

Species validation

Close-up photos help to identify individual whales, however sometimes photos that are distant can also help researchers. When whales are elusive or distant, photos of the whale's lateral side, blow or fluke can help to validate the species.



Your sightings can be reported to :

- Two Bays Whale Project Facebook Page
- Whale SMS hotline **0487 745 066**

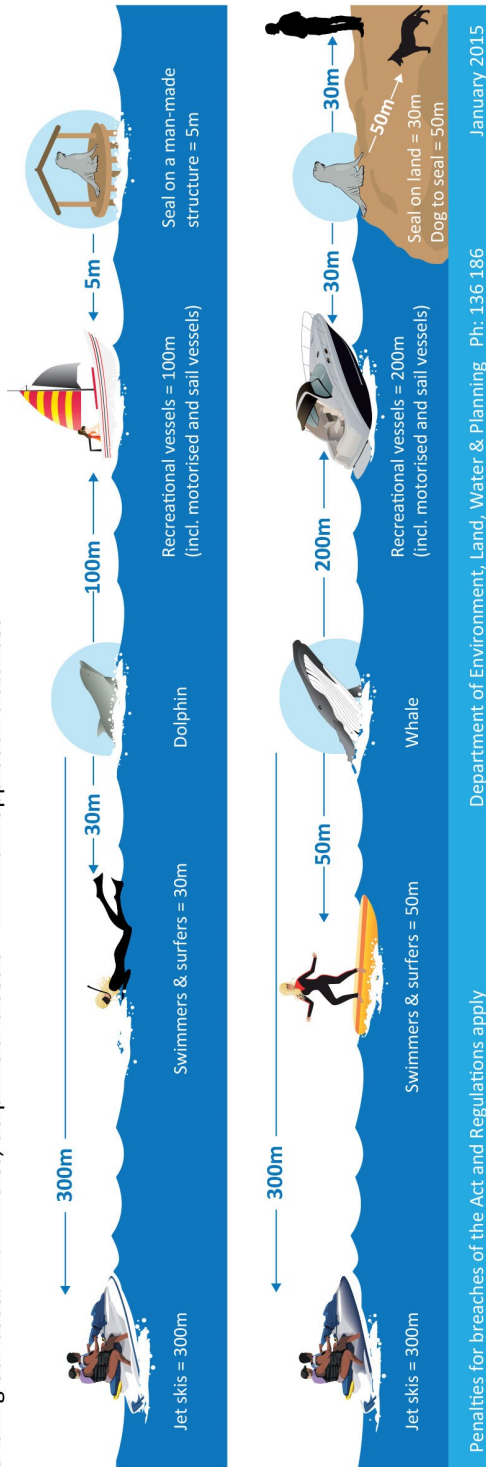
Include:

- Date and time
- Species and numbers
- Location and travel direction
- Behaviour

Upload your report and images to
the Dolphin Research Institute website
www.dolphinresearch.org.au

For cetacean emergencies
DELWP Whales and dolphin emergency hotline
1300 136 017

Sharing our coast with whales, dolphins and seals – minimum approach distances



Penalties for breaches of the Act and Regulations apply

Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning Ph: 136 186

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PHOTOGRAPHY FOR WHALE RESEARCH



Contributing your images to research

Taking quality images

To whale researchers, photos are an important source of data that can help to identify individuals and verify species. Essentially, the better the image quality, the better the detail, which provides more robust data.

To photograph whales successfully you can

- Set your camera to sports mode
- Use a fast ISO - an ISO of 200 is a good start for a bright day. Use a higher ISO for a dull day
- Use a fast shutter speed $\geq 1/1000$ second
- Use a long lens length - a 200 to 300 mm telephoto lens is a good length and light to handle.

Remember—minimum approach distances to marine mammals exist (see back of brochure).



Fluke and dorsal fin photos

Similar to a human fingerprint, the underside of a whale's tail (or fluke), and the dorsal fin of some species, are unique. Fluke or dorsal fin photos are regularly used by researchers to identify individual humpback whales and killer whales respectively. Researchers keep catalogues of photographs of flukes or dorsal fins to enable the long-term identification and monitoring of individuals.

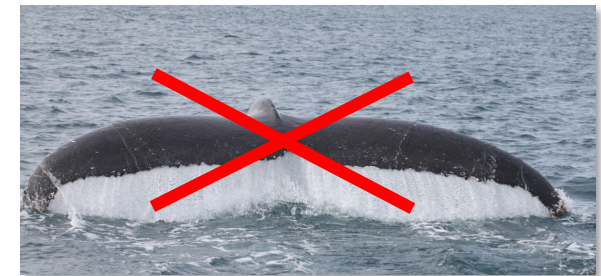


Callosities

Callosities are patches of calcified skin found on the jawline and head of southern right whales. The patterns of callosities are unique to each southern right whale; researchers photograph the callosities to identify individuals.



The challenge as a photographer is to capture the identifying feature with minimal water covering it. While stunning, images similar to the one below, are not useable by researchers.



All images in this brochure were taken by Dolphin Research Institute staff under research permits that allowed the research vessel to approach the cetaceans closer than regulated minimum approach distances to marine mammals.