



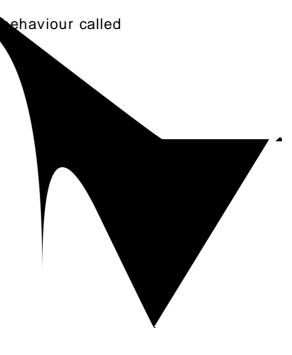
\_ \_ \_ <del>-</del>

Researchers have documented some killer whales covering hundreds of kilometres at incredible speeds between long-line fishing vessels for a quick meal, during a new study monitoring the marine predator's interaction with blue-eye trevalla fishers off South East Australia

Led by scientists from IMAS and Deakin University, the study published in <u>Fisheries Research</u> combined acoustic detection devices on commercial fishing gear with photo identification of individual orcas. The aim was to improve our understanding of their behaviours, to potentially inform efforts to reduce both industry losses and potential harm to the marine predators.

IMAS lead author Matthew Cieslak, who carried out the study as part of his Master's degree under the supervision of Dr Paul Tixier and Associate Professor Mary-Anne Lea, said one particularly persistent animal swam more than 1,000 kilometres in 16 days and was repeatedly observed near the fishing vessels and gear.

"Marine predators removing catch from fishing gear, depredation, is a global issue. Killer whales are



"While one killer whale we tracked covered an exceptional 1,000 km over 16 days, another swam more than 180 km over 18 hours. Meanwhile, almost half of the individuals we photographed were observed near multiple and successive longlines," he said.

Mr Cieslak said the findings could contribute to developing new mitigation strategies to reduce killer whale interactions with longline fishing.

"Before the use of acoustic devices, surface observations were relied on to establish when killer whales were near longlines, but it's now clear their

