

## How To Help

We are compiling whale location data collected using mobile phones and tablets. With enough data, we can help prevent ship collisions with whales.

Take action and get outdoors to whale watch! Use this identification guide to help you ID whales.

Whether you do it from the shoreline or head out on a boat, join a group or swim solo, use our apps to record what you see.

### Apps can save whales!



Download the **Whale Alert** app if you are a whale-watching enthusiast and want to help our efforts to reduce ship strikes to whales.

Download the **Spotter Pro** app if you are a trained naturalist who work regularly with a whale-watching business and want to contribute to our West Coast-wide efforts to reduce ship strikes to whales.

We will reach our goal with your help!



@WhaleAlertWestCoast



Blue whale and ship photos: John Calambokidis (Cascadia Research Collective)

## Threats

Whale species were hunted to near extinction from the 1700s to the mid-1900s for oil and meat.

Some populations are now stable or even showing signs of recovery. However, many species are still considered endangered – including the blue whale, fin whale, and humpback whale – despite efforts to protect them over the last several decades.

Most current threats are caused by human activities. Ship strikes to whales and entanglements are a growing concern worldwide and, for many species, pose a serious threat to their population recovery.

Between 1988 and 2012, there were at least 100 documented large whale ship strikes along the California coast. Actual numbers could be at least 10 times higher than documented.

The whale species most commonly harmed by ship strikes in our region are the endangered blue, fin, and humpback whales, as well as gray whales.

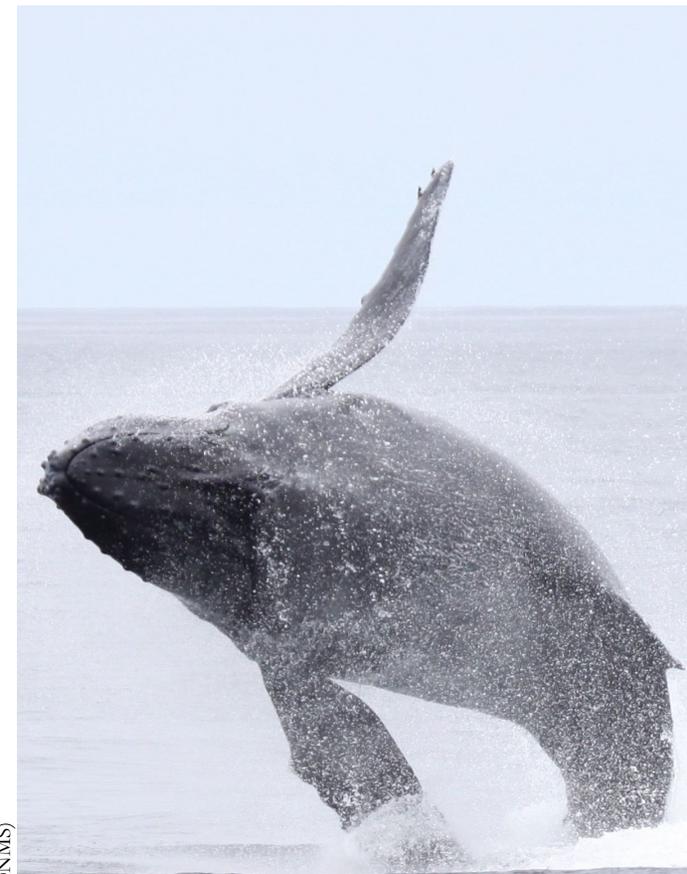
Help us protect whales, report whale sightings!

For more information visit us at:  
[westcoast.whalealert.org](http://westcoast.whalealert.org)

or contact:  
[whalealert@pointblue.org](mailto:whalealert@pointblue.org)



Humpback whale photo: Sophie Webb (ACCESS/Point Blue/NOAA-ONMS)



