Keep a Sharp Lookout for Whales and Report Sightings

Large whales off the west coast of the U.S. are federally protected species. You can help in their conservation by reporting sightings.

Blue Whale
Balaenoptera musculus
- Up to 88 feet long
- Ridge along top of head
- Mottled bluish gray, often visible below surface
- Tall column blow

Fin Whale
Balaenoptera physalus
- Up to 75 feet long
- Asymmetrical jaw color, white on right, ridge along top of head
- Brownish gray to black, paler underside
- Tall column blow

Humpback Whale
Megaptera novaeangliae
- Up to 60 feet long
- Smooth knob or nodules along top of head
- Dark gray to black
- Medium slightly bushy blow

Gray Whale
Eschrichtius robustus
- Up to 45 feet long
- Head often covered in barnacles
- Mottled gray and blotchy coloration
- More heart shaped blow

REPORT WHALE SIGHTINGS
- Mariners are being asked to report all whale sightings. This information can help with the conservation of these species.
- If you see whales, please collect the following: GPS location, number and species. Email information to: whales@noaa.gov
- For information on whales in your area and any NOAA advisories, refer to your district USCG Local Notice to Mariners (LNM) at: http://www.navcen.uscg.gov
- For current information on whales and ship strikes go to: http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/protect/shipstrike/

HOW TO REPORT INJURED, DISTRESSED, ENTANGLED OR DEAD WHALE SIGHTINGS
Call: (877) SOS-WHALe [767-9425] or U.S. Coast Guard, VHF Channel 16

SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:
- GPS location and time of sighting, condition of whale, species if known, photographs if possible
- If you witness a strike, please provide the vessel information (ID), size and speed (if known)