

# 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



### 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



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



- 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



- 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



- 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](mailto: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)

