

The Marine Mammal Center: Making Space for Marine Mammals

Laura Gill | Public Programs Manager | June 10, 2024



Behind the Bark

Lumpie



C-603



Lumpie



The Marine
Mammal Center.®

KEEP WILDLIFE WILD



The Marine
Mammal Center®

MarineMammalCenter.org

Protect yourself, your pets and marine mammals when you follow these tips.

- Stay back at least 50 yards (that's half a football field!) and keep your pets leashed.
- Do not touch, pick up, feed, or return animals to the water. If animals react to your presence, you're too close.
- Use your zoom to take pictures. No selfies!
- Call The Marine Mammal Center if you see a seal or sea lion in distress: 415.289.SEAL [7325]

Save our number



Find more tips

Lumpie

- 1-month old pup rescued from Manresa State Beach, Santa Cruz, CA
- 91 pounds
- Treated for malnutrition



Rehabilitation





Fish School



C-603



The Marine
Mammal Center®

Report Your Sighting of Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises

Name *	Name
Email *	Email
Date	mm/dd/yyyy  Time --:-- -- 
Animal Location	Beach or shore reference point, GPS coordinates, etc.
Your Location	On shore, sailboat, ferry boat, etc.
Species	
Additional Details *	Describe what you saw - behavior, direction of travel, special characteristics, etc.
☐ I'm not a robot  reCAPTCHA Privacy - Terms	

[Upload Photos](#)

REPORT NOW

Porpoise
5-6 ft



Dolphin
8-10 ft



Humpback Whale
40-50 ft



Gray Whale
35-40 ft



Viewer Discretion

- A sad reality of wildlife rehabilitation is that not every animal will survive
- Sometimes animals are too sick or too injured to be saved
- Learning from death is critical for conservation



* next slides have images of deceased whales

C-603

- Carcass of gray whale
- Found on Ocean Beach, San Francisco county
- Necropsy performed by The Marine Mammal Center and California Academy of Sciences
- Identified fractured vertebrae, hemorrhaging of skeletal muscles along right side and severe malnutrition



CSI: Gray Whale



Malnutrition



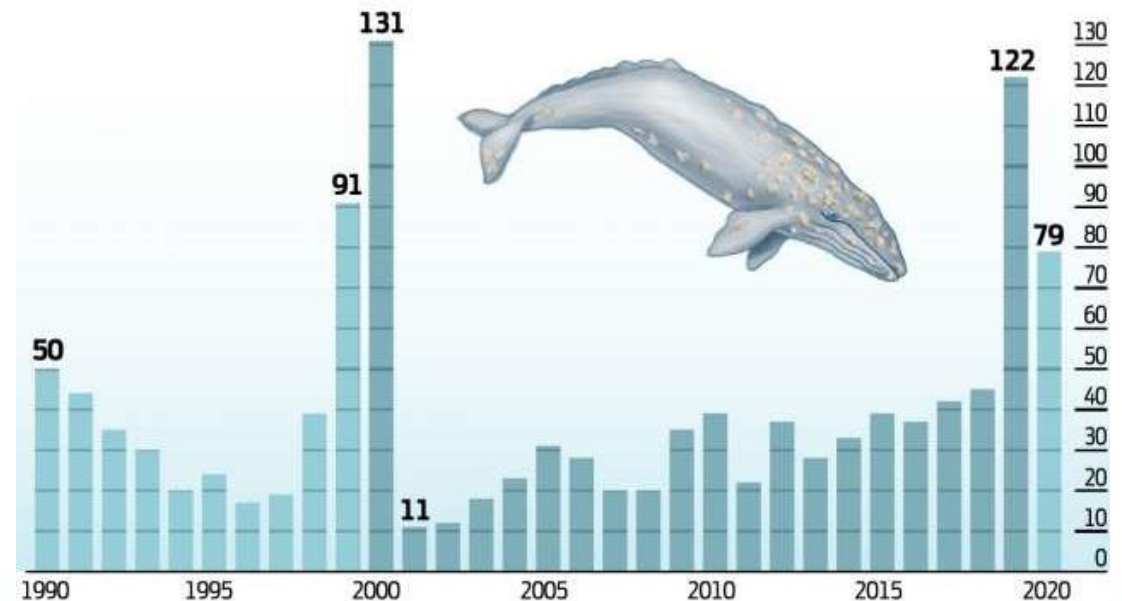
Ship Strikes

Gray Whale Unusual Mortality Event (UME)

