

Māui's Dolphin

Māui's dolphins are a sub-species of the Hector's dolphin. Not only are they the smallest dolphins in the world, they are also the rarest. They have a rounded back dorsal fin. Māui's dolphins have grey black and white markings and a short snout.



Life Span

Up to 20 years

Size

Females can grow up to 1.7 metres but males are slightly smaller.

Weight

Up to 50 kilograms



Māui's dolphins are usually found in the shallow waters on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand.

Māui's dolphins communicate with each other by making a high-pitched clicking sound. They also use this click to find their food as the clicks bounce off their prey. This is called 'echolocation'.

Did you know?

There are only about 55 Māui's dolphins left in New Zealand so they are considered critically endangered. There are special laws about fishing on the west coast of New Zealand to help to protect them.

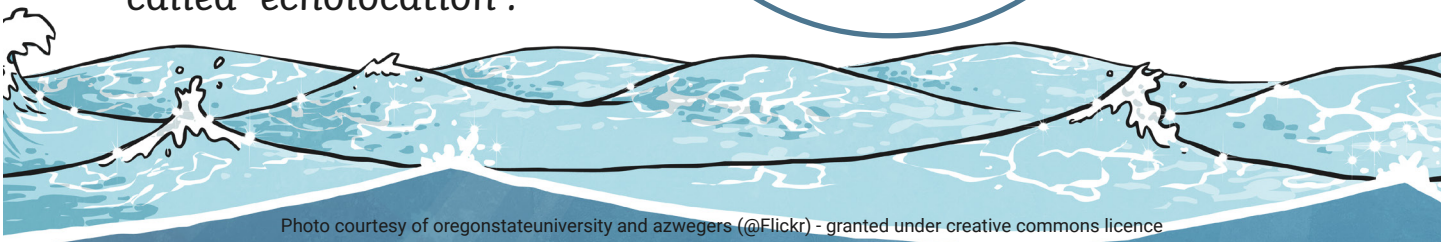


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Hector's Dolphin

Hector's dolphins are one of the smallest dolphins in the world. There are two sub-species of Hector's dolphins; Māui's dolphins and the South Island Hector's dolphins. They are grey with black and white markings and have a short snout. They also have a rounded back dorsal fin. Māui's and Hector's dolphins look exactly the same but Māui's dolphins have a larger skull and longer, wider snouts.



Hector's and Māui's dolphins are known to Māori by other names, including tutumairekurai, aihe, papakanua, upokohue, tukuperu, tūpoupou, pahu, pōpoto and hopuhopu. Traditionally, Māori used to watch dolphins to predict the weather.

Hector's dolphins are found around the coasts of the South Island. Hector's dolphins eat different species of fish including bottom-dwelling fish and free-swimming fish.

Life Span

Up to 20 years

Size

Females can grow up to 1.6 metres but males are slightly smaller.

Weight

Between 40 and 60 kilograms



Did you know?

Māui's and Hector's dolphins are the only dolphins with a well-rounded black dorsal fin.

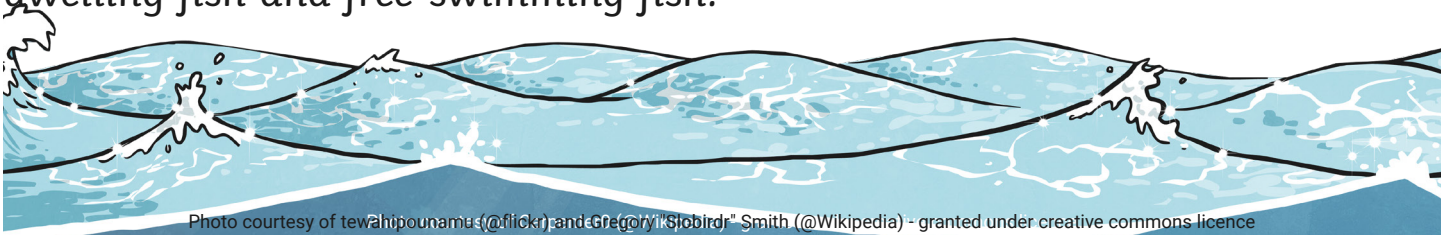


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Orca

Orca (or killer whales) are not actually whales. They are the largest member of the dolphin family. Orcas are black and white with large, paddle-shaped fins. Groups of orca are called pods.



