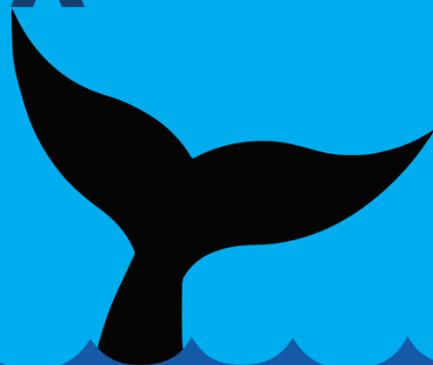
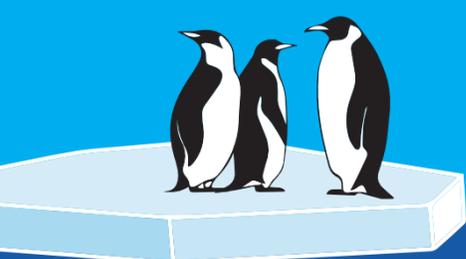


# WHALES

## OF ANTARCTICA



During the austral summer (October – February), thousands of whales migrate to the waters surrounding Antarctica to feed on a bounty of krill, small shrimp-like creatures that live in large schools. A highlight of any trip to Antarctica is the chance to view these leviathans as they feed, breach, and socialize in the Antarctic's icy waters. Here are some of the whales you may see.

### WHALING

It is estimated that 1.25 million whales were harvested by the whaling industry from the early 1900s, until it was banned in 1986 by the International Whaling Commission.

**E** = ON THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST

### BLUE WHALE

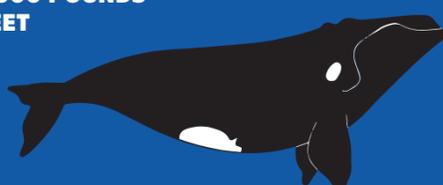
**WEIGHT: UP TO 441,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 80 TO 100 FEET**



**E** Blue whales are larger than any creature to have ever inhabited the Earth. Their length can be compared to a Boeing 737, and their heart is approximately the size of a small car. They require almost 9,000 pounds of krill per day and their average lifespan is 80 to 90 years.

### RIGHT WHALE

**WEIGHT: UP TO 140,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 45 TO 55 FEET**



**E** With the estimated world population of right whales less than 500, they are one of the world's most endangered marine mammals. They face threats from ship collisions, entanglement in fishing gear, habitat degradation, and climate and ecosystem change, as well as natural threats from predators, such as large sharks and killer whales.

### FIN WHALE

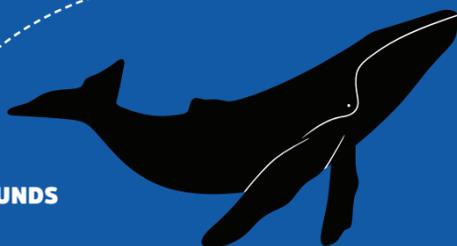
**WEIGHT: UP TO 260,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 60 TO 90 FEET**



**E** Fin whales are the second largest whale in existence, in terms of length, right after the blue whale. Despite its large size, this whale is relatively slender allowing it to reach speeds of 25 miles per hour.

### HUMPBACK WHALE

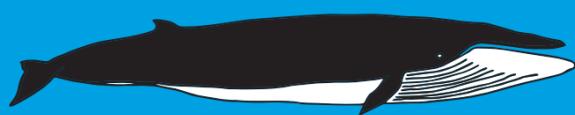
**WEIGHT: UP TO 80,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 40 TO 60 FEET**



**E** Once hunted to the brink of extinction, humpback whales now number around 80,000. Humpback whales are known for their beautiful songs and can be heard underwater 20 miles away. Each whale has unique underbelly markings that are like human fingerprints.

### SEI WHALE

**WEIGHT: UP TO 60,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 40 TO 50 FEET**



**E** The sei (pronounced "say") whales are among the more elusive of the larger whales, as they tend to steer clear of land. Sei whales are one of the fastest of all cetaceans (whales, dolphins, and porpoises), able to reach speeds of up to 30+ mph for short sprints. The current world population is approximately 25,000 (pre-whaling was 150,000) and they are endangered.

### MINKE WHALE

**WEIGHT: UP TO 22,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 22 TO 24 FEET**



Measuring in at less than 25 feet long, the minke whale is the second smallest whale within the baleen whale family. You are more likely to see minke whales at close quarters than other baleen whales, because they are notoriously inquisitive and often approach boats.

### SPERM WHALE

**WEIGHT: UP TO 90,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 35 TO 60 FEET**



A sperm whale's head is about one-third of its body length, and they have the largest brain of any animal on Earth. Sperm whales can dive to depths of more than 3,000 feet, mostly in search of prey such as squid. Sperm whales can also hold their breath for up to 90 minutes. These toothed whales eat about one ton of fish and squid per day.

### ORCA (KILLER WHALE)

**WEIGHT: UP TO 12,000 POUNDS**  
**LENGTH: 23 TO 32 FEET**



Orcas are technically not whales, but the largest member of the dolphin family. Orcas are found in all of the world's oceans, and lack any natural predators. A female orca gives birth to 1 calf every five years, and averages 5 calves per lifetime.

### TOOTHED WHALES

As the name suggests, toothed whales are born with teeth and are generally considered the hunters of the cetacean family. Species such as the killer whale and sperm whale are known to be aggressive hunters.

Toothed whales are typically smaller than their baleen whale counterparts, with the largest of the toothed whale family, the sperm whale, growing to lengths of up to 60 feet and weighing over 45 tons.

**FOOD** – Baleen whales (humpback, right, blue, fin, sei, and minke) consume mainly krill and small fish. The toothed whales typically don't feed on krill; sperm whales consume mostly squid and fish, while orcas will feed on just about anything they can catch, including seals and penguins.



### BALEEN WHALES

have specialized jaw structures that enable them to efficiently consume small organisms, especially tiny shrimp-like crustaceans called krill. Krill swarm in huge clouds in the ocean, where baleen whales scoop them up, water and all, and send them through a baleen filter-feeding system.

Mostly made of keratin—the same substance found in human fingernails and hair—baleen is similar to the bristles on a brush.