

Reporting Endangered Marine Animal Sightings

The Gulf of Mexico is home to more than 35 protected species. The Port of Corpus Christi Authority is determined to be an environmental leader and minimize the maritime industry’s impact on marine animals.

Unfortunately, many of these species are in decline because of human activities. This includes impacts from port activities, like the noise of large commercial vessels frequenting the Port of Corpus Christi, as well as marine construction projects in the Inner Harbor. There are 12 populations of marine animal species currently classified as endangered or threatened that potentially frequent surrounding Port waters.

To understand and protect these marine animals, ports, commercial vessel operators, and tenants play a key role in reporting sightings of marine animals.

If you see live free-swimming marine animals, report sightings to the NOAA

 **(877) WHALE-HELP**

Whale Alert APP www.whalealert.org

The free Whale Alert app provides mariners and members of the public a user-friendly tool directly on their smartphone or tablet that displays whale "safety zones". Through the app, users can report any live, dead, or distressed whale sightings to the appropriate response agency, helping to reduce whale ship strikes. Whale biologists and resource managers can automatically share whale sightings, helping them to better understand whale feeding and migration patterns. Everyone is welcome to report sightings. (Whale Alert APP)



**DOWNLOAD
WHALE ALERT APP**

If you see an injured, stranded, entangled, or dead Sea Turtle, report sightings to the Standing Hotline.

 **1-866-TURTLE5 (1-866-887-8535)**

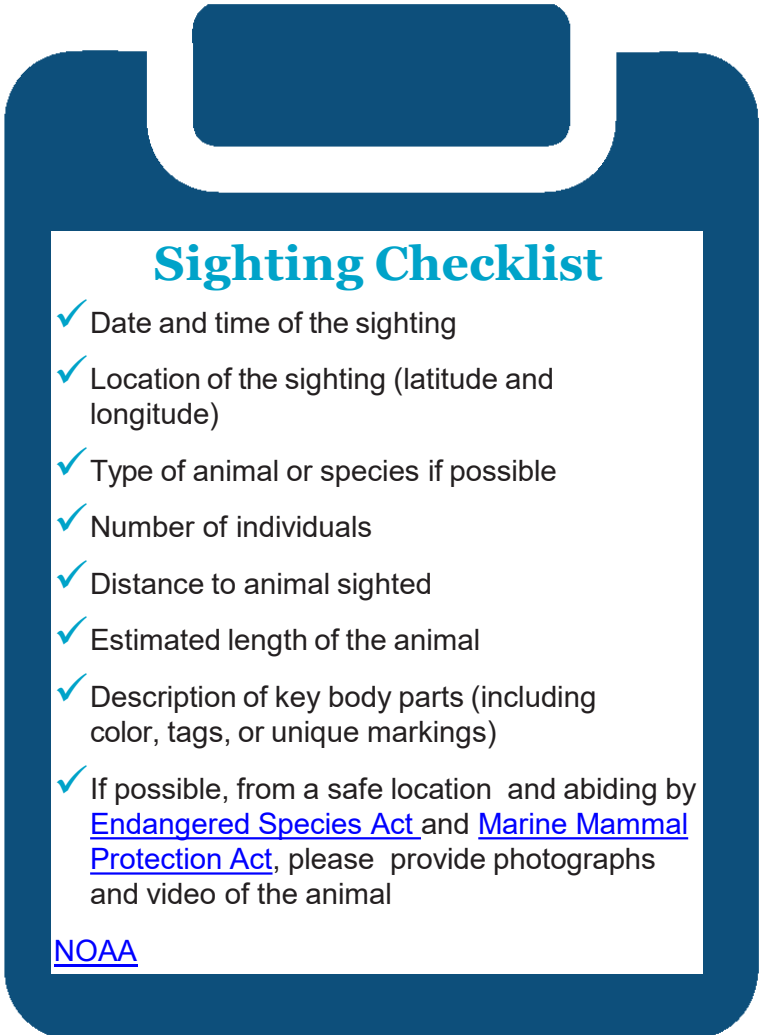
If possible, from a safe location and abiding by NOAA, please provide photographs and video of the animal, especially close-ups of entangling gear and any visible injuries.