	Females	Males
Life span	Up to 90 years	Up to 60 years
Size	6 metres	9 metres
Weight	3.6 tonnes	5.5 tonnes
Dorsal fin	Slightly curved and up to 0.9 metres tall	Straight up and up to 1.8 metres tall

Orcas live all around New Zealand's coastline but they prefer cooler, deeper water. Orcas can be found all over the world, and they are the most-widely spread out mammal apart from humans.

Orcas eat fish, squid, dolphins, sharks and seals. New Zealand orcas are slightly different as they are the only orcas known to eat stingrays, eagle rays and electric rays.

Did you know?

Orcas are at the top of the food web as there are no animals that eat them!

Orcas can swim as far as 150km a day.

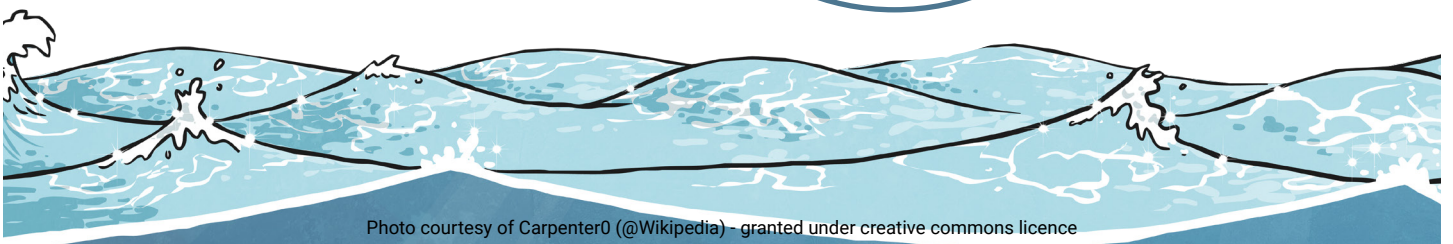
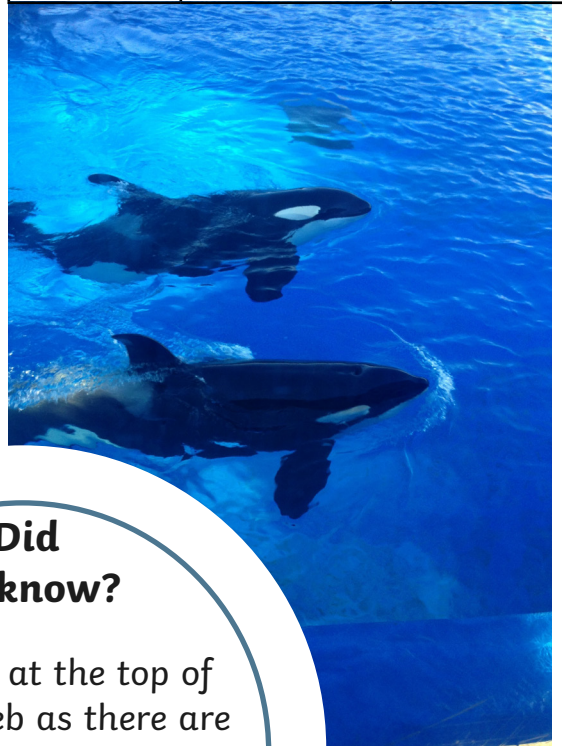


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New Zealand's Sea Lion (Rāpoka/Whakahao)

New Zealand's sea lions are one of the rarest seals in the world. New Zealand's sea lions look like most other sea lions but they have a shorter snout and short whiskers. Male sea lions are dark grey or brown with a mane of thick fur around their neck. Females are lighter grey with darker flippers.



	Females (rāpoko)	Males (whakahao)
Life span	Up to 23 years	
Length	1.6-2 metres	2.4-3.5 metres
Weight	100-160 kilograms	250-400 kilograms



Sea lions live on the coast of the South Island and around the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island.

Sea lions eat fish, some sharks, rays and sea birds. They swim using their front flippers to prey on these animals. They sometimes will even eat fur seals and elephant seals.

Did you know?

