

Killer Whale

Orcinus orca (Northwest Atlantic / Eastern Arctic Population)



Saddle patch markings

Species Description

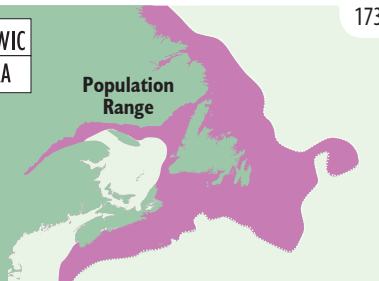
The Killer Whale is a toothed whale with a tall dorsal fin and distinct black and white colouration. Its body is mainly black with sections of white behind the eye, on the flank, and on the underside of its chin, belly and tail flukes. It has a greyish white “saddle patch” marking at the base of its dorsal fin. Females can reach lengths of 7.7 m, while males can reach lengths of 9 m with larger flippers and tail flukes.



Key ID Features: * distinct colouration * tall dorsal fin

STATUS 	Special Concern COSEWIC
	Not listed SARA

This population of Killer Whales extends from U.S. Atlantic coastal waters to the eastern Canadian Arctic and western Greenland. They rarely occur in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, despite being historically common.



Interesting Points

- Killer Whales are highly intelligent.
- Individuals can be recognized by their unique saddle patch and dorsal fin shape.
- There are four other unique populations of killer whales in Canada.
- It preys on seals, other whales, dolphins, birds and fish.

Threats

- Deliberate removal and bycatch.
- Physical and acoustic disturbance.
- Exposure to harmful levels of environmental contaminants.

Learn how you can help on page 136.*



Killer Whale at Brown's Bank



Tall dorsal fin

Contacts, Information & Sighting Reports

Contact: DFO SAR Program 1-902-244-7212/1-866-891-0771 or dfo.marsara-lepmar.mpo@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Info: www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes; www.sararegistry.gc.ca

Sighting Reports: xmarwhalesightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca; Whale Alert App

Stewardship: MARS (Distressed or dead whales) 1-866-567-6277 or mars@marineanimals.ca or VHF Channel 16