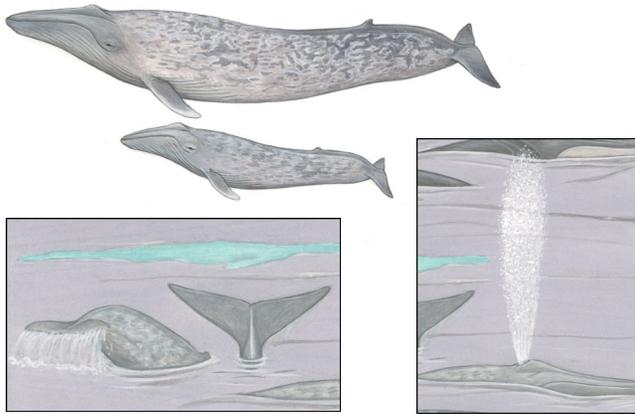
## Help Us Protect Whales

### Report Whale Sightings!



# COMMONLY FOUND WHALES ON THE WEST COAST

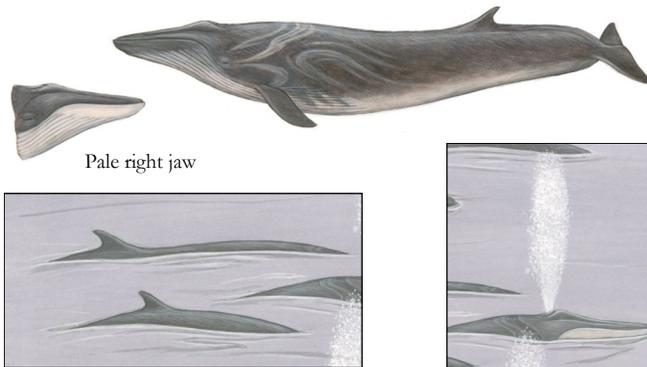
## Blue Whale *Balaenoptera musculus*



- Largest mammal on Earth; max. length of 95 feet
- Body is blue-gray with light or dark mottling
- Very small dorsal fin, set far back on body
- Blow is tall and columnar, can reach up to 39 feet
- Fluke is deeply keeled, triangular, and broad.

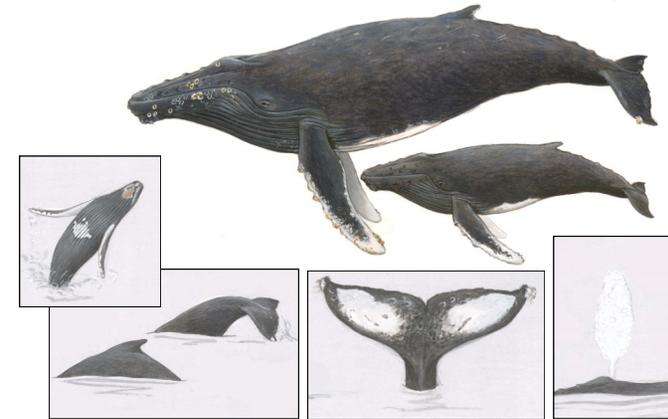
## Fin Whale *Balaenoptera physalus*

- Second largest whale with a max. length of 88 feet
- Body is gray or gray-brown above and white below
- Black lower left jaw with white on the right side
- Chevron pattern behind the blowholes to the tail
- Arches its back before diving; rarely flukes
- Blow is tall, but is lower than the blue whale



Pale right jaw

## Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*



- Black to dark gray body; ranges 39 to 42 feet
- Knoblike bumps (tubercles) on rostrum
- V- or heart-shaped blow, up to 10 feet in height
- Scallop-shaped tail with serrations on the edge
- Wing-like pectoral fins; very long and narrow

## Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*



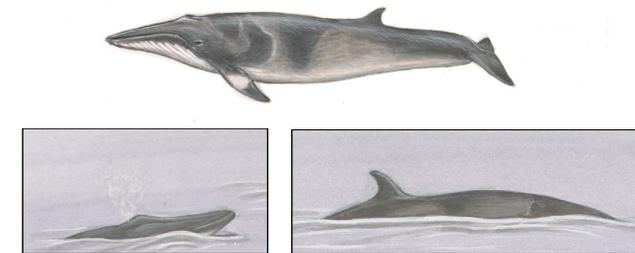
- Largest member of dolphin family; reaches 32 feet
- Black body, white markings; gray saddle patch
- Males have a tall (6 foot), triangular dorsal fin
- Flippers are paddle-shaped, broad, and round
- Flukes are notched and slightly concave; can reach 9 feet in breadth

## Gray Whale *Eschrichtius robustus*

- Dark gray with mottled white or yellow coloration
- Stout body with blunt, narrow, triangular head; no throat pleats
- No dorsal fin; has bumps (peduncles) along back
- Blow is straight up, short, broad, and bushy
- Flukes are scalloped; deep notch in the center



## Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*



- Smallest baleen whale; max length is 33 feet
- Narrow pointed head; short, trim flippers
- Black to dark gray back; undersides are white
- White or light gray band across fore-flippers
- Single ridge from blowhole guard to snout
- Pronounced dorsal fin semi-circular, and set back
- Tail is notched; has a smooth edge
- Blow is short and diffuse.