



SCMMSN Species Fact Sheet

Pygmy Sperm Whale & Dwarf Sperm Whale

(*Kogia breviceps*) (*Kogia sima*)



Source: FAO Species Identification Guide: Marine Mammals of the World, 1993.

U.S. Range: Pygmy: Seaward of the continental shelf in tropical and temperate waters.
Dwarf: Continental shelf edge and slope waters in tropical and temperate latitudes.

Size: Pygmy: Adult max. 11'6" (3.5m). Neonates max. 3'11" (1.2m)
Dwarf: Adult max. 8'10" (2.7 m). Neonate max. 3'4" (1m)

Identification: Both species have small, robust fusiform body, bluish-gray upper side, dull white or pinkish underside, squarish head when viewed from the side and conical head when viewed from above with under-slung lower jaw, pectoral fins positioned far forward on the body, just behind the false "gill".

Pygmy - dorsal fin is short, falcate and positioned behind the midpoint on the back.

Dwarf - dorsal fin is taller, falcate and positioned midway along back. May have short longitudinal grooves on the throat.

Stranding History: The pygmy sperm whale, followed by dwarf sperm whale are the second and third most common marine mammals (approx. 10%) to strand in South Carolina. Strandings usually consist of single animals.

Conservation Status: Both are listed as Data Deficient on the IUCN Red List.

FYI

The Marine Mammal Protection Act prohibits the handling of any marine mammal, dead or alive, and the collection of any parts (e. g., teeth, bones) by unauthorized persons.

The South Carolina Marine Mammal Stranding Network personnel are authorized and trained to collect valuable biological data during stranding events. Public cooperation is greatly appreciated.

To report a stranding, call the South Carolina DNR hotline: 1-800-922-5431.

The majority of live strandings consist of animals that are sick and dying. Marine mammals may carry **infectious diseases** that might be **contagious** to humans. Remember the beach is an unfamiliar environment for them. They are stressed and scared. Please remain at a safe distance at all times.

For further information on marine mammal strandings or on the South Carolina Marine Mammal Stranding Network, visit our website: <http://bccmws.coastal.edu/stranding>
Thank you for your cooperation.

The South Carolina Marine Mammal Stranding Network would like to thank the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for their permission to use images from the FAO Species Identification Guide: Marine Mammals of the World, 1993.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). 2011. *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*. Version 2011.1. Retrieved on October 18, 2011, from <http://www.iucnredlist.org>

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The South Carolina Marine Mammal Stranding Network is administered by Coastal Carolina University under the authority of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Stranding Agreement Letter, under authorization of Sections 112(c) and 403 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act)

