

# Hawai'i Marine Mammal ID Guide



**False Killer Whale**  
(*Pseudorca crassidens*)



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**Short-Finned Pilot Whale**  
(*Globicephala macrorhynchus*)



**Melon Headed Whale**  
(*Peponocephala electra*)



**Orca/Killer Whale**  
(*Orcinus orca*)



E

Odontocete | "Blackfish"

Odontocete | "Blackfish"

Odontocete | "Blackfish"

Odontocete | "Blackfish"

**Size:** up to 20 ft & up to 3,000 lbs

**Size:** ~12 - 24 ft & ~2,200 - 6,600 lbs

**Size:** ~9 ft & ~450 lbs

**Size:** up to 32 ft & up to 11 tons

**Dorsal Fin:** Sickle-shaped dorsal fin, usually curved and slightly rounded at the tip



**Dorsal Fin:** Strongly curved ("hooked") dorsal fin with a large base; found far forward on its body



**Dorsal Fin:** "Bow" shaped dorsal fin located in the middle of the back



**Dorsal Fin:** Unmistakenly large dorsal fins; males have straight fins while females and juvenile dorsal fins are curved



**Fluke:** Small in relation to body size



**Fluke:** Fluke has pointed/curved tips



**Fluke:** Broad fluke



**Fluke:** Large, triangular fluke that is often black on top and white on bottom



**Other Key Identifiers:** Long, slender head tapers to rounded snout with no pronounced beak; Long, curved flipper with a pronounced corner or an's' shape; Dark grey/black body color

**Other Key Identifiers:** Bulbous melon head with no obvious rostrum; Long slender sickle-shaped flippers positioned close to the head; Small mouth that slants upward toward eye; Large gray saddle behind the dorsal fin

**Other Key Identifiers:** Small head with a rounded melon and no discernible beak; Decorated with white markings on their lips and dark 'masks' around the eyes; Pectoral fins are long and pointed

**Other Key Identifiers:** Rounded head that tapers to a point; Large, wide paddle-shaped pectoral fins; Oval shaped white patch behind each eye; White chin and belly patch; Large, robust body; Pale grey saddle patch (variable between populations)

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**Pygmy Killer Whale**  
(*Feresa attenuata*)



**Sperm Whale**  
(*Physeter macrocephalus*)



**Pygmy Sperm Whale**  
(*Kogia breviceps*)



**Dwarf Sperm Whale**  
(*Kogia sima*)



Odontocete | "Blackfish"

Odontocete | Toothed-whale

Odontocete | "Blackfish"

Odontocete | "Blackfish"

**Size:** up to 8.5 ft & up to 500 lbs

**Size:** up to 40 - 52 ft & ~15 - 45 tons

**Size:** up to 11.5 ft & ~700 - 1,000 lbs

**Size:** up to 9 ft & ~300 - 600 lbs

**Dorsal Fin:** Relatively large and located behind the mid-back



**Dorsal Fin:** Small dorsal fins that are low, thick, and usually rounded



**Dorsal Fin:** Small, rounded dorsal fin located further back along its body



**Dorsal Fin:** Small fin located near the middle of the back; slightly larger and more forward compared to pygmy sperm whales



**Fluke:** Relatively broad fluke



**Fluke:** Blunt, triangular shaped fluke



**Fluke:** Broad, pointy fluke



**Fluke:** Relatively broad for their size



**Other Key Identifiers:** Small head with a rounded melon that extends in front of the mouth, and no discernable rostrum; relatively long, pointed, tapering pectoral fins; small white areas on the lips and belly; narrow cape that dips only slightly below the dorsal fin and a light gray ventral band

**Other Key Identifiers:** Mostly dark grey; heads are extremely large accounting for up to one-third of the total length; lower jaw is narrow; paddle-shaped pectoral flippers that are small compared to their body size; skin just behind the head is often wrinkled

**Other Key Identifiers:** Extremely similar to the dwarf sperm whale; Pointed snout with a narrow, underslung jaw; Wrinkled brown to blue-grey skin; Slight bump on back; 'Bracket' shaped false gill marking on the head; Underside is pale with pink or white tones; Thin tailstock

**Other Key Identifiers:** Extremely similar to the pygmy sperm whale; Brown to blue-grey colored back with white to pink undertones underneath; Square head with snort snout; Flatter back than pygmy sperm whales; 'Bracket' shaped false gill marking on the head

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## Spinner Dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*)



## Pantropical Spotted Dolphin (*Stenella attenuata*)



## Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)