TURT APP

TURT citizen-scientists to assist researchers in collecting sea turtle sightings and photographs. Researchers can then use these sightings and photographs to identify individual turtles through Photo ID programs or determine general sea turtle sightings rates for a particular area. Users will be able to see where sea turtle sightings have been logged from all over the world through turtle symbols presented on the map. (TURT APP)



**DOWNLOAD
WHALE ALERT APP**



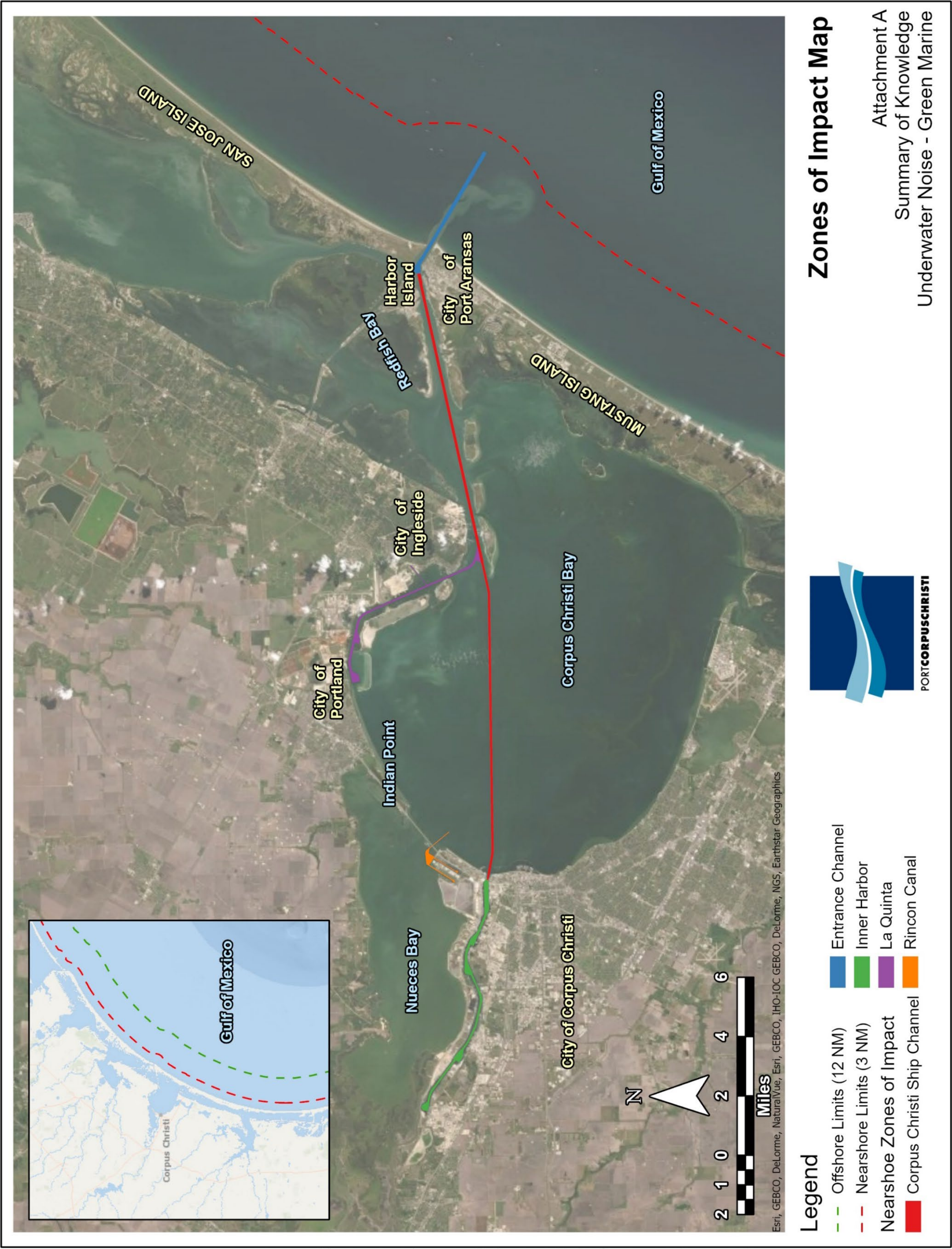
Sighting Checklist

- ✓ Date and time of the sighting
- ✓ Location of the sighting (latitude and longitude)
- ✓ Type of animal or species if possible
- ✓ Number of individuals
- ✓ Distance to animal sighted
- ✓ Estimated length of the animal
- ✓ Description of key body parts (including color, tags, or unique markings)
- ✓ If possible, from a safe location and abiding by [Endangered Species Act](#) and [Marine Mammal Protection Act](#), please provide photographs and video of the animal

[NOAA](#)

Zones of Impact

The following map illustrates sensitive areas to watch for endangered or threatened marine animals.