The New Zealand sea lion is now the world's most endangered sea lion.

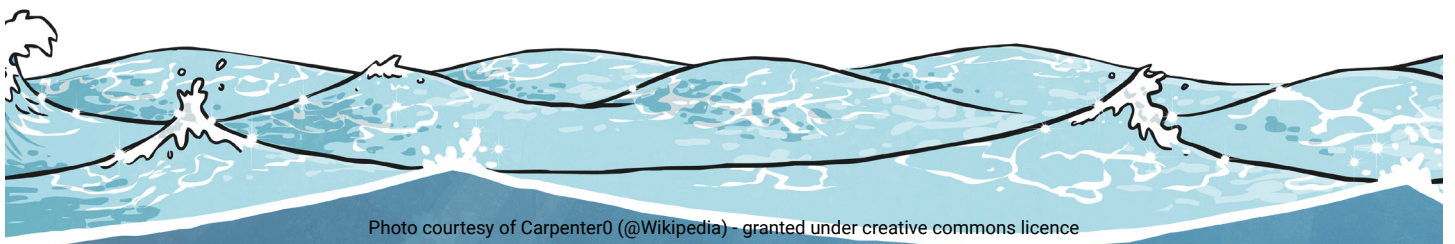


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New Zealand's Fur Seal (Kekeko)

The fur seal is one of New Zealand's most common seals. They are covered in two layers of fur, which is a dark grey/brown on most of its body and a lighter colour on its stomach. Fur seals have pointy noses and long, pale whiskers.



	Females	Males
Life span	Up to 14-17 years	
Length	1.5 metres	2.5 metres
Weight	30-50 kilograms	90-150 kilograms



Fur seals are found on rocky shorelines throughout New Zealand. They are also found in some parts of Australia.

Fur seals eat squid, small fish and they sometimes eat eels and larger fish.

New Zealand fur seals were close to being extinct, but in 1978 they became protected and now their population is increasing at an encouraging level.

Did you know?

The New Zealand fur seal can dive deeper and longer than any other fur seal. Female fur seals are known to dive deeper than 238 metres and for as long as 11 minutes!

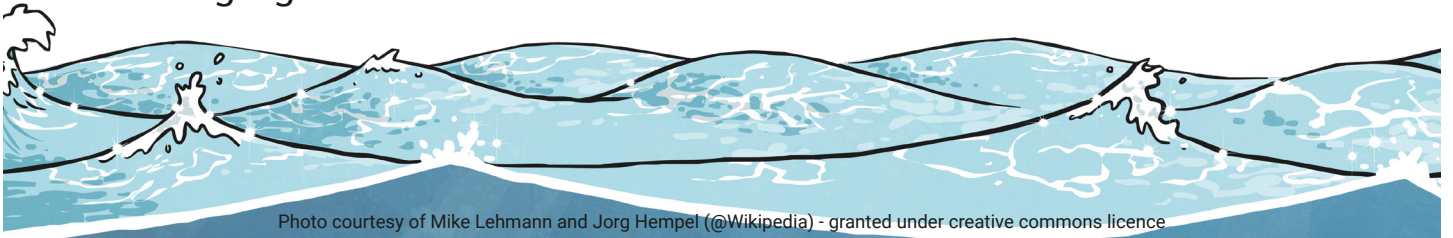


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Southern Right Whale (Tohōra)

The Southern Right whale is a baleen whale (baleens are a group of whales that have baleen plates and bristles instead of teeth). The Southern Right whales are dark grey or black with white patches on their throats and bellies. They also have callosities (white rough growths) on their large heads and jaws. They have large, paddle-shaped flippers and no dorsal fin.



Southern Right whales can be found around the Auckland and Campbell Islands but they are also sometimes seen around the mainland of New Zealand. The Southern Right whale comes close to shore and it is the only whale in New Zealand that can sometimes be seen from the beach.

Southern Right whales eat tiny crustaceans, such as krill and plankton. They hunt their prey by swimming with their mouths open and trapping the prey in their baleen bristles.