- Declared by NOAA
- Since 2019, over 200 gray whales have been found along the US West Coast
- The historical average is approximately 30 whales per year

Gray whale die-off

A spike in beach strandings of gray whales, first observed in 2019, continued last year. Not since two decades ago has there been a similar number of beachings. Here are the numbers of beached whales reported annually in the United States since 1990.

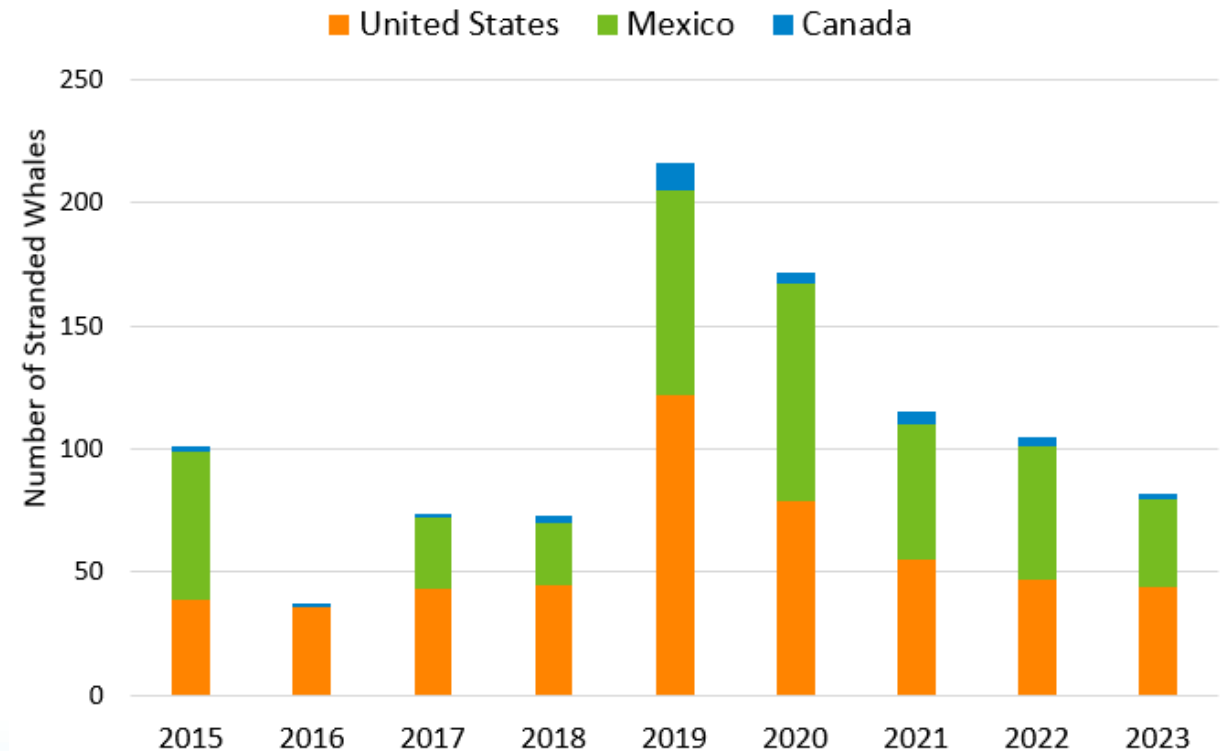


Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration John Blanchard / The Chronicle

Gray Whale Unusual Mortality Event (UME)

