

The whales are back in July at The Brando

French Polynesia is a true oasis of life, thousands of kilometers from the closest continent. The isolation of the Polynesian archipelagos has contributed to protect resources and maintain an abundant marine life. The clarity of the water contributes to the approachability of marine species and conducive to the development of eco-tourism and especially the approach of dolphins and whales in their environment, called "Dolphin and Whale Watching."

The humpback whale, an emblematic species

The humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) is the most commonly observed mysticete in the Pacific area. Every year, they migrate between their resting and reproductive areas (tropical waters of the Pacific Ocean) and their feeding areas (Antarctic Ocean), travelling approximately 12 000 kms back and forth. They can be observed in French Polynesia from July to November. Adult females come to give birth and nurse their calves, to mate, and to rest. As for adult males, we think they use their song in order to attract females, or to signal their presence to other males and thereby avoid conflicts, or perhaps both.

Tetiarioa, a perfect place for watching humpback whales

Tetiarioa is a small wild atoll located 53 km northwest of Tahiti. On this tiny paradise, nature is remarkably preserved. The activity of whale watching is underdeveloped and Tetiarioa gives rise to unique encounters! The Brando offers this unique opportunity to meet these giants of the oceans. Through its eco-responsible approach the hotel works closely with Te mana o te moana association to ensure greater respect for these animals and provide the best guiding, for you to experience a memorable moment.

Te mana o te moana works on site in collaboration with Tetiarioa Society association who manages the ecostation and conservation programs of the atoll.



An observatory for cetaceans

In 2011, te mana o te moana therefore decided to set up the Cetaceans Observatory in French Polynesia. The Cetaceans Observatory's aims at collecting observation, analyzing and making available the collected data for the local population, developing educative tools for tourists and residents, helping them in their efforts to adopt a more environment-friendly behaviour at sea.

Currently, the Observatory has recorded nearly **1000 observations** of marine mammals and **45** stranding. The Observatory also established a **60 pages literature review** on cetaceans in French Polynesia and **created 3 informative media** to make people aware of the importance to have a respectful approach toward cetaceans.

Help us to enrich our knowledge and enter your observation online
<http://observatoirepolynesie.org/cetaces/>



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