



# IDENTIFYING LIVE, ENTANGLED AND DEAD NORTH ATLANTIC RIGHT WHALES



North Atlantic right whales are large baleen whales that inhabit the coastline from Florida to the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

In 2019, with only **411 individuals left**, right whales are an endangered species and are federally protected under the *Species at Risk Act*.

The main threats are vessel collisions and entanglement in fishing gear.



## NEED TO KNOW

- Right whales can be up to 17 metres in length and weigh up to 60-70 tonnes.
- Right whales are capable of diving for at least 30 minutes, but regularly submerge for 6 -8 minutes.
- Many individuals spend all or part of the summer and autumn months in Canadian waters.

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## LIVE, HEALTHY RIGHT WHALES

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



© New England Aquarium

Distinctive v-shaped blow, 5+ metres high.



© Damian Lidgard

Rough white patches (called callosities) on head, along lower lip, chin, above eyes and behind the blowhole.



© New England Aquarium

Tail lifted above the surface before it dives. Usually black on both sides with smooth edge and notch in the center. Sometimes has white scars.



© New England Aquarium

No dorsal fin observed on the back.

To report sightings of live, healthy whales, contact Fisheries and Oceans Canada:  
**1-844-800-8568** | [XMARWhaleSightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:XMARWhaleSightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) | *Whale Alert* mobile app

To report an entangled or dead North Atlantic right whale, contact the Marine Animal Response Society immediately: **1-866-567-6277**



## ENTANGLED RIGHT WHALES

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



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Rope wrapped around head and in mouth.



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Rope through the whale's mouth.



© New England Aquarium

Rope entangled around the body.



© New England Aquarium

Rope entangled around the tail.

## DEAD RIGHT WHALES

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR:



© MARS

Large, curved upper jaw. When exposed, baleen can be 2-2.4m in length.



© New England Aquarium

Flipper large and rounded.



Right Whale

© MARS

Belly is smooth (sometimes with white patches) and does not have grooves.



Blue Whale

© Canadian Coast Guard

Most other large whales have grooves along their belly. Their flippers are also thin and taper to a point.