- **CLOSED** as of 2023
- Ship strikes and malnutrition are still possible but the thankfully lower numbers than past years

Annual Gray Whale Strandings
in the United States, Mexico, and Canada



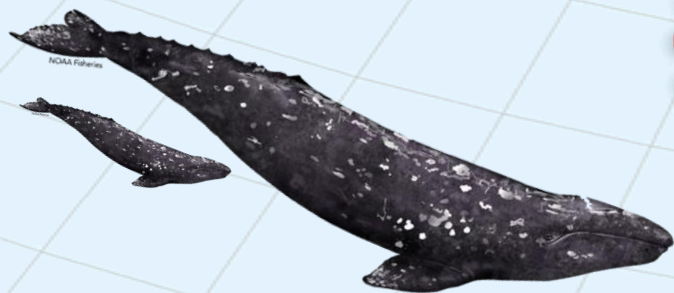
Summer Feeding Grounds

May – October

Pacific gray whales feed from late spring to early fall when ice melts and clears the way to abundant feeding waters in the Bering, Chukchi, and Beaufort Seas. The whales must gain the fat they'll need to sustain them for the roundtrip migration before the next feeding season.

Migration Route

The whales usually travel within 2.5 miles of shore along 5,000–7,000 miles of coastline. Their nearshore route makes this one of the few whale migrations that we can see from shore.



Winter Birthing and Mating Grounds

December – April

The warm, shallow waters in the lagoons of Mexico's Baja Peninsula are home to mothers and babies in winter. Many other gray whales are seen along the coast of Baja and off the mainland of Mexico. ★ Designates nursery lagoon.

Fall Migration

October – February

Southward migration is led by pregnant females, in a hurry to reach the warm birthing and nursery lagoons. Soon to follow are the males and other adult females. Juveniles join the parade, but some don't even reach Mexico before turning around and heading north.

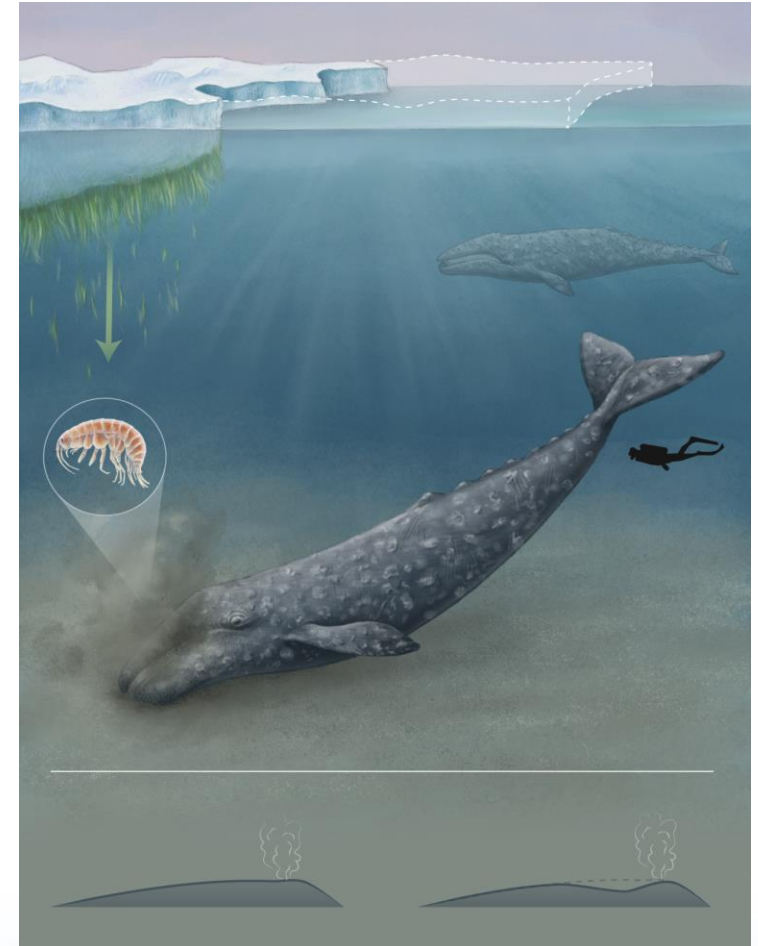
Spring Migration

January – June

Northward migration occurs in pulses or waves. First to head north are adult males and juveniles, and newly pregnant females. Mothers and babies stay in the lagoons a month or two longer than the others so babies can gain blubber and strength before making the long journey north.

