

Welcome to Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre

Can you spot any of these marine mammals?

Barkley Sound is a rich feeding ground for many marine mammals. Our sheltered waters also make a great rest stop for migrating whales.

Humpback whales have made a strong comeback on the BC coast since the end of commercial whaling. They are seen most often between April and October, when they feed on krill and small fish before migrating south for the winter. Gray whales pass through in spring and fall, on their way to and from their feeding grounds

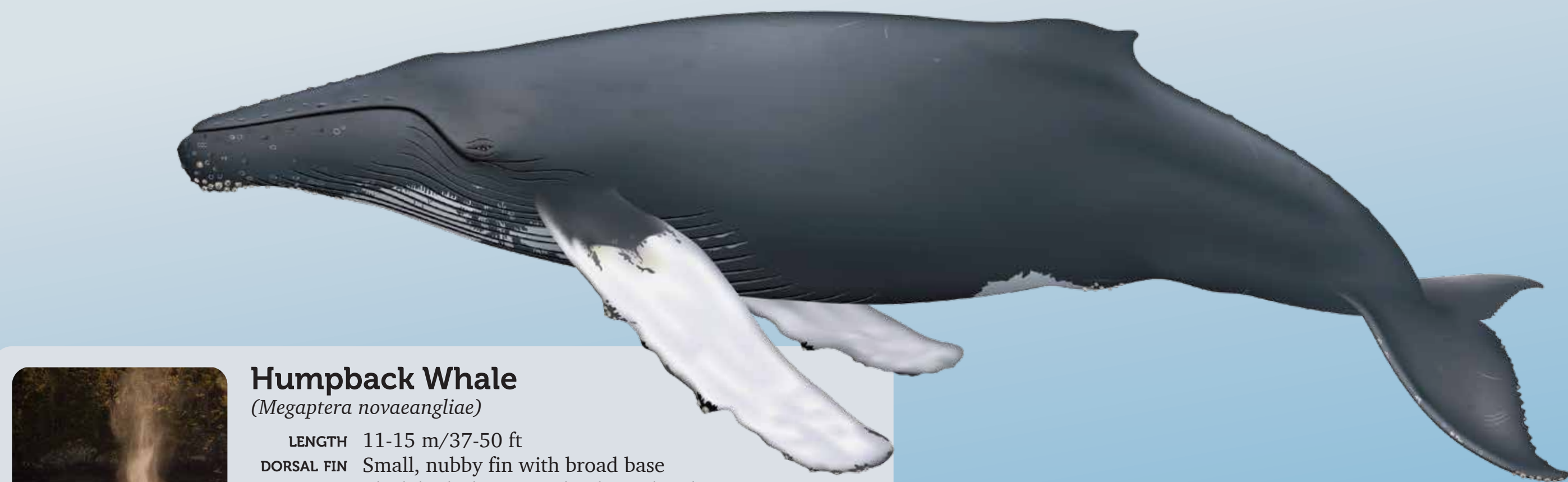
in northern BC and Alaska. Killer whales occasionally visit year-round.

California and Steller sea lions are seen most commonly in the fall and winter. Look for their heads surfacing, and listen for their loud huffing breaths and strident calls. Harbour seals are here all year – they are small and quiet, so keep a sharp lookout!



the
whaletrail

Follow The Whale Trail to watch whales and other marine mammals from shore. From Victoria to Prince Rupert, what will you discover?



Humpback Whale
(Megaptera novaeangliae)

LENGTH 11-15 m/37-50 ft

DORSAL FIN Small, nubby fin with broad base

APPEARANCE Black body, bumps or knobs on head, long pectoral fins with white underside

BEHAVIOUR Medium-sized, bushy blow; usually surfaces 2-5 times between deep dives; often raises tail flukes on final dive

STATUS Threatened



Grey Whale
(Eschrichtius robustus)

LENGTH 12-14 m/39-46 ft

DORSAL FIN No dorsal fin

APPEARANCE Mottled grey colour; covered with barnacles; 9-13 knuckle-like bumps on back; bowed, elongated head

BEHAVIOUR May travel and feed close to shore, travels in groups of 1-3 animals

STATUS Special Concern



California Sea Lion
(Zalophus californianus)

LENGTH 1.5-2.5m /5-8ft

APPEARANCE Dark brown colouration; mature males have a light-coloured sagittal crest on the head

BEHAVIOUR Spends time on land and in water; often seen in large groups on rocky haul outs. Vocalizations sound like a bark.

STATUS Not at Risk



Steller Sea Lion
(Eumetopias jubatus)

LENGTH 2-3 m/6-9 ft

APPEARANCE Light tan to blond, darker on belly, large front flippers, small ear flaps visible on the head, mature males much larger than females with a clearly defined forehead and thick neck and mane,

BEHAVIOUR Spends time on land and in water, often seen in large groups on rocky haulouts

STATUS Special Concern



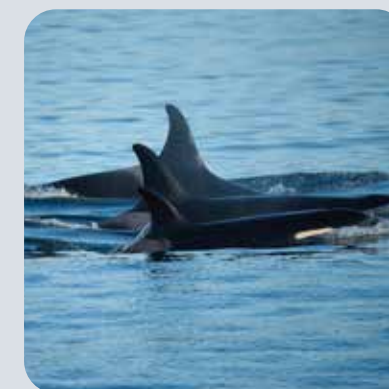
Harbour Seal
(Phoca vitulina)

LENGTH 1-1.5m (3-5ft)

APPEARANCE Varies from blonde to brown and black; short body, large head and short limbs

BEHAVIOUR Spend time on land, and in the water; form loosely gregarious groups when hauled out

STATUS Not at Risk



Killer Whale
(Orcinus orca)

LENGTH 6-9 m/18-28 ft

DORSAL FIN Black; triangular in females and calves; tall, distinctive in adult males

APPEARANCE Black body with white underside, grey saddle patch behind dorsal fin, white eye patch

BEHAVIOUR Usually in groups of 3-25, bushy blows visible in cold weather

STATUS Southern residents Endangered; northern residents, (transients) and offshores Threatened



Human
1.8 m/6 ft
For scale reference



Scan, scroll and listen to these incredible animals vocalizing (sound clips kindly provided by JASCO Applied Sciences, www.jasco.com)



Be a Citizen Scientist – Report your Sightings!

Many populations of marine mammals and sea turtles are at risk in B.C. Report your sightings of whales, dolphins, porpoises and sea turtles to help us better understand the distribution and abundance of these species. **Report your sightings to:**



wild whales
b.c. cetacean sightings network

www.wildwhales.org
1.866.I.SAW.ONE
sightings@vanaqua.org



Download the WhaleReport app for iOS or android



Please report sick, injured, distressed or dead marine mammals and sea turtles to **1.800.465.4336**