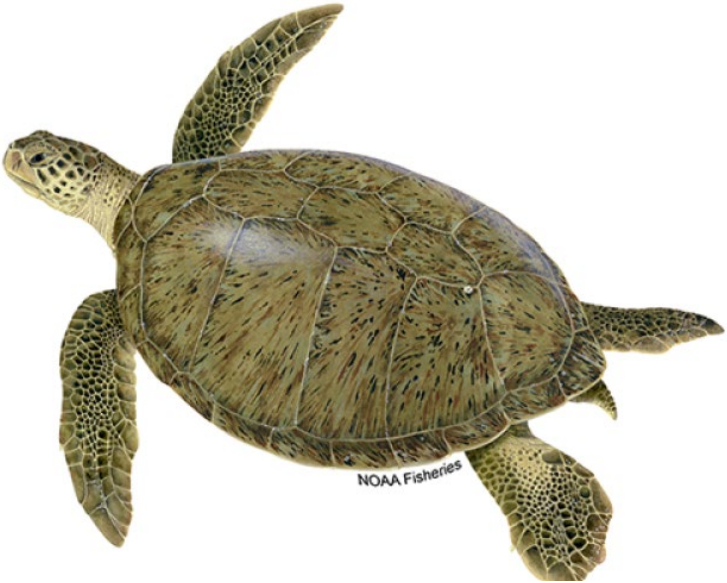


Endangered Marine Animals to Look Out for Inshore/ Near shore

Reporting

Texas Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network at **Phone:** (361) 949-8173 x 226

Green Sea Turtle



3 to 4 Feet

Federally Listed Threatened

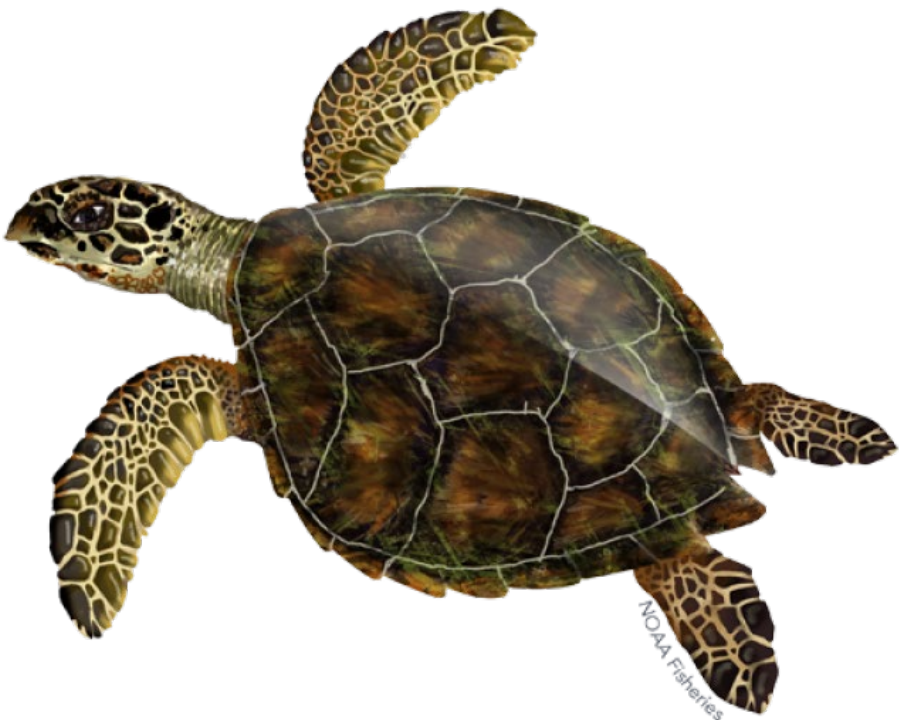
Behavior

- Spends time at the surface to breathe and lay eggs
- Herbivores
- Expected Utilization: High

Characteristics

- Adult can weigh 250 to 400 pounds
- Largest hard-shell sea turtle
- Shell

Hawksbill Sea Turtle



2 to 3.5 Feet

Federally Listed Threaten

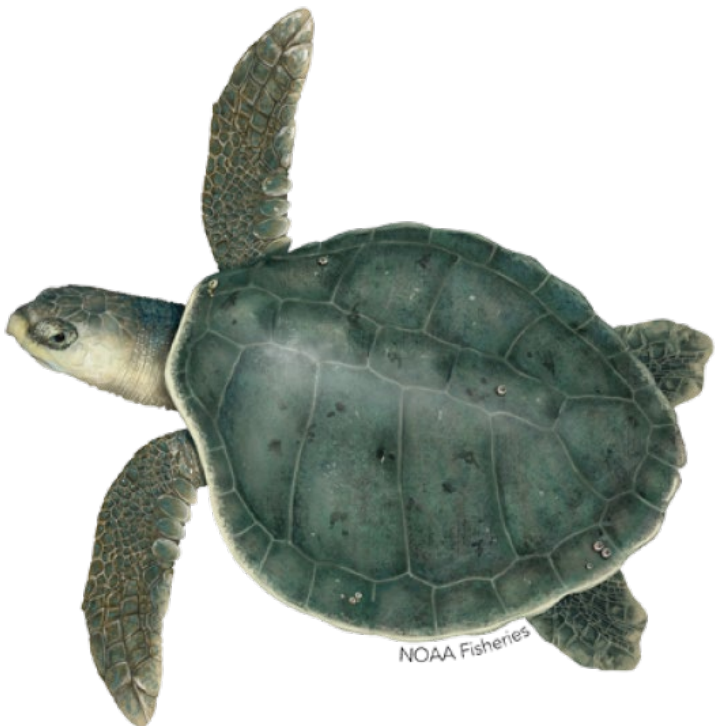
Behavior

- Can migrate long distances between foraging areas and nesting beaches
- Omnivorous: Diet mostly consists of sponges
- Expected Utilization: Medium

