**Where They Blow...**

Canadian waters are rich in whale species, with more than 30 different types inhabiting the waters off our 200,000 kilometres of coastline. Even members of the same species found in different locations have developed distinct behaviours. Virtually every one is threatened or endangered.

![Illustration by Cory Proulx](Image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1. KILLER WHALE</strong></th>
<th>Orcinus orca</th>
<th><strong>Risk status:</strong> threatened</th>
<th><strong>Threats:</strong> low reproductive rate (one calf every five years), acoustic disturbances, pollutants, toxic spills, collisions with vessels, decreased prey availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Northeast Pacific, northern resident</td>
<td><strong>Population (2017):</strong> 309</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. KILLER WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Orcinus orca</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> endangered</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> shrinking salmon stock, pollution, noise, ship strikes, climate change; natural threats include inbreeding, late sexual maturity, low birth rates</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Northeast Pacific, southern resident (see article page 22)</td>
<td><strong>Population (2018):</strong> 74</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. KILLER WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Orcinus orca</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> threatened</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> prey decline (dogfish, chinook salmon and Pacific halibut), contaminants and toxic spills, chronic and acute acoustic disturbances; often gathers in large groups of 120 or more, so oil spills and underwater explosions are particularly dangerous</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Northeast Pacific, offshore</td>
<td><strong>Population (2013):</strong> 300</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. KILLER WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Orcinus orca</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> threatened</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> collisions with ships, entanglement in fishing gear, pollution</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Northeast Pacific, Bigg’s/transient</td>
<td><strong>Population (2009):</strong> 122 (mature individuals)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. BLUE WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Balaenoptera musculus</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> endangered</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> collisions with ships, entanglement, toxic spills, declining prey, noise pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Pacific</td>
<td><strong>Population:</strong> unknown</td>
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<td><strong>6. RIGHT WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Eubalaena japonica</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> endangered</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> vessel strikes, acute and chronic noise pollution, entanglement in fishing gear, pollution, climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> North Pacific</td>
<td><strong>Population:</strong> 20 to 30 (not sighted in Canadian waters in 50 years)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. GREY WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Eschrichtius robustus</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> special concern</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> collisions with ships, entanglement in fishing gear, coastal industries such as salt extraction, oil exploration, mining can lead to toxic spills and noise pollution that ruin breeding and feeding habitats</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Eastern North Pacific</td>
<td><strong>Population (2016):</strong> 20,000</td>
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<td><strong>8. HUMPBACK WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Megaptera novaeangliae</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> special concern</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> vessel strikes, entanglement, toxic spills, declining prey, noise pollution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> North Pacific &amp; North Atlantic</td>
<td><strong>Population (2004):</strong> 2,500</td>
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<td><strong>9. FIN WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Balaenoptera physalus</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> threatened</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> vessel strikes, acute and chronic noise pollution, entanglement in fishing gear, pollution, climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Pacific</td>
<td><strong>Population:</strong> after no reported sightings in Canadian waters in more than 50 years, 5 were spotted in summer 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10. SEI WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Balaenoptera borealis</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> endangered</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> hunted until 1975, the species has not been able to recover since; threats to remaining individuals include vessel strikes, noise, entanglements, climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> Pacific</td>
<td><strong>Population:</strong> after no reported sightings in Canadian waters in more than 50 years, 5 were spotted in summer 2018</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11. COMMON MINKE WHALE</strong></td>
<td>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</td>
<td><strong>Risk status:</strong> not at risk</td>
<td><strong>Threats:</strong> whaling, entanglement, noise, vessel strikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong> North Pacific</td>
<td><strong>Population (2005):</strong> 475</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Numbers on the map represent general location of specific populations. While some whales in Canadian waters are limited to areas on and around the dots, other populations range widely over great distances. Whales Hotspot: This area is frequented seasonally by multiple species. Extirpated or extinct species.

Illustration by Cory Proulx
22. **BOWHEAD WHALE**

Delphinapterus leucas

Location: Labrador Sea

Population: <100

Risk status: special concern

Threats: hunting, changes to habitat, noise, decreased food supply, pollution, oil spills, vessel strikes, whale watching

23. **SPERM WHALE**

Physeter macrocephalus

Location: North Atlantic

Population: >1,000

Risk status: not at risk

Threats: whaling, vessel strikes, noise

24. **FIN WHALE**

Balaenoptera physalus

Location: Atlantic

Population: 100,000

Risk status: special concern

Threats: vessel strikes, noise

25. **GREY WHALE**

Eschrichtius robustus

Location: Bering, Chukchi, Beaufort

Population: 2,100

Risk status: special concern

Threats: hunting, noise, discrimination, whale watching

26. **RIGHT WHALE**

Eubalaena glacialis

Location: North Atlantic

Population: <100

Risk status: endangered

Threats: vessel strikes, pollution, entanglement

27. **SOWERBY’S BEAKED WHALE**

Mesoplodon bidens

Location: Atlantic Continental Slope

Population: unknown

Risk status: special concern

Threats: entanglement, noise, as a deep diver, it is extremely vulnerable to noise pollution

28. **COMMON MINKE WHALE**

Balaenoptera acutorostrata

Location: North Atlantic

Population: plentiful

Risk status: not at risk

Threats: vessel strikes, noise

29. **SILVERED WHALE**

Mesoplodon bidens

Location: Atlantic

Population: plentiful

Risk status: not at risk

Threats: vessel strikes, noise

30. **NARWHAL**

Monodon monoceros

Location: Baffin Bay and Hudson Bay

Population: 40,000 and 2,100

Risk status: special concern

Threats: vessel strikes, noise, entanglement, pollution, increasing traffic