



Letters to the Editor

Hawaiian vocalisations

I have a collection of Hawaiian monk seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*) vocalizations available for analysis. Details are provided below. If any professional researcher is interested in using this collection of vocalizations for analysis, please contact me at: monkseals@hotmail.com. I would be interested in co-authorship, but it is not essential.



Female with pup on East Island, French Frigate Shoals

Tape Recording Details:

- Subjects: Mother-infant vocalizations during pupping (focus on infants).
- Location: on East Island, French Frigate Shoals, Northwest Hawaiian Islands
- Date: May-August 1989
- Media: Sony magnet tapes ~2500 vocalizations
- Taping: Sony Professional Walkman (WM-DC6) with Sennheizer directional shotgun microphone (ME-80) with wind sock on Scotch XSM IV 90 Metal-bias tapes.
- Purpose: Collected as part of a Master of Science Thesis.
- Researcher: Damon A. Job. University of Maryland, College Park, MD, Smithsonian Institution Graduate Fellow (1984)
- Advisor: Dr. Daryl Boness, National Zoological Park, Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C.

See: **Job, D.A., D.J. Boness and J.M. Francis.** 1995. Individual variation in nursing vocalizations of Hawaiian monk seal pups *Monachus schauinslandi* (Phocidae, Pinnipedia), and lack of maternal recognition. *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 73: 975-983.

– *Damon A. Job*, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878, USA

What about the Ionian?

I love reading your bi-annual publication. You rarely write about the population of monk seals in the Ionian sea. What is the status of this population? And is there anything being done to protect it?

– *Theodore Alevrontas*, Demarest NJ, USA


✓ Editor's reply:

Regrettably, it's true. We've had few news items or in-depth reports from the Ionian Sea. The most notable exception, our 2002 interview with the President of the National Marine Park of Zakynthos, Greece [[Challenge in the Ionian](#) 5 (1): May 2002], provides some oblique clues as to why. When not under threat from developers or fisheries, conservation efforts are being squeezed by budget cuts and

a point-blank refusal by the authorities to meet their legal obligations. With protected areas still in limbo throughout Greece, and friends of the marine turtle on Zakynthos outraged, it seems likely that the government will be dragged to the International Court again in short order.

Assessments of monk seal population numbers in the Ionian suffered from the withdrawal of key research group Archipelagos (Aiki Panou) and WWF-Greece several years ago. Unfortunately, even another court judgment against Greece is unlikely to benefit the monk seal directly on Zakynthos, since monk seal habitat lies outside the protection zone.

Even relatively recently, the Mediterranean monk seal in the Ionian was regarded as being large enough to play an important role in the recovery of the species. Those seeking further information are advised to check out relevant titles [Keyword: Ionian] in our online Bibliography:

Karamanlidis, A.A. and W.M. Johnson (eds.). 2002. Annotated Bibliography on Mediterranean monk seals (*Monachus monachus*). Version 1.0. The Monachus Guardian: 1-105. [\[PDF\]](#)  366 KB]

An open letter to Readers of Monachus Guardian

Together with a small group of friends in the beginning and a much larger group today, I have worked since 1988 for the development and enhancement of the efficiency of MOM, the Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk Seal. During those 16 years I was mainly acting as Policy and Funding Coordinator, sometimes with greater and sometimes with less success, but always with unlimited passion for the protection of nature and especially for the marine and coastal environment.

Today, I have decided to focus my professional career on the Corporate Social Responsibility sector, believing that I will succeed in developing and cultivating the contribution of the private sector to the protection of the environment. The much appreciated invitation of Piraeus Bank, Greece to become their Advisor on Environmental Issues now provides me with many promising avenues as well as productive and substantial work.

As a voting member of MOM and a member of the Board of Directors, I will continue to help in any way I can this NGO that offered thousands of fascinating experiences and collaborations over the years. Believing in MOM's aims and mission statement, but above all believing in its people who stand by it from every position and place, I thank all of you for your collaboration and foresee a fruitful continuation tomorrow.

I wish you all more excitements and less routine.

– *Vrassidas Zavras*, Athens, Greece

The editor reserves the right to edit letters for the sake of clarity and space