Characteristics

- Adult can weigh 100 to 150 pounds
- Unique beak-like mouth
- Mottled shells consisting of an irregular combination of shades of amber, orange, red, yellow, black and brown

Kemp’s Ridley Sea Turtle



2 Feet

Federally Listed Threatened

Behaviour

- Migratory pattern concentrated in the Gulf of Mexico
- Omnivorous
- Expected Utilization: Medium

Characteristics

- Adults can weigh 70 to 100 pounds
- smallest sea turtle in the world
- Triangular-shaped head with a slightly hooked beak
- Grayish-green color on top with a pale, yellowish bottom shell

Endangered Marine Animals to Look Out for Inshore/ Near shore

Reporting

Texas Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network at **Phone:** (361) 949-8173 x 226

Leatherback Sea Turtle



Up to 6ft in length

Federally Listed Endangered

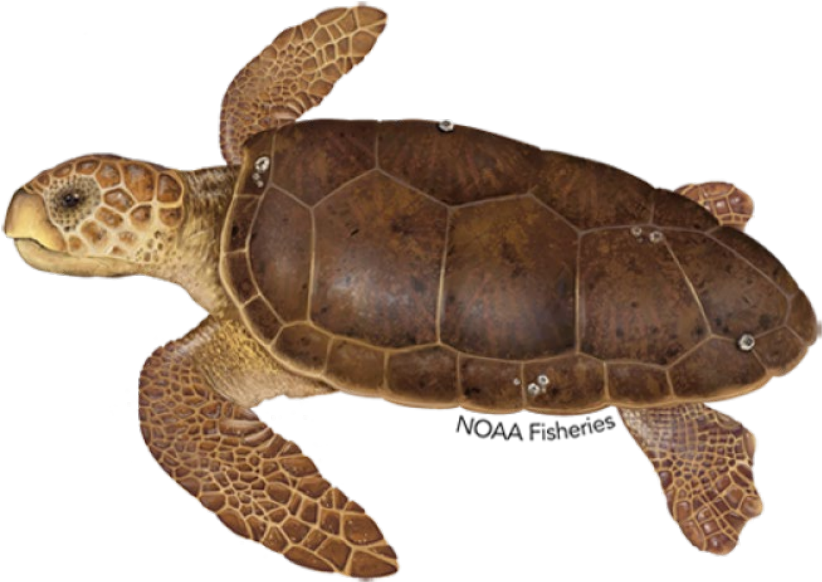
Behavior

- Longest migration patterns of any other turtle
- Diet mostly jellyfish
- Expected Utilization: Low

Characteristics

- Adult can weigh 750 to 1,000 pounds
- Rigid carapace and large flippers
- Mostly black, rubbery skin with pinkish-white coloring on its underside

Loggerhead Sea Turtle



2.5 to 3.5 Feet

Federally Listed Endangered

Behavior

- Early life live in the open ocean and then migrate to nearshore coastal areas
- Carnivores
- Expected Utilization: Low

Characteristics

- Adult can weigh 100 to 150 pounds
- Large Heads with powerful jaws
- Top shell (carapace) is slightly heart-shaped and reddish-brown,
- Bottom shell (plastron) is generally a pale yellowish

[Information above sourced from NOAA.gov species directory](#)

West Indian Manatee



9 Feet

Federally Listed Endangered

Behavior

- Found in marine, estuarine, and freshwater environments
- Herbivores
- Expected Utilization: Low

Characteristics

- Adult can weigh 1000 pounds
- Large, seal-shaped bodies with paired flippers and a round, paddle-shaped tail
- Grey in color (color can range from black to light brown) and occasionally spotted with barnacles or colored by patches of green or red algae

<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/4469>

Reporting

Manatee Report APP provides real-time information on your progress through manatee zones. It also has a function for reporting injured or distressed manatees seen in the area.

