

Humpback Whales of Glacier Bay



Why do Humpback Whales come to Glacier Bay? Glacier Bay is a Humpback Whale Sanctuary. Every summer, these 40-ton giants migrate from Hawaii and Mexico to feed in Southeast Alaska's nutrient rich waters. Sometimes feeding 23 hours a day, a single Humpback Whale can consume almost 1/2 ton of food each and every day!

Research in the Park

Whale biologists study Humpback Whales in Glacier Bay to document the number of individuals, calf production, feeding behavior, and human/whale interactions. This information helps park managers use the latest science to make decisions regarding vessel traffic and noise disturbance in the bay.



Vocabulary:

Endangered species: a plant or animal in danger of extinction.

Threatened species: a plant or animal likely to become an endangered species.

Migrate: to move from one place to another.

Perpetuity: a thing that lasts forever.

Sanctuary: a place of refuge or safety.

Photo Identification

Each whale's tail (flukes) has a distinct, black and white pattern that allows researchers to distinguish individuals.

Under special permit, researchers photograph the flukes and use an online catalog to try to find a match.

Can you find a match on the next page?



**Now YOU be the
Researcher**

Which two humpback whale tails are the same?

List at least three characteristics that helped you make a match.

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Photos courtesy of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, taken under scientific research permits issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service