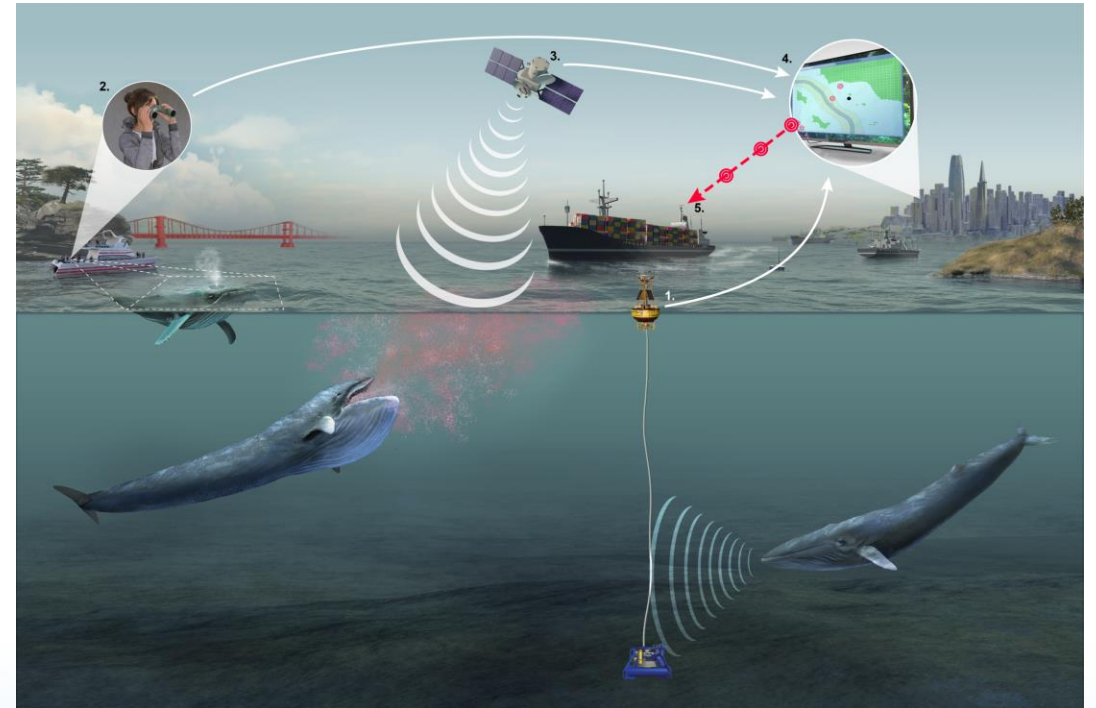
Changing Ocean Conditions

- Whales arriving in breeding area of Mexico are skinnier than normal
- Feeding grounds in Arctic are shifting as temperatures warm and ice melts
- Gray whale food depends on algae that attaches to ice
- Skinny whales are entering new locations to find food on return trip to feeding grounds



Whale Safe

- AI-enabled system to prevent ship collisions
- Check out www.WhaleSafe.com
 - Whale presence
 - Which vessels & shipping companies are reducing their speed to make way for whales



Stay Connected

- Keep wildlife wild & report animals in need
- Visit The Marine Mammal Center and learn more at MarineMammalCenter.org
- Donate to help give animals a second chance at life