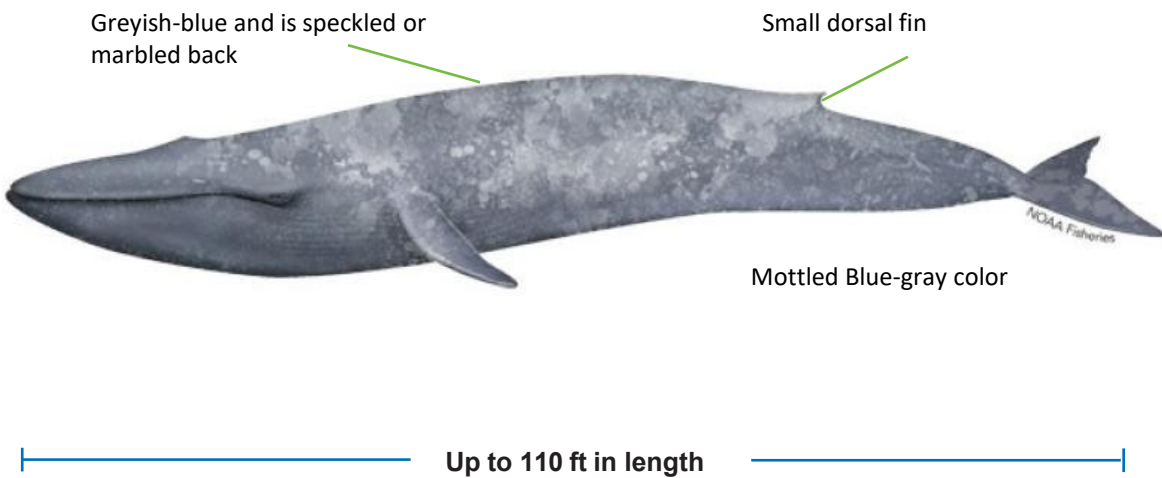
Sightings can also be reported to **1-800-9-MAMMAL**.



Endangered Marine Animals to Look Out for Off-Shore

REFER TO [NOAA](#) FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OCEAN NOISE AND THE EFFECTS ON MARINE MAMMALS THAT FREQUENT THE REGION.

Blue Whale



Federally Listed Endangered

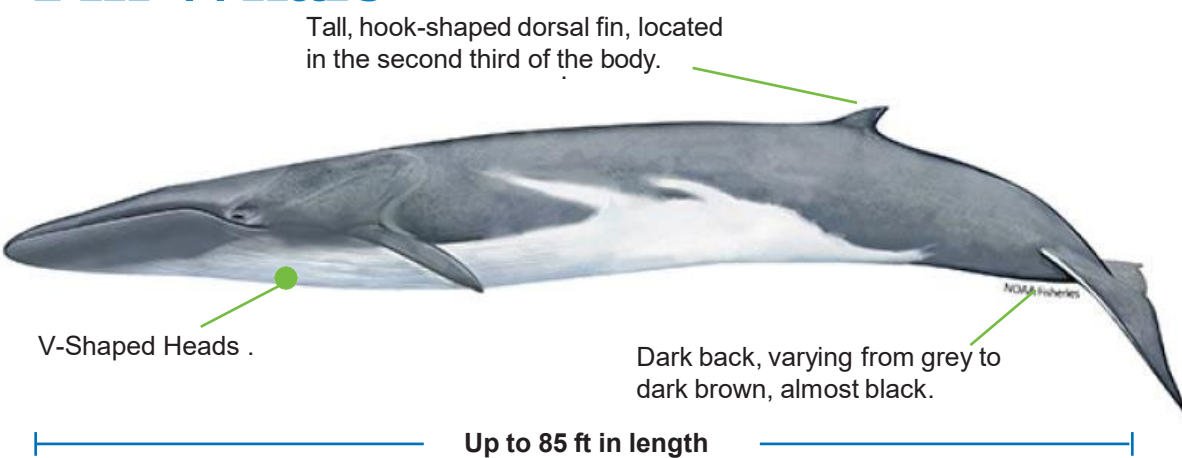
Behavior

- The tail is broad and T-shaped and can be seen in approximately 15 percent of all dives.
- Though typically solitary, but can occasionally be seen in pairs or in small groups
- Expected Utilization: Low

Reporting

- **NOAA Fisheries Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline**
- **Phone:** (877-942-5343)
- **Texas Marine Mammal Stranding Network Hotline**
- **Phone:** (800-962-6625)