Life Span

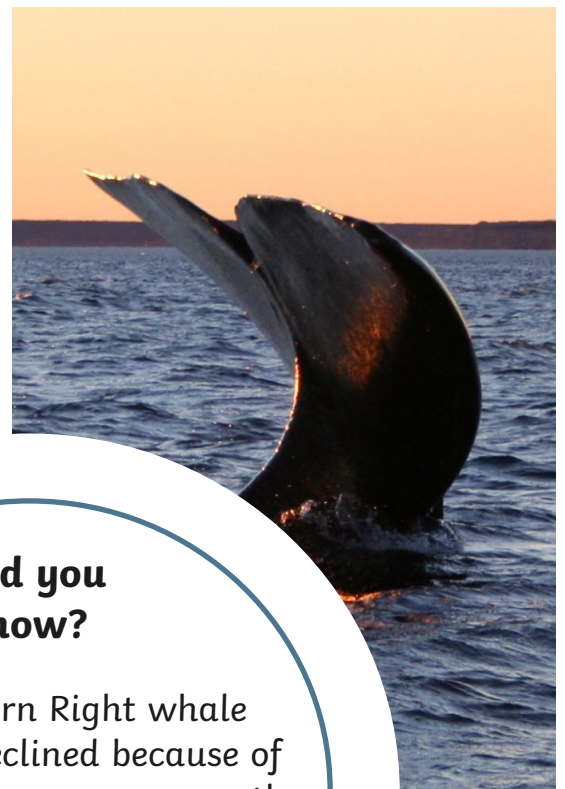
Up to 50-100 years

Size

11-18 metres

Weight

Up to 55 000 kilograms (60 tonnes)



Did you know?

The Southern Right whale population declined because of whaling as they were seen as the 'right' whales to catch. They were easy to approach, lived close to the shore and gave large quantities of meat, oil and whalebone.



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Sperm Whale

The sperm whale is the largest of the toothed whales. They have wrinkly brown or dark grey skin with a white patch underneath. Instead of a dorsal fin, the sperm whale has



small humps on its back. One hump is larger than all the others.

Sperm whales live all around the world in deep water. Female and juveniles like warmer water. All year around, male sperm whales are found in Kaikōura because there is a 3km deep canyon under the water where there are a lot of fish for them to feed on.

Sperm whales mainly eat squid, but they also sometimes eat sharks, rays and fish found on or near the bottom of the ocean.

Life Span

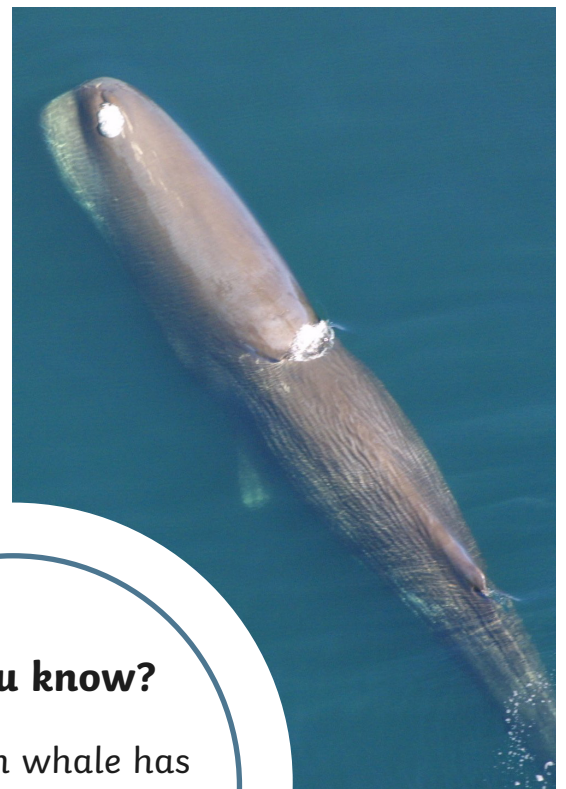
More than 70 years

Size

Up to 18 metres

Weight

Up to 65 000 kilograms
(65 tonnes)



Did you know?

The sperm whale has the largest brain out of any animal and it is the deepest diving whale!

