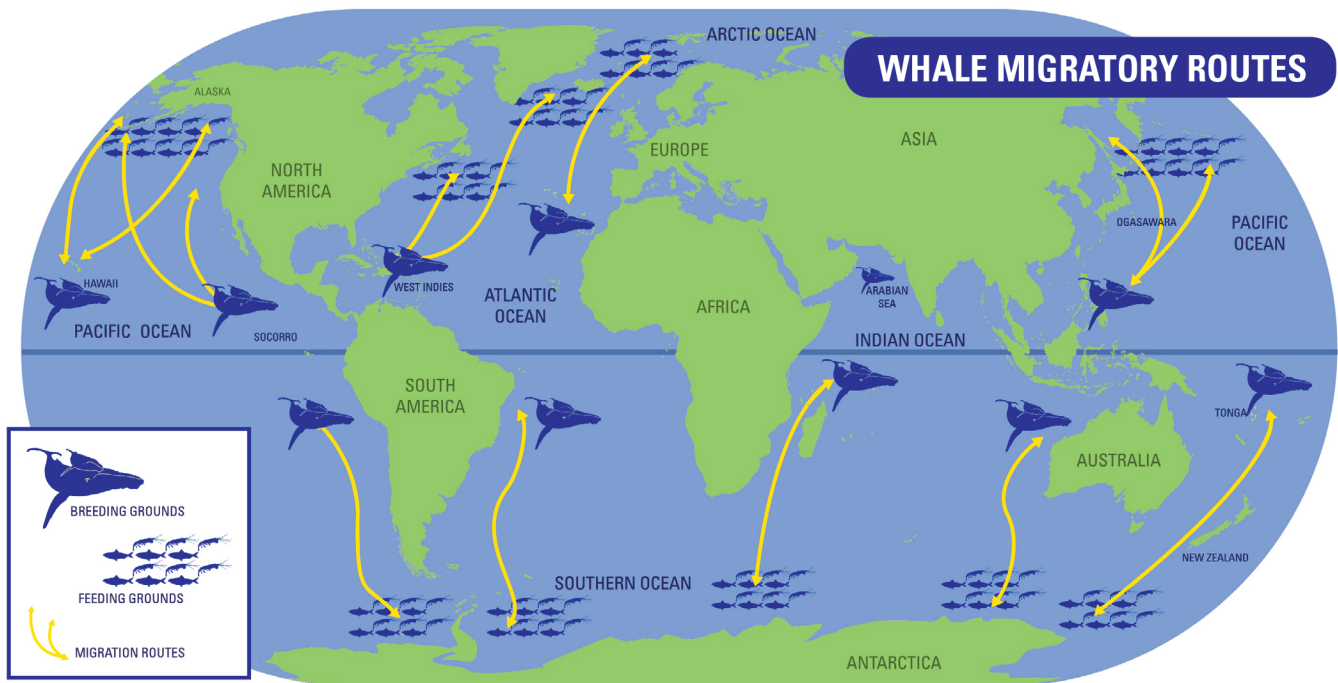


HUMPBACKS TODAY



Today, humpback whales are found in all the oceans of the world. Often called the *ocean's acrobats*, they like to leap high out of the water, a behavior called *breaching*. Though all humpbacks make sounds to communicate, only males sing. The whales in each social group all sing the same song, which can last up to 20 minutes. Their complex melodies change over time and over different regions of the world.

It's hard to imagine that in the last century, commercial whaling almost drove humpbacks to extinction. In 1966, with less than 10% of original humpback populations remaining, the international community passed a ban on hunting humpbacks. Since then, their populations have been steadily increasing.

Over the last 50 years, we've studied and discovered many fascinating behaviors and facts about humpbacks, but researchers are the first to admit that we're just beginning to understand these

ocean giants. There is so much more to learn about humpback whales and their importance to the ocean and our planet.

While their populations are recovering, humpbacks still face threats from ship strikes, entanglement in fishing gear and ocean pollution. Here's how you can help protect them:

- Be curious! Learn more about humpback whales at your library, on the internet, or at your local museum or aquarium. The more we understand humpback whales, the more we will know how to protect them.
- Support conservation organizations, scientific research and legislation aimed at preserving the health of the ocean—with your wallet, your vote, your volunteer time.
- Eat sustainable seafood to help preserve the humpback's ocean home. Get Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch app to guide your shopping and dining (www.seafoodwatch.org).
- Take science classes in school and explore a career in oceanography and marine biology.

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