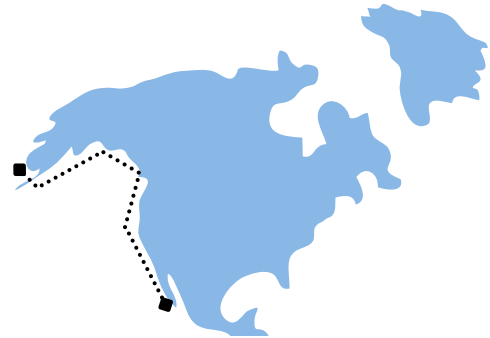


# GRAY WHALE GUIDE

## DIET/FEEDING HABITS



Gray whales do not have teeth. Instead, they have bristly plates called "baleen". Hundreds of these keratin plates grow from the whale's upper jaw and filter their food from the ocean. Gray whales primarily feed on amphipods and other small invertebrates on the ocean floor but will also feed on plankton, krill, and other small fish and crustaceans.



## MIGRATION PATTERNS

Gray whales migrate approximately 12,000 miles round-trip from their arctic feeding grounds off the coast of Alaska, to their birthing grounds in Baja California, Mexico.

## SIZE

Adult gray whales can grow up to 50ft long and weigh about as much as 5 adult elephants.



## WHAT LIVES ON TOP OF A GRAY WHALE?

### BARNACLES

Secrete a sticky substance to attach to surfaces and use their feathery legs to filter feed from the water.

### WHALE LICE

Feed on the whale's dead tissues and skin.

## BEHAVIORS

### BLOW

Occurs when a whale comes to the surface and exhales.

Their blow can shoot 15 feet up into the air!

### BREACH

When a whale jumps out of the water.

### SPYHOP

When a whale sticks just its head out of the water to look around.

### FLUKING

When you see the full "fluke", or tail, of the whale as it dives to the bottom of the ocean.

## THREATS TO GRAY WHALES

- Ocean noise
- Entanglement in fishing gear (bycatch)
- Ship strikes
- Pollution (oil spills)



## OTHER TYPES OF WHALES THAT VISIT SAN DIEGO

### BLUE WHALE



Largest animal on earth

### HUMPBACK WHALE



Has the largest pectoral fins of any whale (up to 16ft long)

### FIN WHALE



The fastest whale (up to 30mph)

### ORCA



The largest member of the dolphin family

## FUN FACTS

### HOW LONG CAN THEY LIVE?

Scientists estimate between 40-80 years

### HOW FAST DO THEY SWIM?

On average, between 3-6mph

### WHY IS THEIR BLOW HEART SHAPED?

All baleen whales have 2 blowholes

### DO THEY HAVE ANY NATURAL PREDATORS?

Orcas