Fin Whale



Federally Listed Endangered

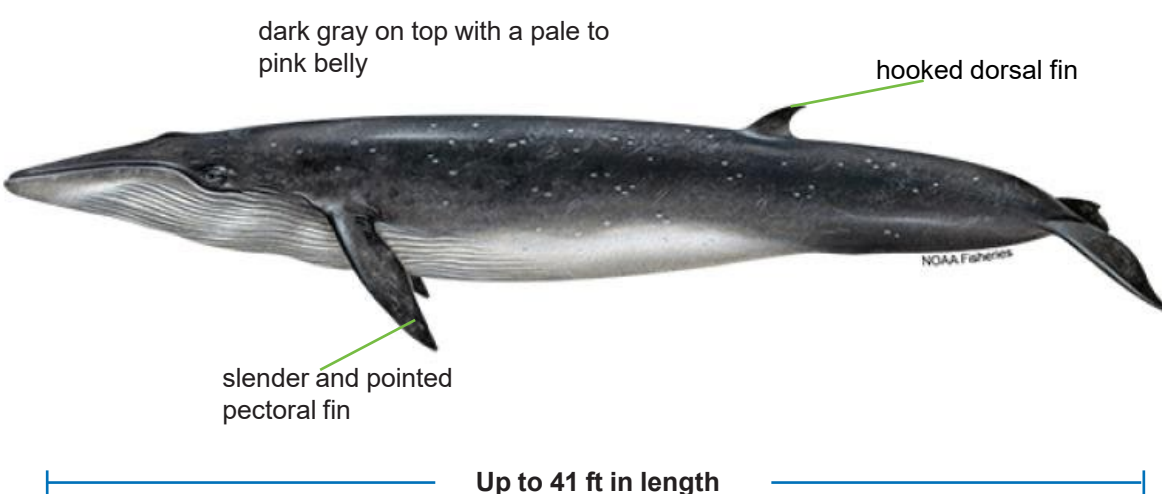
Behavior

- Often seen alone or in groups up to 20.
- Skims water for prey making them vulnerable to vessel strikes
- Expected Utilization: Low

Reporting

- **NOAA Fisheries Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline**
- **Phone:** (877-942-5343)
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Rice's Whale



Federally Listed Endangered

Behavior

- Skims water for prey making them vulnerable to vessel strikes
- Usually seen alone
- Expected Utilization: Low

Reporting

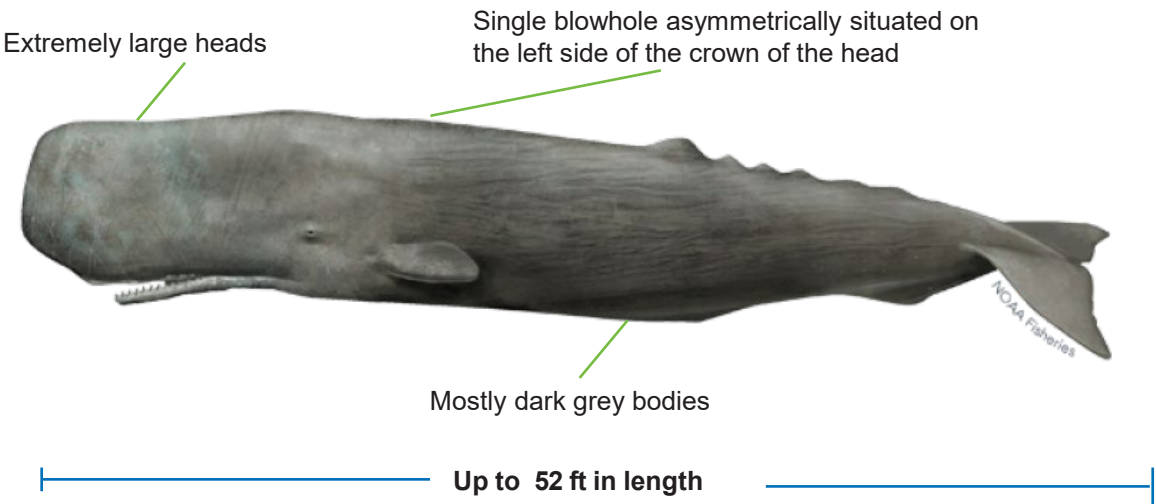
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Sperm Whale



