



SPECIES OF THE DAY: ENVIRONMENT



fin whale
(*Balaenoptera physalus*)
length 23 m (75 ft)

Fin Whale

- The fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*), also known as the finback whale or common rorqual, is a baleen whale species and the second-longest cetacean after the blue whale.
- The largest recorded individual reached 26 meters in length and weighed between 77 to 81 tonnes.
- Its long, slender body is brownish-gray with a paler underside, a form of countershading that makes it less visible from below.

Subspecies: Two main subspecies of fin whales are recognized: one in the North Atlantic and another across the Southern Hemisphere.

Habitat

- Fin whales are found in all major oceans from polar to tropical waters, excluding regions close to polar ice packs and some small areas away from the open ocean.
- They are most densely populated in temperate and cool waters and less common in the warmest equatorial regions.

North Atlantic: Extends from the Gulf of Mexico and Mediterranean Sea to Baffin Bay and Spitsbergen, with a summer feeding range mainly between 41°20'N and 51°00'N.

North Pacific: Includes waters from central Baja California to Japan, and as far north as the Chukchi Sea.

- Their migration pattern is not fully understood, but they are known to feed in high-latitude areas during summer and migrate south in the autumn.

Southern Hemisphere: Primarily migratory, moving from high-latitude Antarctic feeding grounds in summer to low-latitude feeding grounds in winter.

- They are listed as vulnerable by the IUCN and are protected under various international agreements and national regulations.



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- Despite ongoing threats from entanglement in fishing gear and potential impacts from military sonar, their populations are recovering, though they remain at risk from human activities.



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