## Rough-Toothed Dolphin (*Steno bredanensis*)



Odontocete | Dolphin

Odontocete | Dolphin

Odontocete | Dolphin

Odontocete | Dolphin

**Size:** ~4 - 7 ft & ~130 - 170 lbs

**Size:** ~6 - 7 ft & ~250 lbs

**Size:** ~6 - 13 ft & ~300 - 1,400 lbs

**Size:** ~8.5 ft & ~350 lbs

**Dorsal Fin:** Dorsal fins range from slightly curved to erect and triangular

**Dorsal Fin:** Tall, narrow, and strongly curved dorsal fin

**Dorsal Fin:** Prominent recurved dorsal fin with a slightly hooked tip and a broad base

**Dorsal Fin:** Distinctively large dorsal fin that is typically hooked or curved

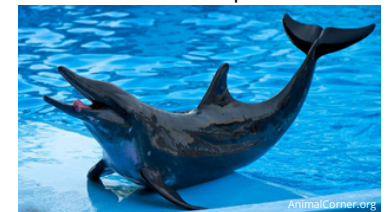


**Fluke:** Small crescent shaped fluke

**Fluke:** Stocky, relatively broad fluke

**Fluke:** Broad, curved fluke with a deep median notch

**Fluke:** Characteristically wide, triangular fluke shape



**Other Key Identifiers:** Relatively small compared to other species with thin and slender bodies; Small, pointed pectoral fins; Long, slim beaks; Try-partite color pattern with colors ranging from dark grey to black, light grey, and white; Only species of dolphin that naturally jump and spin in the air

**Other Key Identifiers:** Long, slender, white-tipped beak; Pale spots increase as the individual ages; Dark coloration (cape) on their backs; Distinct keel below tail stock (except on large males); Dark band between upper jaw and eye; Small, strongly curved flippers with pointed tips: dark on top and bottom

**Other Key Identifiers:** Typically have a short, thick snout; Moderately long, dark, slender pectoral fins; A sharp crease between the beak and the forehead; Underside can be off-white, light grey or pinkish; Generally grey in color

**Other Key Identifiers:** Small head with a long rostrum without a demarcation between their gently sloping melon (or forehead) and rostrum; Pectoral fins are distinctively large; Dark grey bodies with a white throat and lips; body may be dotted with white, uneven splotches

# Hawai'i Marine Mammal ID Guide



**Risso's Dolphin**  
(*Grampus griseus*)



**Striped Dolphin**  
(*Stenella coeruleoalba*)



**Fraser's Dolphin**  
(*Lagenodelphis hosei*)



**Minke Whale**  
(*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*)



Odontocete | Dolphin

Odontocete | Dolphin

Odontocete | Dolphin

Mysticete | Baleen Whale

**Size:** ~8.5 - 13 ft & ~660 - 1,100 lbs

**Size:** ~8 - 9 ft & ~350 lbs

**Size:** ~6 - 9 ft & ~350 - 450 lbs

**Size:** up to 35 ft & up to 20,000 lbs

**Dorsal Fin:** Tall, curved, sickle-shaped dorsal fin located mid-way down their back



**Dorsal Fin:** Tall, hooked dorsal fin located at the mid-back



**Dorsal Fin:** Small, triangular dorsal fin located at the mid-back



**Dorsal Fin:** Fairly tall, sickle-shaped dorsal fin located about two-thirds down their back



**Fluke:** Fluke is broad and curved with a deep median notch



**Fluke:** Small, pale grey fluke



**Fluke:** Small, triangular fluke



**Fluke:** Broad, pointed at the tips; black on top, pale underneath



**Other Key Identifiers:** Robust body with a rounded head; Bulbous head with a vertical crease and an indistinguishable rostrum; Typically dark gray with extensive white scarring originating from their top prey (squid); Pectoral fins are relatively long and thin, and pointed almost straight back

**Other Key Identifiers:** Small to medium-sized, robust, sleek body with a long, defined rostrum and round forehead; distinct and striking coloration pattern including bold, thin stripes that extend from the eye to the flipper; Small slender flippers; Underside is often white or has pink hues contrasting the body

**Other Key Identifiers:** Stocky body with a small, distinct rostrum; Small, pointed pectoral fins; Dark stripe that extends down their side from eye to pectoral flipper; upper body is bluish or brownish-gray, while their underside is usually pale white or pink

**Other Key Identifiers:** Smallest baleen whale in North American waters; Small, dark, sleek body; Body is black to dark grayish/brownish, with a pale chevron on the back behind the head and above the flippers; Flat head and pointed snout; Small, slender, pointed flippers with distinctive white band

# Hawai'i Marine Mammal ID Guide



## Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)



Mysticete | Baleen Whale

**Size:** up to ~60 ft & up to ~40 tons

**Dorsal Fin:** Low, often stubby dorsal fin with broad base and "hump"



**Fluke:** Serrated along the trailing edge, pointed at the tips, and up to 18 ft wide



**Other Key Identifiers:** Long pectoral fins, up to 1/3 of body length with knobs on leading edges; Rounded protrusion at tip of lower jaw; Knobs on top of head and lower jaw; Dark grey to blue-black coloration on upperside with different variations of white on the underside

## Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*)



Mysticete | Baleen Whale

**Size:** up to 110 ft & up to 330,000 lbs

**Dorsal Fin:** Relatively small often stubby dorsal and positioned far along the back



**Fluke:** Massive, slender flukes with smooth trailing edges



**Other Key Identifiers:** Largest animal on the planet; Long and slender body shape; Broad, flattened head; Raised splash guard in front of blow hole; Long, slender pectoral fins; 60-88 dark-colored throat grooves; Light grey-blue, mottled skin; Head uniformly (light) grey/blue; Very thick tail stock

## Fin Whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*)



Mysticete | Baleen Whale

**Size:** ~75 - 85 ft & ~40 - 80 tons

**Dorsal Fin:** Tall, hooked dorsal fin, about two-thirds of the way back on the body, that rises at a shallow angle from the back



**Fluke:** Broad and tapered fluke



**Other Key Identifiers:** Sleek, streamlined bodies with V-shaped heads; Flat head with no slope or angle toward the snout; Small and slender pectoral fins with pointed tips; Lower 'lip' is white on the right side, but dark on the left side; 50-100 throat grooves that extend to navel

## Sei Whale (*Balaenoptera borealis*)



Mysticete | Baleen Whale

**Size:** 40 - 60 ft & up to 100,000 lbs

**Dorsal Fin:** Tall, hooked, slender dorsal fin located about two-thirds down their back



**Fluke:** Small in relation to body size



**Other Key Identifiers:** Long, sleek body that is dark bluish-gray to black in color and white or cream-colored on the underside; Single ridge running from blowhole to tip of rostrum; Head slopes down from the blowhole to the snout; Slender and relatively short pectoral fins

# Hawai'i Marine Mammal ID Guide



**Bryde's Whale**  
(*Balaenoptera edeni*)



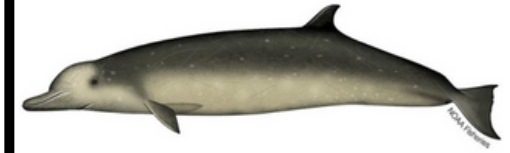
**Blainville's Beaked Whale**  
(*Mesoplodon densirostris*)



**Cuvier's Beaked Whale**  
(*Ziphius cavirostris*)



**Longman's Beaked Whale**  
(*Indopacetus pacificus*)



Mysticete | Baleen Whale

Odontocete | Beaked Whale

Odontocete | Beaked Whale

Odontocete | Beaked Whale

**Size:** ~40 - 55 ft & up to ~90,000 lbs

**Size:** ~15 - 20 ft & ~1,800 - 2,300 lbs

**Size:** ~15 - 23 ft & ~4,000 - 6,800 lbs

**Size:** up to ~22 ft

**Dorsal Fin:** Pointed and strongly hooked dorsal fin located about two-thirds back on the body



**Dorsal Fin:** Slightly hooked dorsal fin with a wide base located far down the animal's back



**Dorsal Fin:** Triangular, falcate dorsal fin located far down the animal's back



**Dorsal Fin:** Fairly large, hooked dorsal fin located behind the midpoint of their back



**Fluke:** Broad fluke that is dark on top and pale on the bottom



**Fluke:** Relatively wide, thin fluke that lacks a well-defined notch



**Fluke:** Relatively broad fluke with a lack of well-defined notch



**Fluke:** Upper surface of the fluke is dark and underside has a series of lighter streaks



**Other Key Identifiers:** Three parallel ridges running from blowholes to the tip of the V-shaped snout; Large head that makes up to a quarter of total length; Small, slender, pointed pectoral fins; 40 - 70 throat grooves; Smoky grey body coloration

**Other Key Identifiers:** Medium-sized, round body; Low, sloping, indistinct forehead; Males may have tusk-like teeth that erupt and point forward from their heavily arched lower jaw; coloration varies from dark-gray to brownish and bluish with a pale underside

**Other Key Identifiers:** Round and robust body; Head is a sloping concave-shape with no obvious melon, an indistinct beak, and a large slit-like blowhole; Jaw-line is slightly upturned giving the whale a "smiling" appearance; Coloration ranges from dark gray to a reddish-brown, with a paler counter-shaded underside

**Other Key Identifiers:** Large, robust body; Dark, small, rounded, narrow pectoral fins that fit into a depression on either side of the body; Well-defined forehead with a long, tube-shaped beak; V-shaped, paired throat creases; darker grayish, bronze, brown, or olive coloration