Federally Listed Endangered

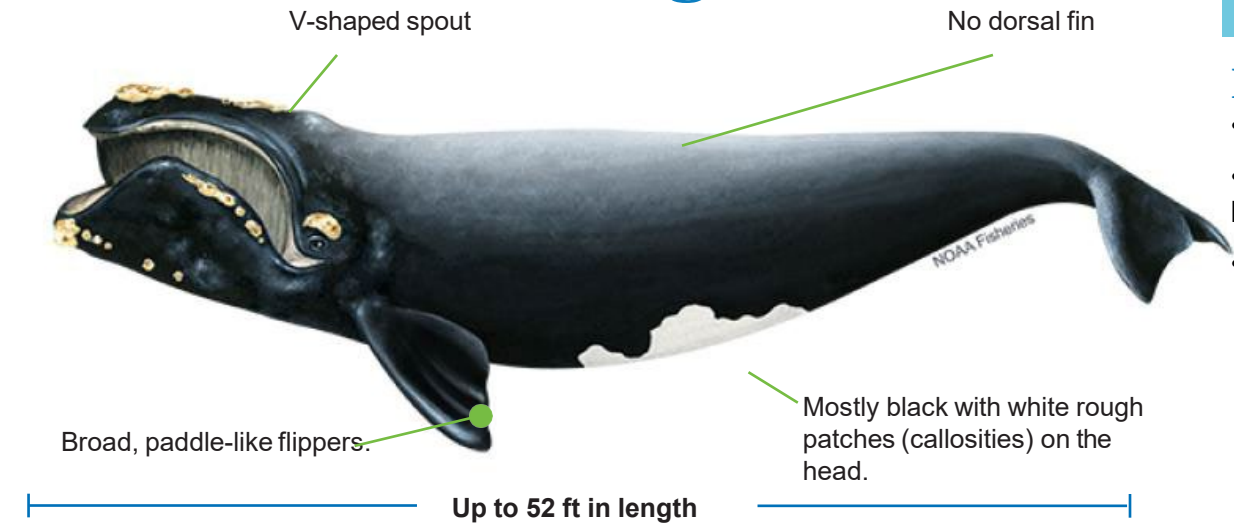
Behavior

- Spends time at the surface to rest from dives making them more susceptible to vessel strikes
- Dives deep (2,000 ft or more) to feed
- Expected Utilization: Low

Reporting

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North Atlantic Right Whale



Federally Listed Endangered

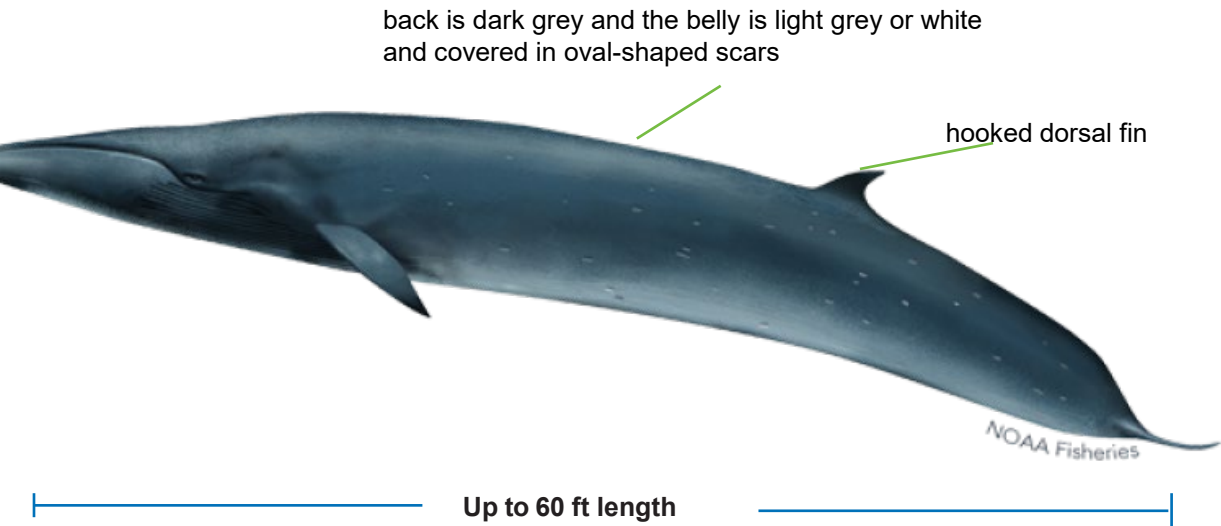
Behavior

- Spends time at the surface and moves very slowly.
- Stocky and shows slow responsiveness to ships, leading to many ship strikes
- Expected Utilization: Low

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Sei Whale



Federally Listed Endangered

Behavior

- Often seen alone or in small groups of three or more
- Fast Swimmers
- Expected Utilization: Low

