of caregivers.

Regarding the introduction with the rest of specimens, she is gradually integrating into larger groups, currently she has already been integrated into a group of five specimens, that is, all specimens in Orca Ocean have been grouped except Adan. The reason for not bringing the six animals together is simple precaution to prevent Adan from suffering any harm in case of a social readjustment, since it is a small-sized specimen. Frequent updates can be found at <http://es-es.facebook.com/loroparque>

Regarding vocal integration, during the last month several dozens of sounds that have been

identified could belong to Morgan. From this point forward, identified sounds will be registered when she is alone in one of the pools, to ensure that all records obtained belong to Morgan.

1.4 INTEGRATION INTO THE SCIENTIFIC PROJECT

On February 8th and 9th a visit by a researcher from the bioacoustics group at the St. Andrews University is scheduled in order to plan the experiments and samplings for the project on dialect evolution, which will confirm that Morgan's dialect adapts to the rest of the specimens' and vice versa. Additionally, a request was received to send blood samples from Morgan to the Museum of Natural Sciences in Denmark to study genetic evolution of cetaceans through detailed DNA analysis.

VETERINARY REPORT



1.2 Background
2.2 Mogan's condition

1.1 BACKGROUND

From the day of her arrival, Morgan has been integrated into the care routines of orcas at Loro Parque by the Veterinary Department. Within these routines, there is a vet visit to Orca Ocean every day to check that everything goes well, to review any ongoing medical treatment and to answer any questions trainers could have about the health of our group of orcas. Communication between the Veterinary Department and orca caregivers/trainers is very close and fluid.

The vet also duly attends training sessions for medical procedures. Morgan had already been trained in Holland and her training has continued here with a very good progression. Thus, Morgan voluntarily allows us to take blood samples, perform ultrasounds, examine her teeth, etc. All orcas go through a thorough monthly blood test containing more than 50 tests (such as: white cell count, determination of indicators for inflammation, determination of liver functionality, etc.).

The Veterinary Department at Loro Parque receives external advice from other veterinarians with extensive experience in orcas, such as Chris Dold (SeaWorld, United States) and Geraldine Lacave (Marine Mammal Veterinary Services, Belgium). A video conference is routinely held every two weeks to keep them informed about every animal's condition, and they visit Loro Parque from 3 to 6 times a year.

2.2 MORGAN'S CONDITION

From the veterinary point of view Morgan is considered to be fully integrated, since she has not had significant medical issues and she goes through the same medical procedures as the other animals in the group.

No anomaly has been observed in Morgan's physical examinations performed during the last month, her caregivers have not referred any abnormal behavior [typo in the original "compotamien-to"] either. The results of the last monthly routine analysis performed on Morgan along with other orca specimens' have shown no sign of alteration.

In short, it can be considered that Morgan is a healthy specimen and has had no major medical problems since she arrived in Loro Parque.

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