

WILDLIFE IN DANGER

This is the second article in a series on endangered wildlife in Canada, based on information provided by the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

HUMPBACK WHALE (Megaptera novaeangliae)

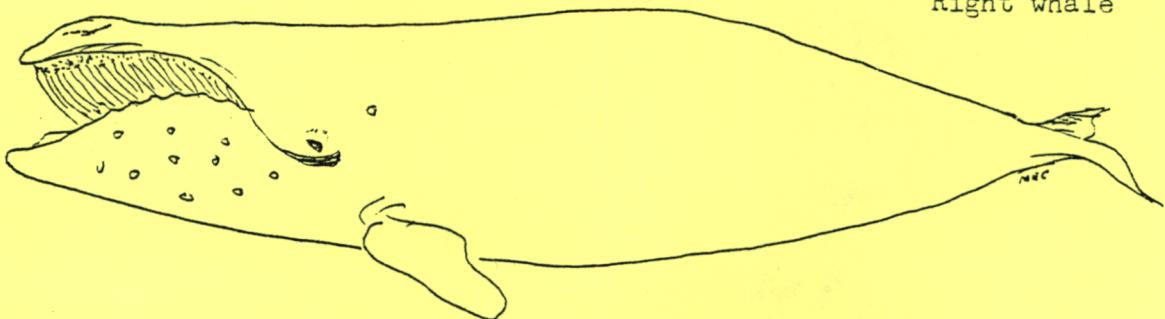
This famous 'songster' is a short stocky whale measuring up to 50 feet long and easily recognized by its two long, white flippers. Found in all oceans, the humpback often enters coastal areas and may be seen on the eastern Canadian coast, particularly on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, during the summer. It is also infrequently seen off the British Columbia coast. Because of its habit of frequenting coastal waters, the slow moving humpback was an easy target for the early whalers. With the advent of modern whaling techniques in the late 19th century, humpback numbers have dwindled and have never recovered. The world population is estimated at between 7,000 and 8,000, and they are currently protected by members of the International Whaling Commission.

RIGHT WHALE (Balaena glacialis)

A large, chunky, black whale lacking a dorsal fin, the right whale may measure up to 60 feet in length. It is characterized by a wart-like protuberance at the tip of its snout, referred to as a callosity or 'bonnet'. Found in temperate and cool oceans, the right whale was the first target of the whaling industry and probably the most severely exploited of all the large whales. In fact, it is so named because whalers referred to it as the 'right' whale to hunt. The right whale was seriously depleted throughout its world range, mostly during the 18th and 19th centuries. The total population is in the low thousands, and the species is now only rarely seen off Canada's coasts. Despite full protection by member countries of the International Whaling Commission, the rate of recovery appears to be very slow.



Humpback whale



Right whale