

Large Whale Disentanglement Network



Emergency CCS HOTLINE: (800) 900 - 3622

Center for Coastal Studies: (508) 487 - 3622 for non-emergency calls



or the U.S.C.G.  on VHF Ch. 16

Whales can become accidentally entangled in fishing gear and other man-made material. While rare, and often not immediately fatal, these entanglements can hinder the recovery of endangered whale populations. Since 1984 the private, non-profit Center for Coastal Studies (CCS) has coordinated a Network of experienced disentanglement teams as a service to whales and fishermen. This private Network has the necessary authorization from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the communications and logistical support of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). The speedy and accurate reporting of entangled whales by all boaters is essential to the process.

What to look for:

- Look for buoys and lines, moving or unusually clumped, near a whale.
- Determine type of whale (see reverse). If it is a right whale, remain at 500 yards unless authorized to move closer through the Network or USCG.

What you can do:

- Call (800) 900-3622 or relay through **USCG (VHF16)** if whale is entangled.
- Please provide the following: Position, species (or best description), behavior, description of gear and entanglement, and how to contact you.
- You may be requested to stand by the whale, on a voluntary basis. Depending on the situation, fishermen may be compensated for lost time.

What will happen:

- A vessel will be dispatched from the Network, USCG or Marine Patrol, whenever possible, in order to transport a team or to stand by.
- The team may attach a radio tag to locate the whale for future attempts if a disentanglement can not be conducted immediately (e.g., time or weather).

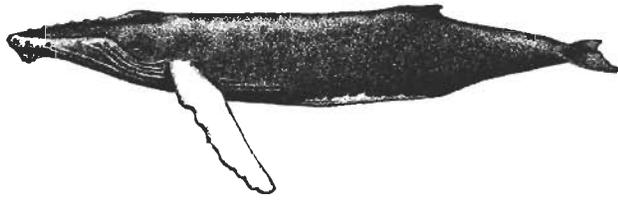
What not to do:

- Do not attempt to disentangle without NMFS authorization and instructions through the Network. Initial instincts of entering the water or cutting some of the gear are dangerous and ineffective. Large whales are powerful and unpredictable. Cutting lines close to the tail makes it very difficult to remove the remaining gear.

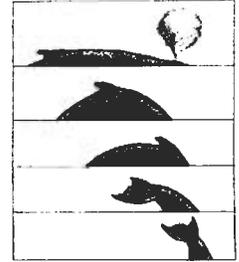
Keep this on your boat

Common Large Whales of the Atlantic

Humpback Whale (Size: Up to 55 feet in length)



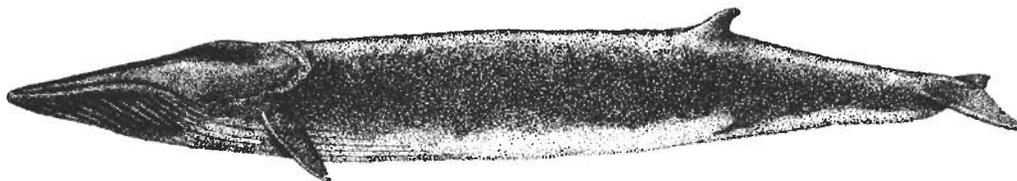
Features: Mostly black with long white flippers, bumps on head and distinctive, variably sized dorsal fin. Usually lifts the tail when diving. Distinctive black and white pattern underneath.



Range: During spring, summer and fall these whales are found most often around the sloping sides of the banks and ledges of the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank and the continental shelf south to Cape Hatteras.

Food: Mostly small schooling fish like sandlance, herring, young mackerel, and krill.

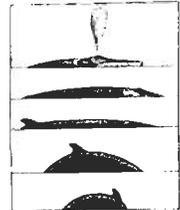
Finback Whale (Size: Up to 85 feet in length)



Features: Grayish, sleek whale with tall, curved dorsal fin. Head lighter on right side. Rarely lifts tail.

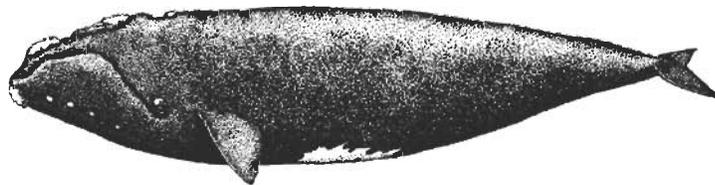
Range: Same areas as the Humpback whale, but not always at the same time.

Food: Same as Humpback whale.

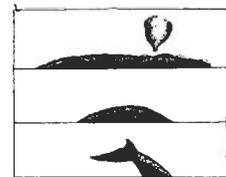


North Atlantic Right Whale (very rare)*

(Size: Up to 60 feet long)



Features: Stocky, mostly black whale with no dorsal fin and rough white patches on head. Often lifts black, triangular tail high when diving.



Range: Winter/Spring in Cape Cod Bay & Great South Channel. Summer/Fall in Bay of Fundy & Roseway Basin. Winter off of Florida and Georgia coast (mostly females and calves).

Food: Small animal plankton, mostly copepods.

* With about 300 remaining, federal regulations establish a 500 yard buffer zone around this species. That zone can only be entered with special authorization through the Network or USCG to assist the Disentanglement Network.

Minke Whale (Size: Up to 35 feet in length)



Features: Sickle-shaped dorsal fin, white bands on flippers, with no visible breath (spout). Rarely lifts tail.

Range: Same as Humpback and Finback whales, but also found in closer to shore.

Food: Same as Humpback and Finback whales. Sometimes eats single discarded fish.

