

WHALES OF HERVEY BAY



MIGALOO



NALA



NUNYARA



ANNIE



KADEE



WARRAIN

Can you see the differences in the markings and pigmentation patterns on these tail flukes?

IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUAL WHALES

Each humpback whale has a unique pattern of marks and colouration on its tail flukes. Pacific Whale Foundation researchers use photographs to identify individual animals using these marks and develop long-term case histories of known whales.

Learn more about the whales that have been identified in Australia through Pacific Whale Foundation's *Adopt a Marine Animal* Program. Visit PacificWhale.org/adopt for more info.

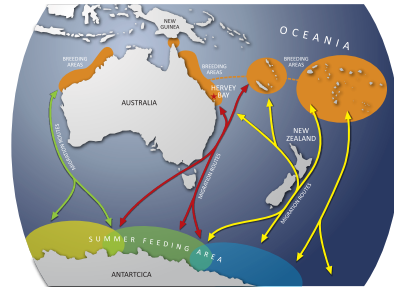
PROTECTING WHALES

During the 1950s and early 1960s, humpback whales along Australia's eastern coast were hunted to near extinction. Thanks to protective measures, the east Australia humpback whale population has recovered and is increasing at a rate of over 10% each year.

HERVEY BAY

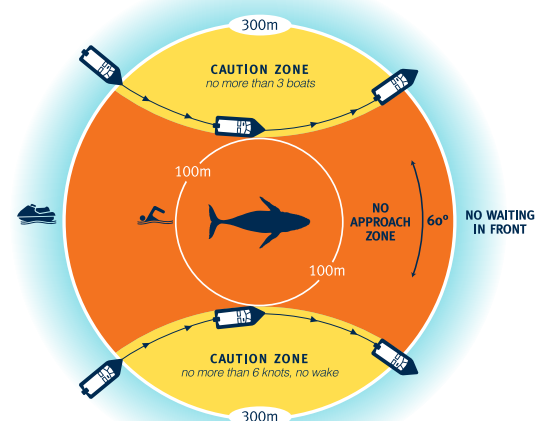
Part of Great Sandy Marine Park and one of the world's finest whalewatch locations

More than 21,000 humpback whales migrate each year along Australia's eastern coast between their winter breeding areas near the equator and their summer feeding areas near Antarctica. Over 30% of this population is believed to stop in Hervey Bay between mid-July and early November. The large number of whales in this relatively small area results in extraordinary whalewatching.



RESPONSIBLE WHALEWATCHING

Help protect Hervey Bay's humpback whales by engaging in responsible boating and whalewatching. Under the National Standards, it is against the law to approach humpback whales closer than 100m by any means or to operate jet skis within 300m of a whale. Swimmers in the water must not approach whales closer than 100m. Aircraft must remain at least 300m away from a whale and helicopters must remain 500m away and not hover above a whale.

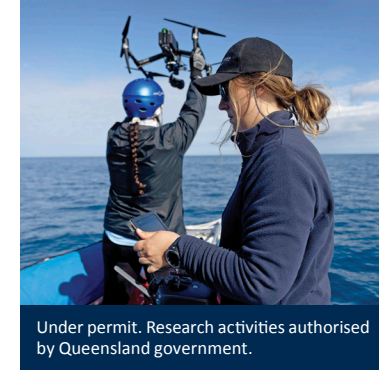


ABOUT PACIFIC WHALE FOUNDATION

Pacific Whale Foundation is an international nonprofit organisation working to protect cetaceans and the ocean through science and advocacy. We work worldwide to reduce the impacts of human activity on cetaceans and to promote responsible eco-tourism.

Since 1984, our researchers have used non-invasive research methods to study humpback whales in Australia. Our findings have been provided to government agencies, the International Whaling Commission's Scientific Committee and other research groups to help guide management measures to conserve this population.

Learn more at PacificWhale.org/research



Under permit. Research activities authorised by Queensland government.

