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Acoustic detector of Franciscana dolphins

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Acoustic detector of Franciscana dolphins

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ABSTRACT

Passive acoustic monitoring has gained considerable attention in the last years and it is considered a useful tool to detect marine mammals in the wild, especially when the focal species are hard to study. Franciscana dolphins (*Pontoporia blainvillei*) are small odontocetes endemic to the south of South America. Their size and coloration, together with their infrequent aerial displays make them difficult to visually study in the wild. With the idea to facilitate population assessments throughout the Franciscana dolphin distribution in a systematic way, we have created the first acoustic detector of free access in South America. This tool consists of a MATLAB-based routine for researchers to analyze their acoustic data. The detector currently uses audio files in a .wav format provided by the user, and indicates presence or absence of calves and adults of Franciscana dolphins per second of recording. We hope that researchers of other regions use it and give us feedback to improve it and have a unified effort to assess population size and structure of this vulnerable species.

We will play a video showing how the “Pontoporia Acoustic Detector” works. To download the package please visit: <http://www.internationalwhalewhisperer.com/projects/>