

# Ocean 11

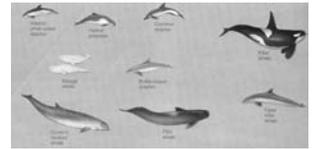
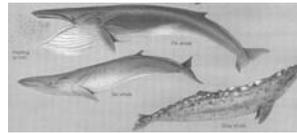
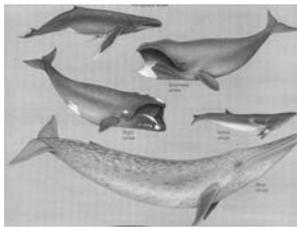
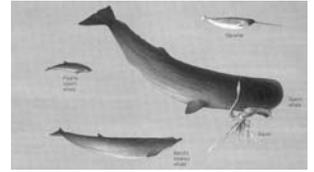
## Whales 1

### Whales

Whales belong to the mammalian order *Cetacea*. There are about 80 species that inhabit all oceans, as well as a few larger rivers. They are the best adapted of all aquatic mammals. Smaller porpoises are less than 2 metres long and weigh only a few tens of kilograms.

The great blue whale can be up to 30 metres long and weigh more than 100 tons. The body is elongate and superficially looks like a fish, but the tail has horizontal flukes. Neither the tail, nor the dorsal fin is supported by a bony skeleton. The two paddle-like front limbs are called flippers or pectoral fins and are supported by short arm bones and many extra finger bones.

The external ear openings are small holes on either side of the head. The nostrils are situated on top of the head instead of near the front, as in most mammals. Their skin is smooth and somewhat rubbery to the touch.



There are two living suborders; whales with baleen and whales with teeth.

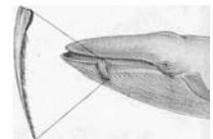
The baleen consists of a series of blades or plates formed from keratin, a material similar to human fingernails. The fingered inner edges of these plates form a sieve or mat against which prey organisms become trapped, as seawater is forced out of the mouth.

In the narwhal, one tooth of males becomes a highly developed tusk, protruding outside the mouth.

Baleen

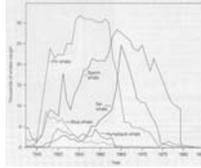


Baleen



Year	Number of Whales	Year	Number of Whales
1947	31	1983-84	83,281
1947-51	96	1984-85	63,685
1948	176	1985-86	37,881
1949	359	1986-87	52,248
1950	759	1987-88	65,846
1951	1,267	1988-89	61,736
1952	1,881	1989-91	61,681
1953	3,887	1975-77	56,771
1954	5,228	1977-78	35,325
1955	68,873	1978-79*	28,856
1956	8,468	1979-79	21,829
1957	18,731	1979-79	28,851
1958	23,983	1975-76	21,148
1959	38,887	1976-77	36,286
1960	44,822	1977-78	23,828
1961	8,273	1978-79	31,885
1962	14,822	1979-80	13,845
1963	23,843	1980-81	11,808
1964	34,251	1981-82	11,828
1965-67	85,841	1982-83	1,883
1967-67*	56,259	1983-84	1,883
1968-68	61,879		

Whale Catches 1945-1985



**Whale Migration**

Some whales spend the spring off the coast of New England, where they eat plenty of plankton.

In the early summer, they head north to the breeding and nursery area in the Bay of Fundy and in areas south of Nova Scotia.

In the winter, some of the adult females migrate to the coastal waters off the southern United States. They particularly like the shallow waters from Georgia to Florida. Very few juveniles or males migrate to this region.

Often, females are alone early in the season. The calves are generally born between December and March. This is the only known area for calving for some whales. It is unknown where the non-pregnant females go.

Video: Whales

34 minutes



Video: Whale Rescue

44 minutes



Next: Whale 2