

NiE



Wordy news

WHALE of a time – to have an exciting or fun time; to enjoy yourself immensely.



Did you know?

IN AUSTRALIAN waters, vessels must not approach whales closer than 100m. Within 300m vessels must use caution and travel at low speed.

Whale of a time

THEY'RE the giants of the ocean. Magnificent creatures that exhibit various types of amazing physical behaviour when they surface. A spectacle that draws us to the tops of lookouts or aboard a boat in the hope of catching a glimpse of these mammoths of the sea.

Whales belong to a group of marine animals known as cetaceans which includes whales, dolphins and porpoises.

These marine mammals, breathe air into lungs, are warm-blooded, give birth to live young, feed their young milk and have some hair (although very little).

Whales are divided into two

BIG FACTS

- The blue whale is the largest animal ever to have lived on Earth. The biggest recorded blue whale was 30.5m long.
- Sperm whales are the loudest whales, they have been recorded making sounds at 230 decibels.
- The humpback whales that feed in Antarctic waters and swim north to breed make the longest migration.
- Australian waters are home to 45 species of whales, dolphins and porpoises – 10 large whales, 20 smaller whales, 14 dolphins and one porpoise.

suborders: baleen and toothed whales.

- The largest species of whale are the baleen which have two blow-holes and a comb-like fringe,

called a baleen, on the upper jaw, used to filter plankton, as well as small fish and crustaceans.

- Toothed whales have teeth and prey on fish, squid, other marine

mammals, using echolocation to sense their surrounding environment.

Whales are efficient swimmers, propelling their large bodies through the water using their flippers, flukes (tail fins) and dorsal fin (not present in all species).

Because they breath air, they must return to the surface at regular intervals to get a breath, giving us the chance to see these fascinating creatures.

IN THE NEWS

Celebrate whales

LAUNCHED in 2008 by International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), National Whale Day is a celebration of the whales and dolphins that migrate to our coastlines annually.

Australia is a world leader in whale conservation and its campaigns like National Whale Day and associated events, help maintain our strong position.

IFAW's National Whale Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness of, and discuss solutions to, the threats facing whales and their environment including whaling, noise pollution, vessel strikes, marine debris and by-catch, entanglement and climate change.

CHECK IT OUT

Wilbur the whale

IF WHALES could stand in a state or federal election, what would their policies be?

Introducing, Wilbur Whale, and his Whale and Dolphin Party. Check out the IFAW candidate's election campaign. www.ifaw.org/australia/our-work/whales/national-whale-day-australia

Sounds from the deep

THE whale song – a pattern of regular and predictable sounds made by some species of whales (notably the male humpback) – is considered one of the most complex non-human forms of communication created by any species in the animal kingdom.

The purpose of these whale-created sounds is a mystery scientists are trying to understand.

Have a listen to a recording of a whale's version of a hit single:- www.youtube.com/watch?v=WabTIL-nN-E

Tips for spotting a whale

WITH the reopening of the whale highway along the east coast of Australia it is a good time to keep a look out for these amazing creatures in their natural habitat as they head north during their annual migration (June to November) to breed in the warmer waters of the tropics.

- ★ Pick good weather.
- ★ Download the Wild About Whales app for Apple and Android
- ★ Be patient.
- ★ Know the different kinds of stunts whales perform such as breaching, spy hopping and tail and pectoral slapping.
- ★ Bring some binoculars as they are great to zoom in on a whale as soon as you spot it.



NEXT WEEK: All that jazz

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