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A character-driven nature documentary based on fifteen years of stunning, unique visual insights into the mid-ocean social lives of the North Atlantic humpback whales.

# THE WHALE WHISPERER



## CONTACT

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## BACKGROUND

Over the past fifteen years, Andrew has accumulated **hundreds of hours** of 4-k aerial and underwater footage documenting **never-before-seen** humpback behavior giving us insights into their complex social lives and how they are like us humans in so many ways. Since completing his second documentary on the humpbacks, he has obtained **another four years of aerial footage** that has not been seen.



## SYNOPSIS

This film is not just about connecting with whales, it is as much about us as individuals: dreaming, recreating ourselves, and discovering once again a passion and meaning in life. It is about proving that anything is possible, at any age, anywhere in the world. It is a feel-good story about the ocean bringing us together, and how we are all connected to nature. A success story of conservation, it is the story of the humpback whales repopulating the same oceans in which commercial whaling almost exterminated these iconic marine mammals, giving us a ray of hope in tackling the major ecological challenges that confront the world today. With no background in marine biology or science, we follow Andrew and his family, as they chase his dream, trying to find Magical Whale, a specific humpback whale that changed Andrew's life, pursuing his new purpose in life to inspire and give hope to young and old. But age is just a number, and a diploma is just a piece of paper. Andrew is not pushing an idea, he is telling us a story, his story, as it is, honestly. It is about our universal craving for connection, not just to each other, but to our environment as well. Dreams are not just dreams, they can become a reality, and in doing so they draw us together as humans. This documentary will appeal to all generations.

***Self-taught  
producer/director/cameraman/writer/editor,  
Andrew Stevenson is seeking to partner/collaborate  
with experienced film producers/directors  
to develop his next documentary to another level  
for broadcast television/streaming  
in English and/or French.***

## ANDREW



Bermuda-based Canadian **Andrew Stevenson**, economist, East African wildlife enthusiast, Himalayan climber, traveler, adventurer, and author, is the stay-at-home daddy, raising two daughters. In 2007, while swimming with wild dolphins off Bermuda, Andrew has an unexpected and unique two-hour up-close-and-personal encounter with an old male humpback that changes his life. Since then, while searching for this whale, (he names Magical Whale) Andrew has identified 2,000 individual humpback whales in Bermuda waters alone.

Andrew has singlehandedly produced **two award-winning documentaries**. His 60-minute documentary *"Where the Whales Sing"* won 'Best Emerging Underwater Filmmaker' at the BLUE Ocean Film Festival, Monterey, California in 2010, and went on to win other awards at major film festivals. It has been dubbed in Italian, subtitled in Spanish, French, Korean, Persian, and Czechoslovakian and was screened on Air Canada's in-flight program.

*"Where the Whales Sing"*:

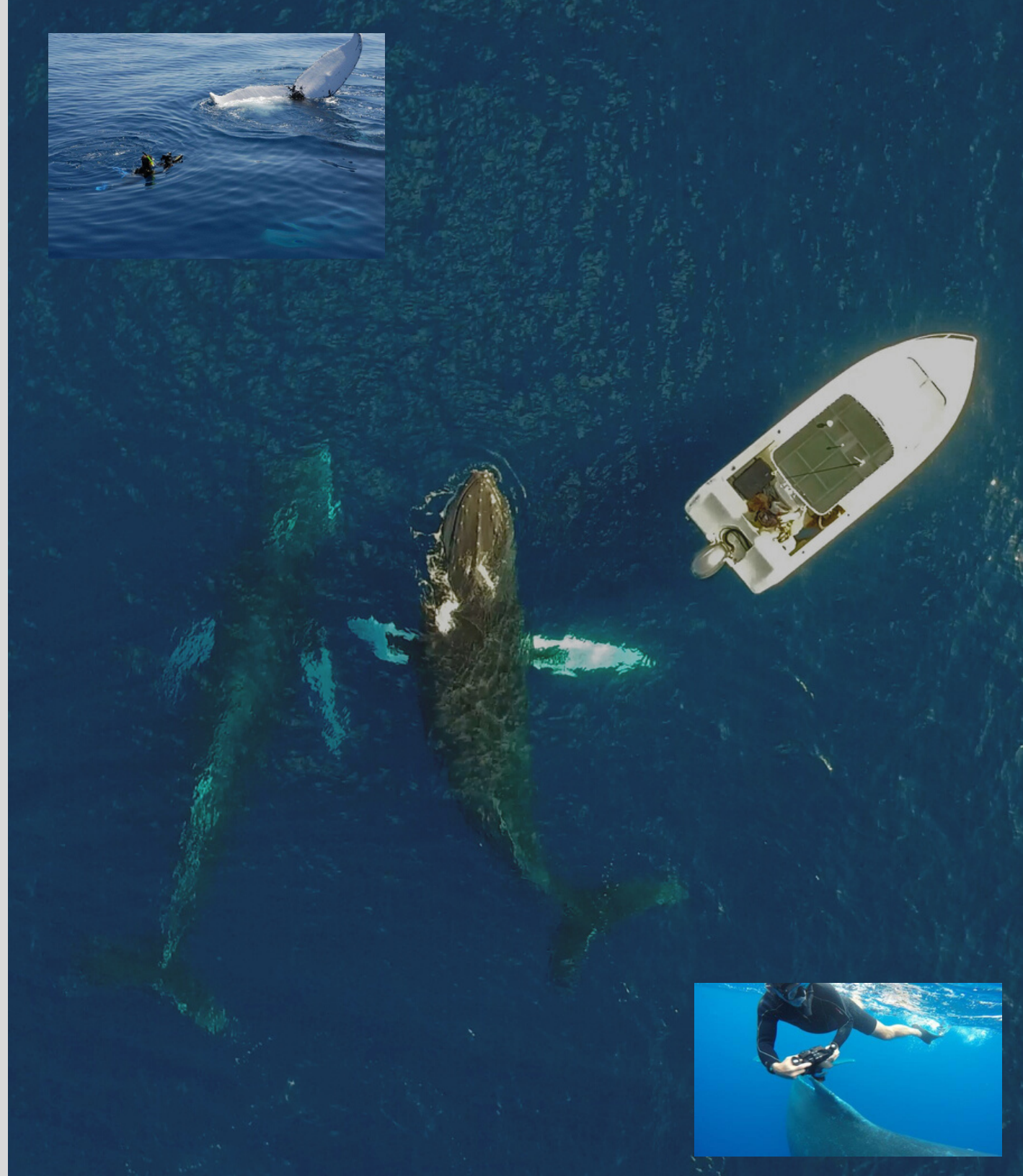
<https://vimeo.com/405604860>

His second documentary, *"The Secrets Lives of the Humpback Whales"* won the Best Ocean Film at the Wildlife Conservation Film Festival in New York City in 2019.

Link to the trailers:

<https://vimeo.com/298666630> and to the

documentary: <https://vimeo.com/354733042>

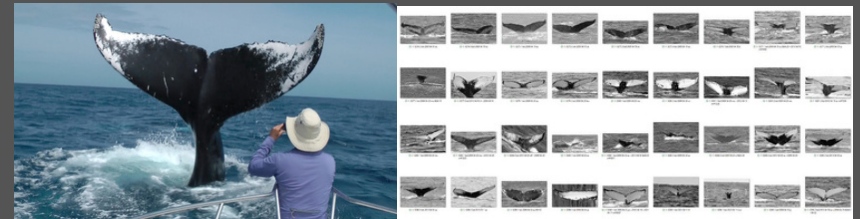




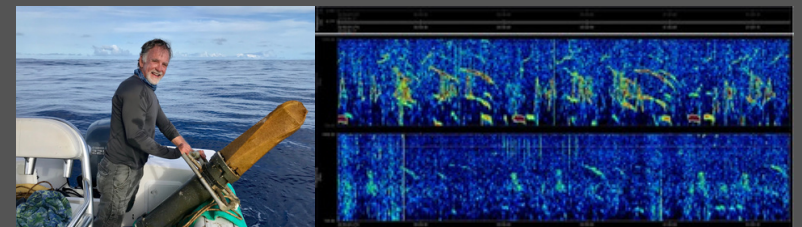
## CITIZEN SCIENCE:

With five presentations at past biennial conferences of the Society for Marine Mammology already to his credit, Andrew is working with two PhD students to publish peer-reviewed papers in science journals based on his fluke ID and acoustic databases.

**Andrew's catalogue of 2,000 individual humpback whale IDs is the largest held by one person**, the largest catalogue of whales for one geographic area, and is unique in being the only catalogue of fluke IDs achieved in the middle of the ocean. Bermuda is the halfway point of the North Atlantic humpback whales' spring migratory route from their southern breeding/calving grounds in the Caribbean to their northern feeding grounds. Citizen scientists have matched Andrew's 'Bermuda' whales up the Eastern Seaboard of the USA, Eastern Canada, to Greenland, Iceland, and Franz Josef Land, in Russia.



In addition to his visual data, using passive military-grade acoustic devices resting on the ocean floor on a seamount fifteen miles offshore Bermuda, Andrew has recorded humpback whale song 24/7, for twelve consecutive months from 2018-2019. This is the **first time such high-quality recordings of the humpbacks have been made** since the US Navy's anti submarine acoustic recordings from Bermuda during the Cold War launched the "Save the Whales" movement in the 1970s.  
<https://vimeo.com/643958027>



