Whale Types

Of all the creatures on the face of our earth, whales are one of the most fascinating. Did you know that even though they live in the ocean and look like fish they are not fish? Of course they are not. They are mammals. Like mammals they breathe oxygen from the atmosphere. Whales take in oxygen through a blowhole on the top of their head. Like humans., whales love to communicate with each other which they do through underwater singing. There are many different types of whale; however, whales can be divided into two main types: baleen whales and toothed whales.

Baleen Whales

The baleen whales are the gentle giants of the deep. These whale, many of the largest organisms to ever inhabit our earth, are filter feeders. These creatures use a brush-like substance called baleen to capture their food. These creatures take water into their mouths and then spit it out over the baleen which acts as a filter to capture the small organisms such as plankton and krill upon which they feed. Baleen whales have two blowholes for taking in oxygen. Female baleen whales are generally larger than the males. The baleen whales are from largest to smallest: the blue whale (26m), the fin whale (22m), the bowhead whale (18m), the right whale (17m), the humpback whale (15m), and finally the grey whale (14m).

Toothed Whales

The toothed whales are the greatest hunters of the deep. No creature of the sea is safe from these voracious predators. The toothed whales have sharp teeth designed to capture and render their prey. These hunters prey upon other sea mammals such as sea lions and squid as well as large fish such as tuna and salmon. Toothed whales have a single blowhole on top of their head. The male toothed whales tend to be larger than the females. The largest of the toothed whales is the sperm whale (18m), the killer whale (9m), the pilot whale (7m), and lastly the beluga and narwhal (4.5m).