

Cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) are marine mammals that have fully adapted to life in water. Unlike other mammals, they do not rely on land for any part of their life cycle. There are about 33 species of cetaceans observed in Canadian waters.

Cetaceans can be divided in two groups: toothed whales (*Odontocetes*) and baleen whales (*Mysticetes*). Both types of cetaceans share the many characteristics that enable them to survive solely in marine habitats. They can, for example, hold their breath for long periods of time while underwater. However, there are a few key features that make them strikingly different. Dive in and discover them!

#### TOOTHED WHALES

As their name implies, toothed whales have teeth which they use mainly to hunt and break apart their prey. Since most species of toothed whales are social whales living in tight groups or pods, they hunt together using echolocation (gathering information about their surroundings by using sound – a lot like sonar).

#### A SPERM WHALE | *Physeter macrocephalus*

**Length:** About 11m (females) and 16m (males), max. 18m  
**Weight:** About 15t (females) and 45t (males)  
**Range:** From the Equator to the edge of pack ice in both hemispheres  
**Diet:** Large squid, sharks, skates and fish  
**Cool Fact:** It is capable of diving for over an hour and to depths greater than 1,000m

#### B KILLER WHALE | *Orcinus orca*

**Length:** Up to 8.5m (females) and 10m (males)  
**Weight:** Up to 7.5t (females) and 10t (males)  
**Range:** All of the world's oceans  
**Diet:** Fish, marine mammals, sharks and sea birds  
**Cool Fact:** Each population can have different dietary needs, behavior patterns, social structures and habitat preferences

#### C NARWHAL | *Monodon monoceros*

**Length:** Around 4m (females) and 4.5m (males), max. 5.4m  
**Weight:** 1.0 to 1.5t (females) and 1.6 to 1.9t (males)  
**Range:** Arctic ocean  
**Diet:** Deep-water fish, squid, shrimp and crab  
**Cool Facts:**  
» It spends most of winter in deep waters under the sea ice  
» Males (and some females) have a tusk that can be 3m long

#### D BELUGA | *Delphinapterus leucas*

**Length:** About 3.55m (females) and 4.15m (males), max. 4.5m  
**Weight:** About 1.36t (females) and 1.5t (males), max. 1.9t  
**Range:** Arctic and subarctic waters, with a small population in the Gulf of St. Lawrence  
**Diet:** Octopus, squid, crab, shrimp, clams, mussels, snails, sandworms and fish  
**Cool Fact:** It has a thick layer of blubber that accounts for as much as 40 per cent of its body mass

#### E HARBOUR PORPOISE | *Phocoena phocoena*

**Length:** About 1.5 to 1.7m, max. 2m  
**Weight:** 50 to 90kg  
**Range:** Northern temperate and subarctic shallow waters in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans  
**Diet:** Schooling fish and cephalopods  
**Cool Fact:** Its name comes from the Latin for pig (*porcus*), and it is sometimes referred to as the "puffing pig" in parts of Atlantic Canada

#### F PACIFIC WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN

***Lagenorhynchus obliquidens***  
**Length:** About 2.3m (females) and 2.5m (males)  
**Weight:** 135 to 180kg  
**Range:** Temperate waters of the North Pacific Ocean  
**Diet:** Squid and small schooling fish  
**Cool Fact:** It is playful and highly acrobatic

#### G ATLANTIC WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN

***Lagenorhynchus acutus***  
**Length:** About 2.5m (females) and 3m (males)  
**Weight:** 150 to 225kg  
**Range:** Temperate waters of the North Atlantic Ocean shelf and slope  
**Diet:** Fish, squid and shrimp  
**Cool Facts:** It often hunts alongside large baleen whales

#### H COMMON DOLPHIN | *Delphinus delphis*

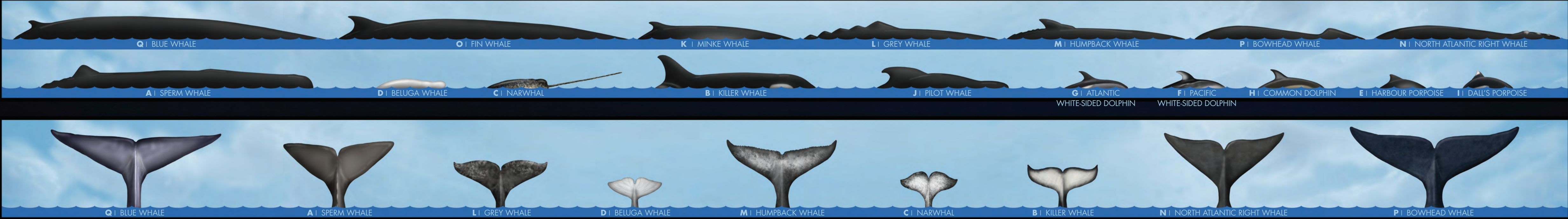
**Length:** Up to 2.7m  
**Weight:** About 200kg  
**Range:** Occasionally in Canada; prefers warm tropical to cool temperate waters in both Pacific and Atlantic oceans  
**Diet:** Deep-sea schooling fish and cephalopods  
**Cool Fact:** It hunts at night time, diving to depths of more than 200m

