

ATTENTION MARINERS



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



- Small variable shaped dorsal fin
- Dorsal fin not visible at blow
- Occasionally shows grayish flukes on final dive



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



- Medium back swept dorsal fin
- Often surfaces low in water with dorsal fin not showing
- Almost never shows flukes — in fact, if you see a whale fluke, it most likely is not a fin whale



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



- Small dorsal fin, hump in back, especially when diving
- Very long pectoral fin (flippers) often seen at surface
- Typically arches high and shows flukes with scalloped trailing edge on last surfacing



Gray Whale

Eschrichtius robustus

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



- No dorsal fin but slight dorsal hump and knuckles
- Ridges or knuckles near tail
- Often shows flukes on final dive



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)