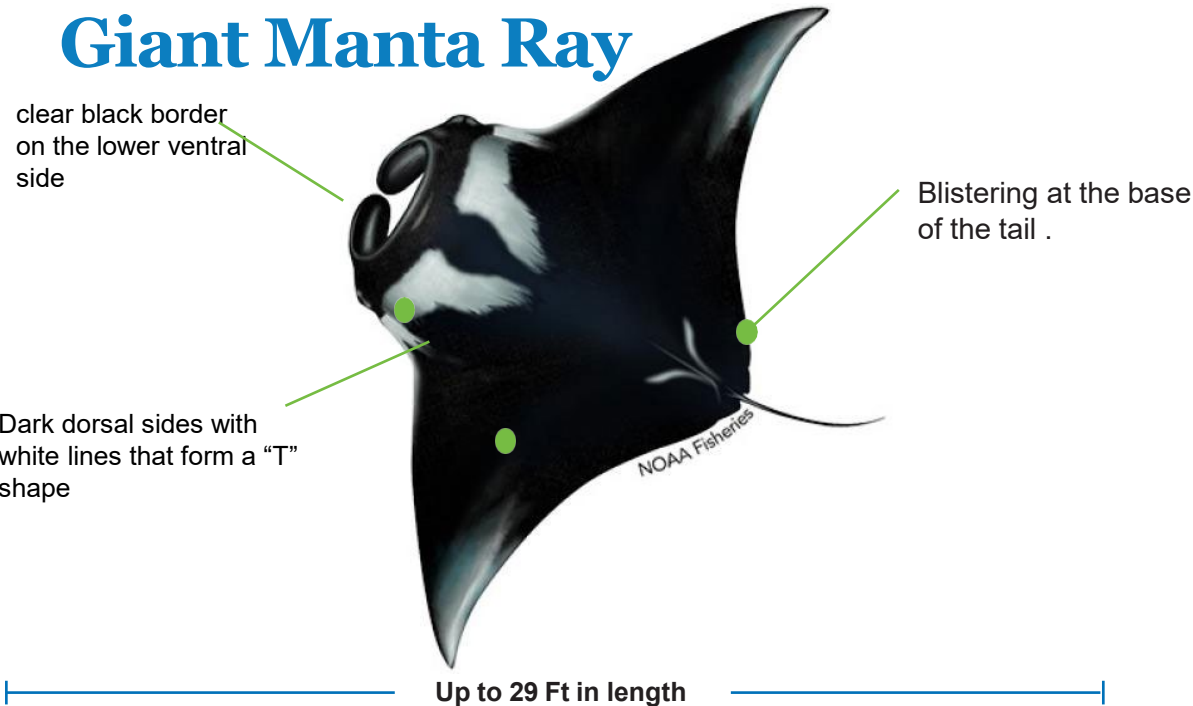
Reporting

- **NOAA Fisheries Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline**
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Giant Manta Ray



Federally Listed Threaten

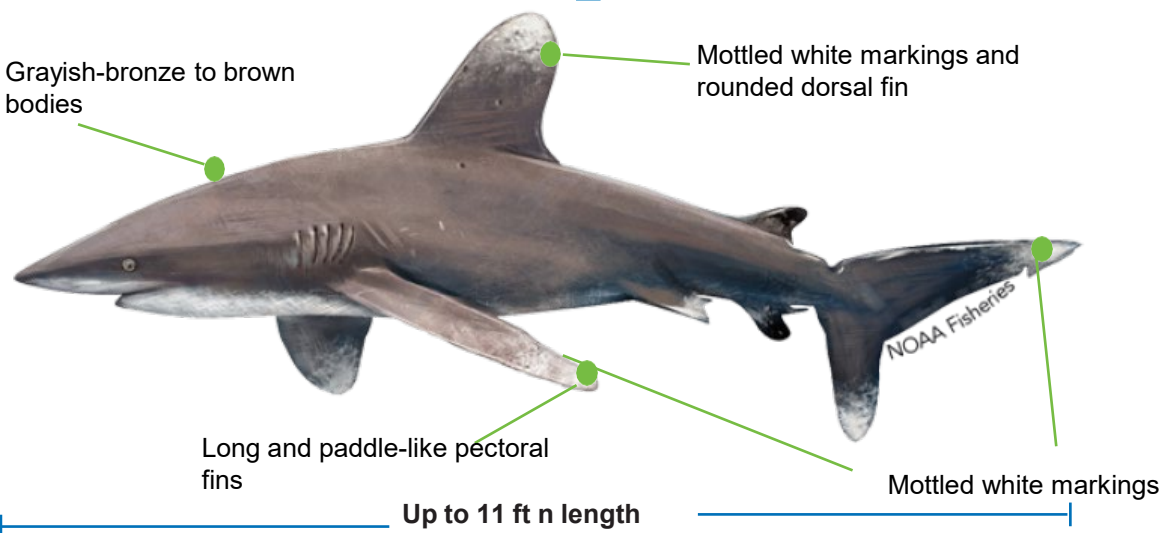
Behavior and Characteristics

- The giant manta ray migrates according to zooplankton, its favorite food, always staying far offshore.
- Expected Utilization: Low

Reporting

- **NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**
- **Email:** manta.ray@noaa.gov
- **Phone:** (727) 824-5312

Oceanic Whitetip Shark



Federally Listed Threaten

Behavior and Characteristics

- Top predator, eating at the top of the food chain
- Live in the upper part of the water column, making them susceptible to incidental bycatch
- Expected Utilization: Low

Reporting (Under Development)

- **NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**
- **Phone:** (877-942-5343)