



# Cetacean sighting report

Please e-mail completed reports and photographs to [sightingsdata@aad.gov.au](mailto:sightingsdata@aad.gov.au) or upload to our website with your photos: <http://www.marinemammals.gov.au/sorp/sightings>

\* Required fields



## Your details

<b>First name*</b>	<b>Last name*</b>	<b>Email address*</b>

## What did you see?

<b>Species category (pick category from below)*</b>		<b>Species*</b>	
<b>How confident are you of the species?*</b>	Certain/ Probable		
<b>How many in group?*</b>		<b>Group size confidence level*</b>	Certain/Probable
<b>Number of adults</b>		<b>Number of calves</b>	
<b>Sighting cue (pick category from below)</b>		<b>Behaviour</b>	

## Any other notes about sighting

Species category: BAW = Baleen whale, BEW = Beaked whale, DW = Delphinid 'whale', DOP = Dolphin or porpoise, SW = Sperm whale (sp), UC = Unidentified cetacean, ULC = Unidentified large cetacean, USC = Unidentified small cetacean

Sighting cue: BL = Blow, BO = Body, BR = Breach, DF = Dorsal fin, O = Other (please add notes), SA = Surface activity

## When and where?

<b>Date (UTC)*</b>		<b>Sighted from (land/oil platform/plane/vessel)</b>	
<b>Time (hh:mm UTC)*</b>		<b>Vessel name</b>	
<b>Jurisdiction</b>			
<b>Latitude*</b>		<b>Longitude*</b>	
<b>Location description</b>			

General Behaviour: BR = Bow ride, BR = Breaching, DI = Diving, F = Feeding, M = Milling, O = Other (please add notes), RAS = Resting at surface, SH = Spy hopping, SW = Swimming, T/PS = Tail/pectoral slapping

Jurisdiction: ACT, Commonwealth, International, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA

## Image notes

## Terms and conditions

Submission of information and/or images will be taken as acceptance of the terms and conditions as set out on <http://www.marinemammals.gov.au/sorp/sightings>

**Postal address for forms and images on DVD/CD**: SORP coordinator, Australian Marine Mammal Centre, Australian Antarctic Division, 203 Channel Highway, Kingston, Tasmania 7050, Australia.

# Cetacean identification photos

Cetacean markings, colouration, fins, flukes and scars can be used like fingerprints in humans to identify individual cetaceans. If you can provide high resolution images\* of the cetaceans you see they will be entered into international image databases that help scientists understand cetacean distribution, movements and behaviour. Examples of the images of key features we require for individual identification are shown below. **Please remember to clearly mark which sightings report each photograph relates to.**

Blue whale	Killer whale	Humpback whale
		
Dorsal fin	Dorsal fin	Tail flukes
Mottling (colouration and patterning on skin)	Saddle patch (the pale area just below and behind the dorsal fin)	Trailing edge (the scalloped edge of each fluke)
Photograph left and right side of whale if possible	Photograph left and right side of whale if possible	Notch between flukes
Scars or unusual markings on other parts of the body	Scars or unusual markings on other parts of the body	Scars or unusual markings on other parts of the body

Photo credits (L-R): Michael Double, Robert Pitman, Nicholas Gales.

## General tips:

- Always try to take photographs when the sun is behind you (and not behind the whale).
- When using a camera that has adjustable settings, use shutter speeds of 1000 to 2000 or the 'sports/action' mode. This allows for a stop action effect when photographing a moving whale.
- Ideally keep the aperture at 11 or higher as a greater depth of field is often needed with a large animal.
- ISO settings of 400 or 800 are best.
- Record the date, time, and location (latitude/longitude) for the cetaceans that are photographed. Also record how many whales were present and how many of those were photographed.