#### I DALL'S PORPOISE | *Phocoenoides dalli*

**Length:** Up to 2.1m (females) and 2.4m (males)  
**Weight:** Up to 220kg  
**Range:** North Pacific Ocean  
**Diet:** Small fish, crab and shrimp  
**Cool Fact:** It is the fastest swimming small Cetacean, with a maximum speed of 55 km/h

#### J LONG-FINNED PILOT WHALE

***Globicephala melas***  
**Length:** Up to 5.8m (females) and 7.6m (males)  
**Weight:** Up to 1.3t (females) and up to 2.3t (males)  
**Range:** Deep temperate or subarctic waters of the Atlantic Ocean  
**Diet:** Fish, cephalopods and shrimp  
**Cool Fact:** It is often involved in mass strandings (when many whales become beached at the same time) possibly because of the tight social bonds within a pod



#### BALEEN WHALES

Baleen whales use their baleens (plates made of keratin, like human fingernails) to gather food. When these whales close their mouths, the baleens act as filters, trapping food inside their mouths but releasing water back into the sea. Most baleen whales migrate long distances to feed in northern waters during the summer, and spend the winter months in warmer waters to give birth and mate. They tend to be more solitary than toothed whales.

#### K MINKE WHALE

***Balaenoptera acutorostrata***  
**Length:** About 10m  
**Weight:** Up to 9.2t  
**Range:** Throughout the Northern Hemisphere, tropical and subtropical waters (winter), northern subarctic waters (summer)  
**Diet:** Krill, zooplankton and small schooling fish  
**Cool Fact:** It feeds by lunging into schools of prey while gulping large amounts of water

#### L GREY WHALE | *Eschrichtius robustus*

**Length:** 11.7 to 15.2m (females), 11.1 to 14.3m (males)  
**Weight:** About 35t  
**Range:** Shallow coastal waters in the North Pacific Ocean (summer), west coast of Mexico (winter)  
**Diet:** Small crustaceans, small fish and zooplankton  
**Cool Fact:** It feeds at the bottom of the ocean by turning on its side, scooping up sand from the sea floor with its mouth and spitting the sand and water through its baleens

#### M HUMPBACK WHALE

***Megaptera novaeangliae***  
**Length:** About 14m (females) and about 13m (males)  
**Weight:** 34 to 45t  
**Range:** Tropical (winter), temperate and subpolar (summer) waters worldwide  
**Diet:** Krill, zooplankton and small fish  
**Cool Facts:**  
» In its wintering grounds, males sing complex songs for hours which can be heard 30km away  
» It migrates the farthest of all mammals to its summering grounds, the record being 8,300km

#### N NORTH ATLANTIC RIGHT WHALE

***Eubalaena glacialis***  
**Length:** Up to 18m  
**Weight:** Up to 70t  
**Range:** Shallow coastal temperate and subpolar waters of the Atlantic Ocean (summer), sometimes migrating to southern temperate waters (winter)  
**Diet:** Mainly zooplankton  
**Cool Facts:**  
» Its baleens can be 2.4m long  
» Fewer than 450 of these whales remain in the wild

#### O FIN WHALE | *Balaenoptera physalus*

**Length:** 20 to 27m  
**Weight:** 40 to 80t  
**Range:** In deep, offshore waters of all major oceans, primarily in temperate to polar latitudes (summer), tropical waters (winter)  
**Diet:** Krill, small schooling fish and squid  
**Cool Fact:** It is the second largest animal on Earth, after the Blue Whale

#### P BOWHEAD WHALE | *Balaena mysticetus*

**Length:** 13 to 14m  
**Weight:** 75 to 100t  
**Range:** Arctic Ocean  
**Diet:** Zooplankton, small invertebrates and fish  
**Cool Fact:** It uses its head to break through thick ice at the surface of the water


#### Q BLUE WHALE | *Balaenoptera musculus*

**Length:** Up to 33m  
**Weight:** Up to 200t  
**Range:** Offshore waters worldwide, temperate waters (summer) and tropical waters (winter)  
**Diet:** Krill, zooplankton and fish  
**Cool Facts:**  
» It is the largest animal ever known to have lived on Earth!  
» It can consume as much as 4t of krill in a day  
» It can emit sounds louder than a jet aircraft

Historically, many species of cetaceans were hunted in Canadian waters by the whaling industry. Since commercial whaling ended, many species have remained or have become at-risk. Threats facing these species include habitat loss, pollution, disturbance from various human activities, ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear. Learn how you can help Canada's cetaceans by visiting [HWW.ca](http://HWW.ca) and [CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca](http://CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca).

## HINTERLAND WHO'S WHO



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[hww.ca](http://hww.ca) | [CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca](http://CanadianWildlifeFederation.ca)

Illustration: David Wysotski | Text: Annie Langlois

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