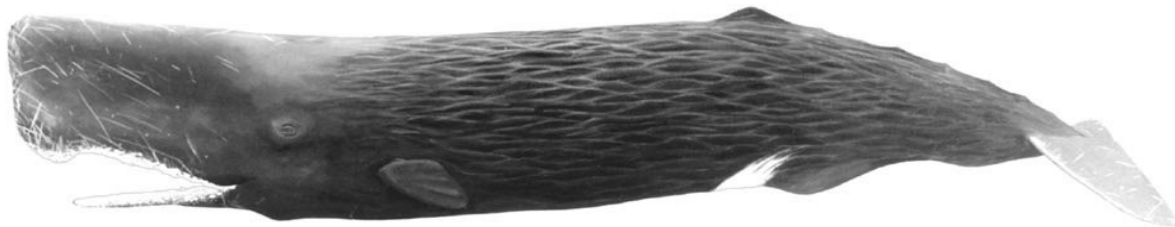




SCMMSN Species Fact Sheet

Sperm Whale

(*Physeter macrocephalus*)



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

U.S. Range: Offshore and near deep water canyons along the entire US coast.

Size: Adult max. Male 60' (18.3 m) Female 36' (11 m). Neonates 13' (4 m)

Identification: Large, robust, squarish head usually scarred. Post-head skin is wrinkled, small pectoral fins, small, triangular dorsal fin. Dark in color with white lips. May have ventral white patches.

Stranding History: Occasionally strands throughout its range with reported mass strandings in the Southeastern Atlantic, Gulf of California, California and Pacific Northwest. In South Carolina, strandings are rare (two every 10 years).

Conservation Status: Listed as Vulnerable 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.

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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)

