

# Video captures whale bubble-net feeding

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University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Marine Mammal Research Program (MMRP) researchers and key collaborators captured amazing whale's-point-of-view and aerial drone video of humpback whale bubble-net feeding. It's one component of a project investigating causes of a possible decline in humpback whale numbers

They used suction-cup tags fitted with cameras and sensors to gain an understanding of how humpback [whales](#) feed and how some whales use bubbles to optimize their consumption of prey by creating bubble nets. The tag data (video and accelerometer data) coupled with the drone data, is providing novel insights into the fine-scale details of how the whales carry out this behavior and how often they do this to sustain and gain enough energy and weight before they migrate back down to Hawai'i to breed and mate.

The bubble-net observations and [data collection](#) are part of a larger project investigating causes of a possible decline in humpback whale numbers, including shifts in habitat use and changes to [food availability](#) linked to prey depletion and [climate change](#).

About 3,000 humpback whales visit Alaska during the summer feeding period, and up to 10,000 visit Hawai'i during the winter breeding period. When the whales leave their foraging grounds and migrate 3,000 miles, they stop eating until their return several months later.

The MMRP's bubble-net research is helping scientists to understand how [humpback whales](#) feed, how often they need to feed, what they feed on

and how fast their bodies change or grow.

Other MMRP collaborators include The Pacific Whale Foundation, Hawai'i Institute for Marine Biology Researcher Kristi West and UH Hilo Professor Adam Pack.

Provided by University of Hawaii at Manoa

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