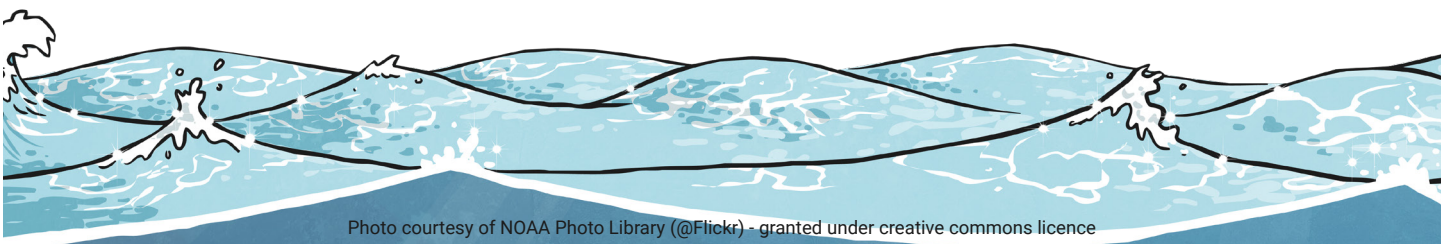


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Bryde's Whale

The Bryde's whale (pronounced 'brooders') is a small to medium-sized baleen whale (baleen are a group of whales that have baleen plates and bristles instead of teeth). Bryde's whales are long and thin with dark grey and white skin. They have a pointed dorsal fin and three ridges that go from their snout to their two blowholes. Bryde's whales also have 40-50 long throat grooves, which stretch out while they are feeding.



Bryde's whales eat small fish and crustaceans. When they are feeding, the Bryde's whales dive down, roll sideways and take a big mouthful of water. Then they float slowly upwards. When they reach the surface, they let all the water out and strain all the animals through their baleen plates.

Bryde's whales live in warmer water usually in northern New Zealand. They are common around springtime in the Bay of Plenty, Hauraki Gulf and off the east coast of Northland.

Life Span

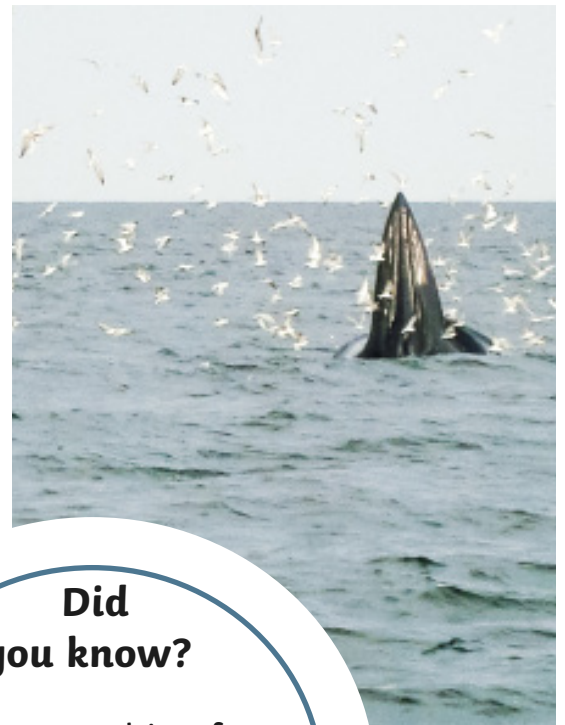
Unknown

Size

Up to 15 metres

Weight

Up to 30 000 kilograms
(30 tonnes)



Did you know?

When searching for food, the Bryde's whale can stay under water for 20 minutes before coming up to take a breath.

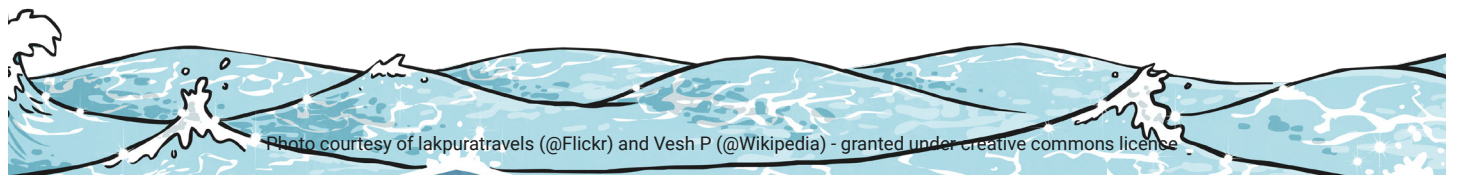


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