Supporting whale and dolphin conservation

Approximately 40 cetacean species have been identified in Tasmania to date. The following provides a guide to identifying the 10 most frequently sighted whales and dolphins in Tasmanian waters.

The waters around Tasmania support a diverse range of whale and dolphin (cetacean) species, however many populations are still recovering from historical exploitation. The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) is responsible for the conservation and management of cetaceans in Tasmania.

You can help:

1. Immediately REPORT all stranded, injured or entangled whales or dolphins (alive or dead) to the Whale Hotline 0427 WHALES (0427 942 537)

Rescue of compromised whales and dolphins requires specialised skills and equipment, and rapid reporting via the 24hr/7day hotline provides the Marine Conservation Program with the best chance of effecting a successful response.

2. Visit our WhalesTas FACEBOOK page for more information and to report sightings (www.facebook.com/whalestas)

Reporting sightings of whales and dolphins contributes valuable information to long-term monitoring of these species in Tasmania, providing the opportunity to actively participate in their conservation and protection. To discuss sightings please call the Whale Hotline.

Photos of the dorsal fin, head and tail are particularly useful for identification.

3. Tag your PHOTOS #whalestas

Guidelines for viewing and approaching cetaceans are outlined below, and additional information can be found on the DPIPWE website. These guidelines apply to all water users including commercial operators (e.g. tour vessels) as well as recreational boaters.

In general, when a whale or dolphin is observed, vessel operators should:

- Slow down and avoid erratic changes in speed and direction
- Approach no closer than the specified approach distances (see below)
- Avoid approaching from directly in front of or behind the animal

If vessels are operated appropriately, the impacts of whale and dolphin watching can be minimised and you will have a more enjoyable experience. Remember, it is OK if whales or dolphins deliberately approach your vessel closer than the approach distances outlined below (e.g. dolphins riding a vessel’s bow-wave), however this must be entirely determined by the animal.

Marine Conservation Program
Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment
134 Macquarie St Hobart • GPO Box 44 Hobart TAS 7001
www.dPIPWE.tas.gov.au
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Max Size (m)</th>
<th>Weight (tons)</th>
<th>Tas Status</th>
<th>National Status</th>
<th>Identification Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue whale</strong> - <em>Balaenoptera musculus</em></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>Massive shoulder and splashguard, Tiny dorsal fin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southern right whale</strong> - <em>Eubalaena australis</em></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>No dorsal fin, Turquoise silhouette below the water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humpback whale</strong> - <em>Megaptera novaeangliae</em></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>Vulnerable</td>
<td>White throat pleats, Extremely long flippers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pygmy right whale</strong> - <em>Caperea marginata</em></td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sickle-shaped dorsal fin far back on body, White leading edge to flipper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Antartic minke whale</strong> - <em>Balaenoptera bonaerensis</em></td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rather tall sickle-shaped dorsal fin, White leading edge to flipper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Report sightings to 0427 WHALES
Surfacing behaviour

Identifying features
Max: 18 m
55 tons

Sperm whale - Physeter macrocephalus

Toothed whale

Rounded or triangular dorsal fin
Exaggerated “knuckles” on tail stock

Dark wrinkled skin

Single blowhole on left side

Killer whale - Orcinus Orca

Toothed whale

Tall triangular dorsal fin on mature males

White underside to flukes

Unmistakeable black and white pigmentation

Long-finned pilot whale - Globicephala Melas

Toothed whale

Characteristic lobed dorsal fin
White saddle patch and eye-stripe

Bulbous melon

Sickle-shaped flippers

Bottlenose dolphin - Tursiops Truncatus

Dolphin

High erect falcate dorsal fin

Large peg-like teeth

Common dolphin - Delphinus Delphis

Dolphin

Black eye spot/stripes

Dark beak-flipper stripe

Large yellowish-buff thoracic panel

Report sightings to 0427 WHALES