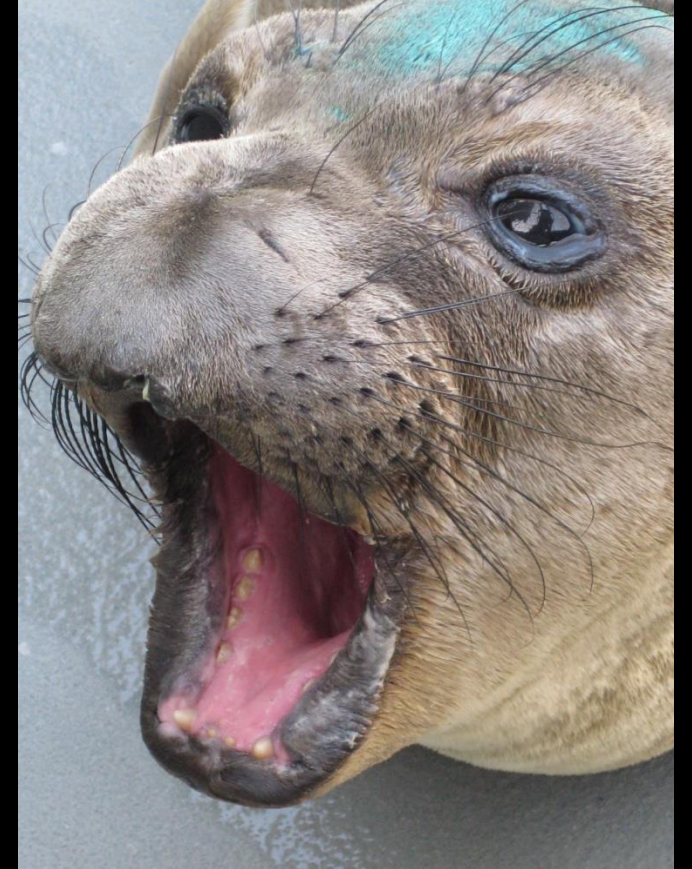
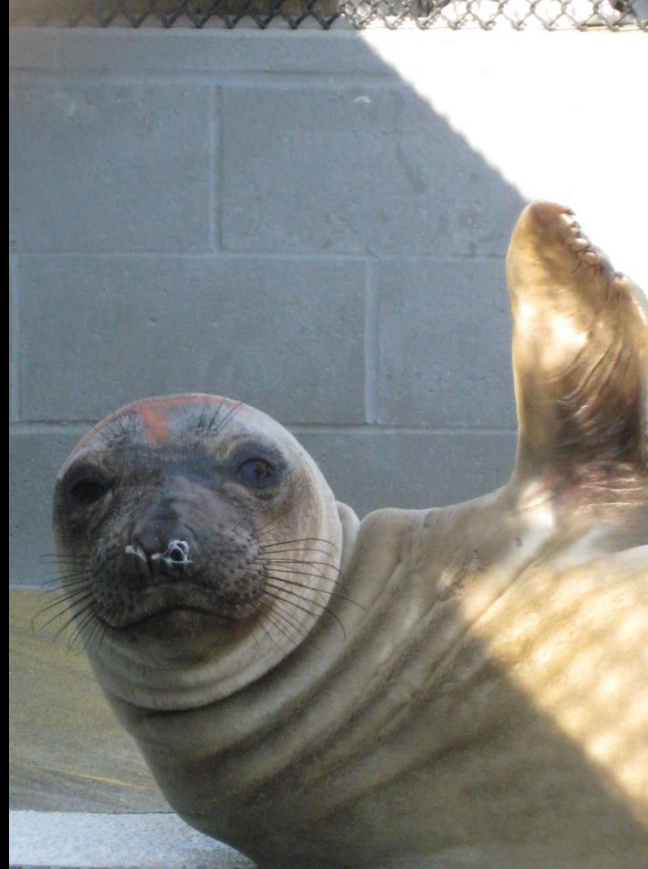


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Thank You! Questions?

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The Marine Mammal Center advances global ocean conservation through marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education.