WHALE WATCHING GUIDE



PO BOX 7149, Urangan, QLD 4655

For more information visit PacificWhale.com.au

CALL: 1800 454 310

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HUMBACK WHALES OF HERVEY BAY



© Bryant Austin



WINTER: A TIME FOR MATING AND CALVING

Breeding occurs during winter when the whales are in warmer water areas near the Great Barrier Reef. It may also occur along the migratory route. While many calves are seen each year, researchers have only documented whales giving birth a handful of times.

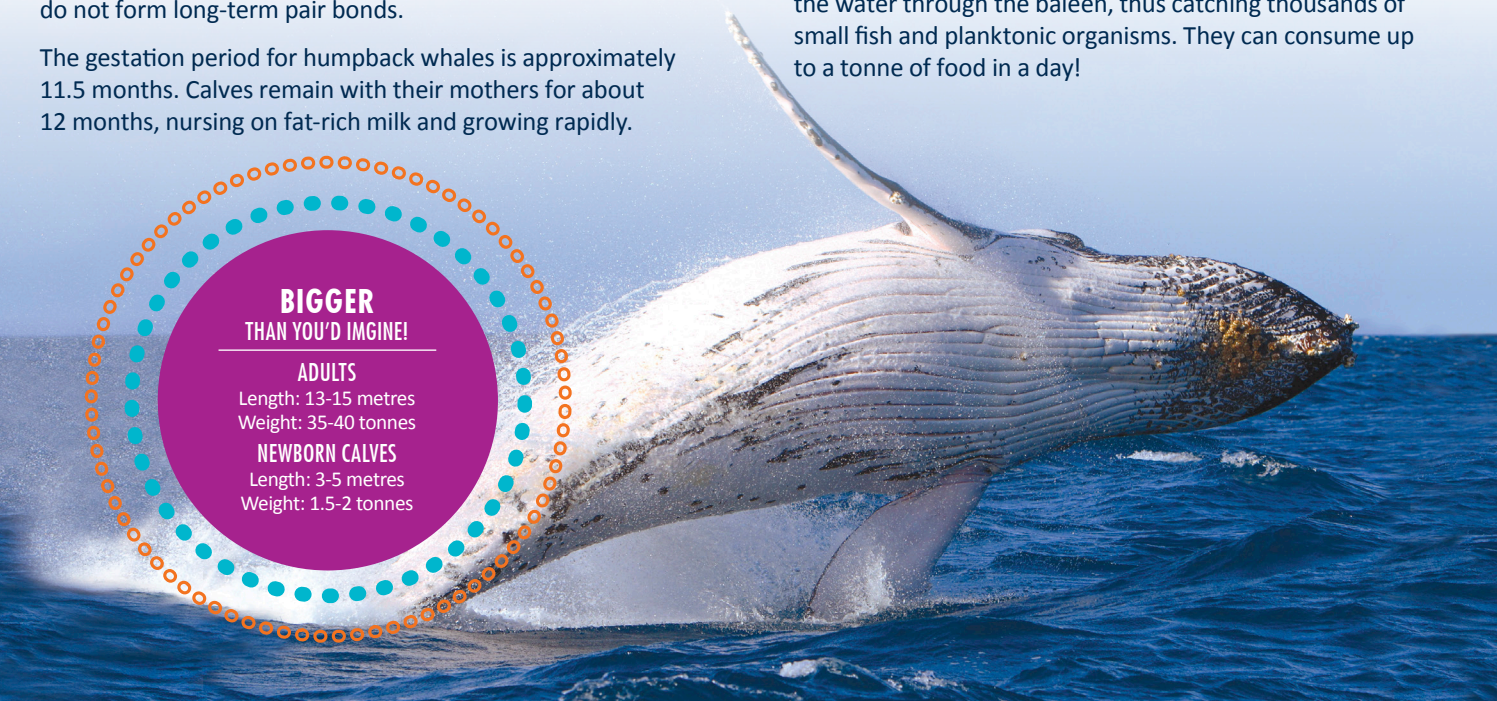
Competitive groups are thought to be whales competing for the closest position to a mature female whale, in hopes of mating. These groups often display high-energy behaviours such as breaching, head lunging, peduncle throws, and rapid swimming at the surface. Competition groups often gain or lose members and can persist for many hours, as the strongest males strive to hold the closest position to the female. Males and females do not form long-term pair bonds.

