

Photo: WCNE and SBNMMS



Boat propellers can kill or maim whales. Your vigilance can prevent this serious injury or mortality.

Helpful Hotline Numbers

Boaters can be instrumental in helping gather crucial data, such as sightings of the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale, and saving injured or entangled animals by reporting them to the appropriate authorities. Please call the hotline number if you see a right whale, find a whale that is injured or stranded, or see a whale entangled in fishing gear. You can make a difference!



Photo: POGCS

Reporting Saves Lives!

To report a stranded, injured, entangled or dead marine mammal or sea turtle, call: **866-755-NOAA (2266)** or contact the U.S. Coast Guard via **VH16**.

If possible, please stand by an entangled whale until a response vessel arrives. If you must depart, please document your sighting with photos or video and report the time, location, and whale's direction of travel when you left the scene.

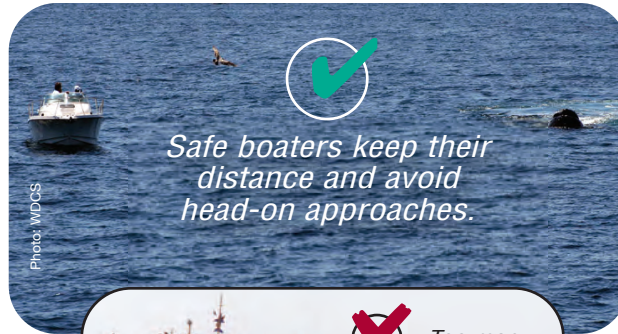
To report presumed marine law violations, call NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement: **800-853-1964**

Photo: NMFS

Rapid and carefully planned responses often lead to successful disentanglements.



Photo obtained under NOAA Fisheries Permit #932-1489



Safe boaters keep their distance and avoid head-on approaches.

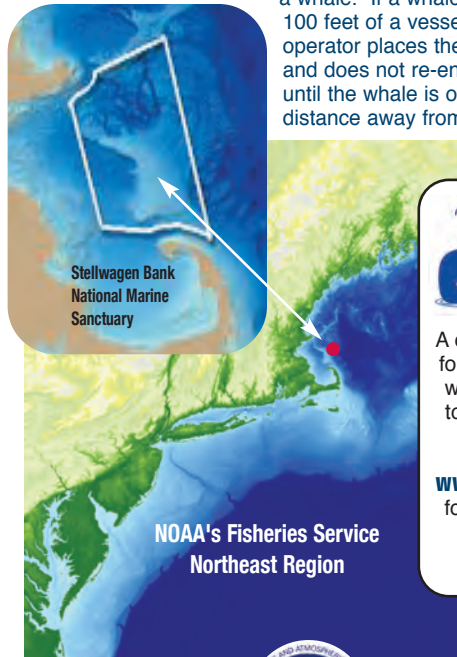
Photo: WDCCS



Too many boats may disturb whales.

Photo: WDCCS

Responsible vessel operators adhere to NOAA's Northeast whale watching guidelines by never approaching closer than 100 feet to a whale. If a whale approaches within 100 feet of a vessel, the responsible operator places the engine in neutral and does not re-engage propulsion until the whale is observed a safe distance away from the vessel.



Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

NOAA's Fisheries Service Northeast Region



A companion program for commercial whale watch vessel operators in the northeast region may be of interest. Visit www.whalesense.org for more information about safe whale watching.



Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society
508-746-2522
<http://www.whales.org>



NOAA's Fisheries Service
Northeast Regional Office
Protected Resources Division
978-281-9328
<http://www.nero.noaa.gov>



NOAA's Gerry E. Studds
Stellwagen Bank
National Marine Sanctuary
781-545-8026
<http://stellwagen.noaa.gov>

Responsible Whale Watching...



It's Up To You!

See a Spout, Watch Out!

Important tips for boaters to help protect the whales of Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the Northeast Region



Photo: SBMMMS

Six Tips for Boating Around Whales

See a Spout, Watch Out!

1.

See a Spout, Watch Out!

If you see a spout, a tail or a breaching whale, please slow down and post a lookout. Some whales dive 20 minutes or more searching for food. If you've seen one whale, many more could be close - maybe too close to your boat and its spinning propellers. Proceed cautiously!

2.

Head On is Wrong!

Don't alter a whale's path by cutting it off or risk striking a whale by approaching too closely. Please comply with regional regulations and guidelines when watching whales. This information can be found on the web sites of the *See A Spout* sponsoring organizations.

3.

Lots of Boats, Then Talk to Folks!

