

Checklist of Marine Mammals Historically Encountered

In North Carolina Waters

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North Carolina Maritime Museums

Compiled October 1, 2013; revised April 1, 2016



Order	Suborder	Family	Common Name	Scientific Name	
Cetacea	Mysticeti	Balaenidae	North Atlantic right whale	<i>Eubalaena glacialis</i>	
		Eschrichtiidae	gray whale	<i>Eschrichtius robustus</i> *	
Balaenopteridae		blue whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>		
		fin whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>		
		humpback whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>		
		minke whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>		
		sei whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>		
		Bryde's whale	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>		
		Odontoceti	Physeteridae	sperm whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>
			Kogiidae	dwarf sperm whale	<i>Kogia sima</i>
pygmy sperm whale	<i>Kogia breviceps</i>				
Ziphiidae	Blainville's beaked whale	Blainville's beaked whale	<i>Mesoplodon densirostris</i>		
		Cuvier's beaked whale	<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>		
		Gervais' beaked whale	<i>Mesoplodon europaeus</i>		
	Delphinidae	True's beaked whale	northern bottlenose whale	<i>Hyperoodon ampullatus</i>	
			Atlantic spotted dolphin	<i>Stenella frontalis</i>	
			Atlantic white-sided dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i>	
		bottlenose dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>		
		Clymene dolphin	<i>Stenella clymene</i>		
		common dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>		
		false killer whale	<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>		
		Fraser's dolphin	<i>Lagenodelphis hosei</i>		
		killer whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>		
		long-finned pilot whale	<i>Globicephala melas</i>		
		melon-headed whale	<i>Peponocephala electra</i>		
		pygmy killer whale	<i>Feresa attenuata</i>		
		Risso's dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>		
		rough-toothed dolphin	<i>Steno bredanensis</i>		
		short-finned pilot whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>		
spinner dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>				
pantropical spotted dolphin	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>				
striped dolphin	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>				
white-beaked dolphin	<i>Lagenorhynchus albirostris</i>				
Sirenia	Pinnipedia	Phocoenidae	harbor porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	
		Trichechidae	Florida manatee	<i>Trichechus manatus latirostris</i>	
Carnivora	Pinnipedia	Phocidae	harbor seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	
			gray seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>	
			harp seal	<i>Pagophilus groenlandicus</i>	
			hooded seal	<i>Cystophora cristata</i>	

NOTE: This checklist was compiled and updated down through the years from several sources, both in the scientific and popular literature. For scientific names, we have relied on, "List of Marine Mammal Species," compiled by the Society for Marine Mammology's Ad-Hoc Committee on Taxonomy in 2015.

*There is some debate as to whether the gray whale, *Eschrichtius robustus*, was encountered by whalers operating off the coast of North Carolina during the Colonial Period. This species is believed to have been extirpated from the Atlantic Ocean in the eighteenth century. A partial skull of a juvenile gray whale was found at Cape Lookout in April of 1979, and Carbon 14 testing showed it to be approximately 1,000 years old. These remains were deposited into the collection of the Hampton Mariners Museum, forerunner of the N.C. Maritime Museum in Beaufort.