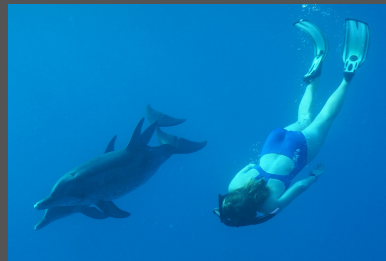
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“I have always been passionate about nature and animals and wildlife. Settling here in Bermuda, this vast oceanic wilderness is right on our doorstep. I soon realized I was sitting on a potential gold mine of information about the mid-ocean lives of the humpbacks. There is nowhere else like Bermuda in providing this window into the humpbacks’ pelagic social behavior. I gave myself three years to make my first film and at the end of the initial season I had zero underwater footage of the humpbacks. The local fishers told me the humpbacks had gone. It was late in the season when I entered the water to film bottlenose dolphins. And that is when I had my two-hour, up-close-and-personal encounter with **Magical Whale**. I could not sleep for a week afterwards. I kept asking myself, “What was that whale thinking when he swam within arm’s reach of me?” For a month, I could not talk about this encounter without becoming emotionally overwhelmed. This experience with a creature that seemed enormously intelligent, had a profound effect on me. I identified with this old male humpback that, despite his friendly behavior, has never been ID’ed before, or since. Magical Whale is probably about the same age as me. He has a scar on his right cheek, as do I. **In my mind, I was Magical Whale. He was me.**



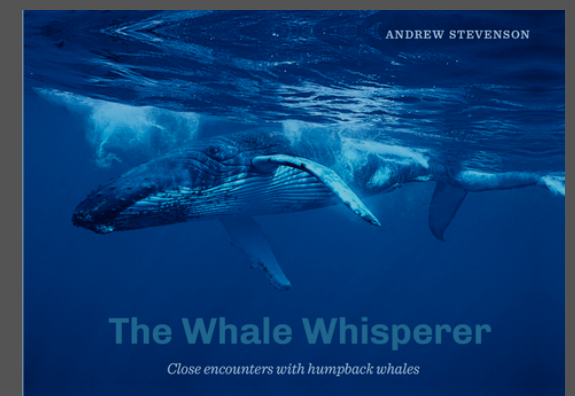
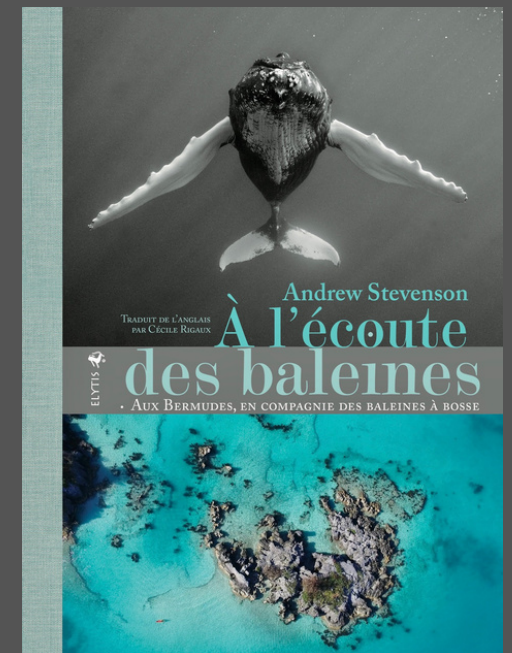
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“Magical Whale and I are the same beings, in different forms. When I have trouble sleeping, I just close my eyes and relive my underwater encounter with Magical Whale, and the memory calms my mind. As to why he approached and interacted with me, my intuition tells me my humpback alter ego wanted me to share my experiences about the cetaceans, to expose how pollution, entanglement, and ship strikes still threaten the humpbacks. Sixteen years later, with a website with **8 million views**, I am about to produce my **third documentary** on the humpbacks, and my third photographic book.



“Elsa and Somers, my 18 and 13 years old daughters, share my passion for the whales. Keen swimmers and divers, they have lived with the whales and dolphins on their doorstep, in the great wilderness of the Atlantic Ocean surrounding Bermuda.”

- Andrew





## FILMING LOCATIONS

Primary location: **Bermuda.**

Secondary locations include **Eastern USA/Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Norway** and the French territories of **Guadeloupe, St Pierre-et-Miquelon.**

Existing footage exists from Bermuda, Eastern Canada, and the Caribbean.

Link to footage in Brier Island, Nova Scotia:  
<https://vimeo.com/200465883>

Rough cuts of whales since completing the previous two documentaries:  
<https://vimeo.com/665193065>

*All work under a research permit issued by the Government of Bermuda and a Commercial Small Unmanned Aircraft License issued by the Bermuda Civil Aviation Authority*

## ANDREW'S INTIMATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMPBACK WHALES GIVES US ADDITIONAL THREADS/STORYLINES THAT CAN BE DEVELOPED:

- Andrew is on a quest to find the whale he first encountered 15 years ago, a whale that has never been identified before or since. Has his **Magical Whale** been killed by traditional whalers in Greenland or the Island of Bequia in the Grenadines, or perhaps even in Iceland, which is not a member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC)?
- Despite the success story of protecting humpbacks from commercial whaling, cetaceans are still threatened with ocean pollution, climate change, entanglement, and ship strikes. Through Andrew and his international network of other whale advocates, the increasing role and **importance of citizen scientists** often surpasses the scientific research of the scientists themselves.
- Andrew's two daughters, Elsa (18) and Somers (13) have lived and experienced their father's passion for the whales, providing a **unique insight through the eyes of teenagers/children** to appeal to the younger generation. Both of Andrew's previous documentaries on the humpbacks were narrated by his daughters.

Rough cuts of Elsa and Somers with whales and dolphins:  
<https://vimeo.com/665752801>



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