If there are other boats watching or traveling near whales, hail them on your VHF radio (channels 9 or 16) and coordinate your viewing efforts.

Photo: NMFS
Humpback Bubble Cloud

4.

Avoid Troubles, Steer Clear of Bubbles!

Humpback whales create "bubble clouds" and "bubble nets" to corral schools of small fish. Never approach or drive through a bubble cloud or bubble net. A feeding whale is likely to be just below the surface.

5.

Don't Chase, Give the Whales Space!

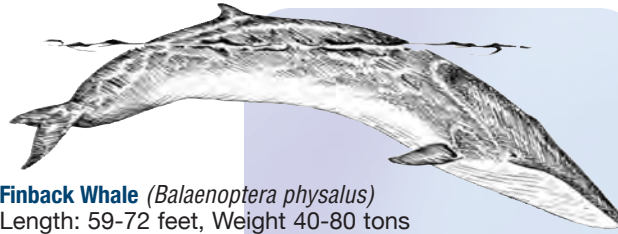
Closely approaching a whale may cause the animal to move away from its food source. Respect the whale's behavior and keep your distance. If a whale moves away, don't chase it. A cautious boater may get to see whales feeding, breaching or tail and flipper slapping. Enjoy the whales; don't endanger them or yourselves.

6.

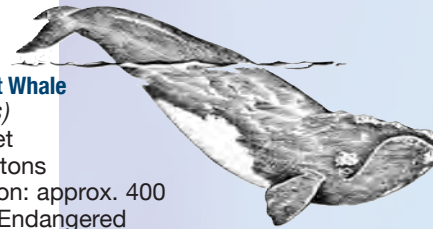
Drop Your Sails When Watching Whales!

A boat under sail may not be able to reduce speed or stop at a safe distance from a surfacing whale. When in the vicinity of whales, it is best to use your auxiliary motor and proceed cautiously.

Commonly Watched Marine Mammals

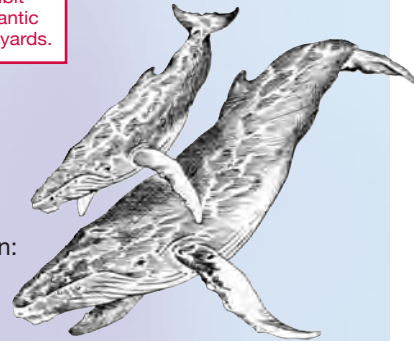


Finback Whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)
Length: 59-72 feet, Weight 40-80 tons
W. North Atlantic Population: approx. 2,000
Status: Endangered

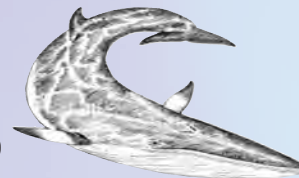


North Atlantic Right Whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*)
Length: 45-55 feet
Weight: up to 70 tons
Species Population: approx. 400
Status: Critically Endangered

Federal regulations prohibit approaching the North Atlantic right whale closer than 500 yards.



Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)
Length: 45-56 feet
Weight: 25-45 tons
Gulf of Maine Population: approx. 800
Status: Endangered



Minke Whale (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*)
Length: 23-33 feet
Weight: 5-10 tons
Canadian East Coast Population: approx. 3,000
Status: Protected



Atlantic White-Sided Dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus acutus*)
Length: 8-9 feet
Weight: 400-500 lbs.
W. North Atlantic Population: more than 63,000
Status: Protected

Illustrations: F. McCue

Keep Our Waters Clean and Pristine!

We rely on the ocean for food, fun, and our well being. Keeping the marine ecosystem clean and healthy is in our best interest. Here are a few easy things that you can do to help ensure a healthy ocean:

Don't Dump, Pump!

Contact with disease-causing bacteria found in sewage can lead to human ailments, habitat degradation and shellfish poisoning. Call ahead to the local harbormaster to find a local pumpout station to remove sewage from your vessel. Dumping untreated sewage within three miles of shore is illegal.

Put a Sock in It!

Use oil absorbent "socks" and pads in your bilge to prevent oil from leaking out and contaminating the water. Check pads regularly, change when needed and dispose of properly to ensure a more efficient and cleaner running engine.

Stash Your Trash!

Federal laws prohibit dumping any trash overboard within three miles of shore. Plastic waste may not be dumped anywhere in the ocean. Marine mammals, seabirds and sea turtles are known to ingest or become entangled in marine debris, which can lead to fatalities. Please do not leave trash on the deck where it can blow overboard. Bring your trash to shore for proper disposal.



Boats under sail may not have sufficient control to avoid collisions.

Photo: Dolphin Fleet