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BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSES OF OCEANIC CETACEANS TO VARIATION IN FOOD RESOURCES



MÓNICA ALMEIDA E SILVA

IMAR - INSTITUTE OF MARINE RESEARCH OKEANOS R&D CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF THE AZORES

The need to acquire food resources to survive and reproduce is fundamental to all animals. However, resources vary both in space and time, and animals must decide where and when to forage to maximize food intake, while reducing the energetic costs of foraging. Animals evolved an array of behavioural and physiological adaptations to respond to the spatiotemporal variation in food resources, from hibernation and torpor, to seasonal migration. While these adaptations have been relatively well investigated in terrestrial systems, responses of marine animals are less well understood. This is especially true for marine animals living in the open ocean, where low and highly patchy productivity can create even higher challenges. In this talk I will present some of the work we have being doing in the Azores to unveil the behavioural strategies and mechanisms used by oceanic cetaceans to deal with and exploit the heterogeneity in resources across space and time.

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HOST PAULO CATRY

ENTRADA LIVRE



RUA JARDIM DO TABACO, 34 1149 - 041 LISBOA T. 218 811 700 | CGI@ISPA.PT SPA.PT SPAMEDIA © ISPAMEDIA