The gestation period for humpback whales is approximately 11.5 months. Calves remain with their mothers for about 12 months, nursing on fat-rich milk and growing rapidly.

SUMMER: A TIME FOR FEEDING

Australia's humpback whales devote their summer months to feeding on krill and small schooling fish such as capelin, pilchards or herring found in cool waters near Antarctica. Generally, the whales do not feed while in their winter breeding grounds or in Hervey Bay. However, Pacific Whale Foundation's researchers have documented whales feeding mid-migration in the chilly waters off Eden NSW from late August to mid-October.

Humpback whales have no teeth. Instead, they have rigid strips of baleen (made of keratin, a material similar to human fingernails) hanging from their upper jaws. Humpback whales take in large amounts of both food and water, and then strain the water through the baleen, thus catching thousands of small fish and planktonic organisms. They can consume up to a tonne of food in a day!



BIGGER THAN YOU'D IMAGINE!

ADULTS

Length: 13-15 metres
Weight: 35-40 tonnes

NEWBORN CALVES

Length: 3-5 metres
Weight: 1.5-2 tonnes

WHALE BEHAVIOURS

Humpback whales engage in a variety of high-energy behaviours. To understand the significance and purpose of whale behaviours, scientists consider factors such as the season, location, and other whales in the vicinity.



HEAD SLAP

Lunging head-first out of the water, the whale pounds its massive, sometimes partially engorged mouth on the water's surface. The head can rise up to 6 metres above the water during this display.



BLOW

A blow occurs as a whale exhales and inhales at the surface. A bushy cloud of water vapour is produced above the animal's head during exhalation.



FLUKE UP DIVE

The humpback brings its tail flukes above the surface of the water. It is called a "fluke up" dive if the flukes are brought straight into the air, so that the entire ventral (underneath) surface of the flukes is exposed.



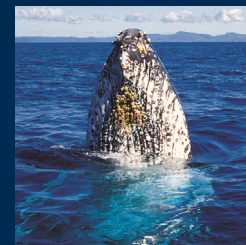
PEC SLAP

The whale rolls sideways at the surface, slapping a pectoral fin against the water. Sometimes whales lay on their backs slapping both fins down on top of the water.



BREACH

The whale propels itself out of the water, clearing the surface with two-thirds of its body or more. As the whale rises above the water, it throws one pectoral fin out to the side and turns in the air on its longitudinal axis. Following a breach, other whales can often be observed breaching in the distance, indicating a possible form of communication.



SPY HOP

The whale rises relatively straight up out of the water rather slowly, maintains its head above the surface to just below the eye, often turns 90 - 180 degrees on its longitudinal axis, and then slips back below the surface.



TAIL SLAP

This forceful slapping of the tail fluke against the surface of the water can be carried out while the whale is lying either upright or inverted in the water. The resulting sound can be heard underwater, and may be a form of communication.



PEDUNCLE THROW

The rear portion of the body, including both the caudal peduncle and the flukes, is thrown up out of the water then brought down sideways, either on the surface of the water or on top of another whale.



LONGER THAN YOU'D THINK!

HUMPBACK WHALE BREATHING RATES

Swimming: every 6-8 min
Resting: every 10-20 min
Singing: up to 1 breath/hr



SINGING

Sometimes described as resembling "barnyard" noises, humpback whale songs are actually complex, orderly components of a song that are repeated for extended periods. Only males "sing" and whale songs primarily occur in breeding and calving areas.