Fence Productions. Animals Video. Humpback whales make stunning comeback in southern Africa. Whaling drove humpbacks in the region to near extinction. Now new survey data suggests there are far more than anyone expected.

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Resumo:
Considerable uncertainty exists regarding the migratory destinations of humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) from the Antarctic Peninsula region and the breeding grounds off the coasts of South America. Evidence is presented on the migratory patterns of Antarctic humpback whales based upon movements of individuals identified by natural markings as part of a large-scale international collaboration. Recapture rates were compared between animals from the low latitude breeding and calving areas along the northeastern (n=288) and northwestern (n=325) margins of South America with those identified in the high-latitude feeding areas in the region of the Antarctic Peninsula (n=535). The number of individuals re-sighted in the Antarctic Peninsula differed dramatically between eastern and western South America (c2=40.98, p=1.5 3 10–10). No individuals from Brazil were re-sighted in either the Antarctic Peninsula or off western South America. In contrast, 43 individuals from western South America were identified off the Antarctic Peninsula. These findings suggest that the northwest coast of South America represents an important breeding ground destination for at least some of the humpback whales that feed near the Antarctic Peninsula, but provide no support for movement between the Antarctic Peninsula and the east coast of South America.

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Migrations of individually identified humpback whales between the Antarctic Peninsula and South America

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Humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) are known to have some of the longest migration distances of all mammals, and this huge journey is about 400 kilometres farther than the previous humpback record. The finding was made by Peter Stevick, a biologist at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine. Typically, humpback whales move in a north-south direction between cold feeding areas and warm breeding grounds - and the longest journeys which have been recorded until now have been between breeding and feeding sites. The whale, a female, was first spotted off the coast of Brazil, where researchers photographed its tail fluke and took skin samples for chromosome testing to determine the animal's sex. The humpback whale (Megaptera novaeangliae) is a species of baleen whale. It is one of the larger roqual species, with adults ranging in length from 12–16 m (39–52 ft) and weighing around 25–30 metric tons (28–33 short tons). The humpback has a distinctive body shape, with long pectoral fins and a knobbly head. It is known for breaching and other distinctive surface behaviors, making it popular with whale watchers. Males produce a complex song lasting 10 to 20 minutes, which they repeat for hours at