



Apr 27th, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

The Variety and Value of Grassroots, Ground-up Recovery Efforts

Jess Newley

Donna Sandstrom

Dr. Frances Robertson

Susie Washington-Smyth

Jessica Scott

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<https://cedar.wwu.edu/ssec/2022ssec/allsessions/222>

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1,000 Yards/1 KM

**Give Them
Space!** Take the pledge.



Donna Sandstrom, The Whale Trail

Need

- ❑ Vessels closer than $\frac{1}{2}$ NM (1,000 yards) are a disturbance (WAS 2020)
- ❑ Female SRKW stop foraging when vessels approach closer than 400 yards (NOAA 2021)
- ❑ Be Whale Wise: 200 yards
- ❑ WA State Law: 300 yards
- ❑ **Current rules and guidelines are not enough**



- ❑ Fall 2020 - 3 pregnant SRKW
- ❑ Urgency to Act
- ❑ Coalition Formed



Audience



Commercial Whale Watchers

Whale-watching companies that operate in the Salish Sea — motorized vessels and kayak companies too.

[Commercial Pledge](#)



Recreational Boaters

Sailors, powerboaters and personal watercraft owners - pledge to stay 1,000 yards away!

[Recreational Pledge](#)



Individual Supporters

Help us get the word out. Encourage commercial operators and recreational boaters to take the pledge and Give Them Space!

[Individual Pledge](#)

How We Reach

- Presentations to yacht clubs
- Social media
- Future: Burgees!



Measuring Success

- ❑ Number of presentations (currently 12 yacht clubs & ~280 boaters)
- ❑ Web & Social media engagement
- ❑ Number of pledge-takers (currently **162**)
- ❑ Number of burgees flying!

- ★ **Increased awareness**
- ★ **Decreased number of recreational vessels around SRKW**
- ★ **Commercial vessels stay 1,000 yards away year-round**

Measuring Success - Signs of Recovery



- More births
- Calves survive
- Return to Salish Sea

Thank you!

donna@thewhaletrail.org

Tahlequah and Calf (Mark Sears Permit 21348)

SHARE THE WATER

Orca Network's Whale Safe Vessel Program



*Connecting Whales and People
In the Pacific Northwest*

WHALE SIGHTING NETWORK EFFORTS

- **Every Sighting Network post includes:**
- Share the Water **vessel safety details** for species reported
 - Where and **how to report whale harassment** – US & BC
 - **Be Whale Wise & Whale flag** website links
 - Map for 100+ **public shore-based viewing spots**
- Orca Network reaches & educates thousands of people daily
- Onshore volunteers educate public from shore
- **Weekly Sightings Report emails to 16,000+ subscribers include:**
are watching and visiting the whales in their home. Please observe, love, and respect them from a distance”
- Numbers for **enforcement reporting in US & BC**, Info about **regulations** and links to **Be Whale Wise**, and to **Viewpoint map** to encourage shore-based whale watching



FACEBOOK POSTS

Share the Water infographics on Orca Network's Facebook page, shared with every Whale Sighting thread on a daily basis

SHARE THE WATER

WHALES & ALL MARINE MAMMALS APPROACH DISTANCE LAWS

Washington State (includes vessels/watercraft/objects)

ENDANGERED

- Southern Resident orcas (fish-eating type)
300 yards parallel & 400 yards front/behind
- Bigg's Transient orcas (mammal-eating type)
200 yards
- Baleen whales & all other marine mammals
100 yards

SLOW TO UNDER 7 KNOTS WITHIN 1/2 MILE OF WHALES



www.orcanetwork.org



SHARE THE WATER

When operating any type of watercraft (includes paddle boards & kayaks) in WA state



Some things to watch for:

Gray whale exhalations/blows. (heart-shaped at some angles)

Photo by Jill Hein



Heads & dorsal ridges (no fin) when surfacing; flukes/tails when diving.

Pec & fluke fin tips. (Grays feed on their sides)

Photo by John Judy



GRAY WHALES DO NOT USE ECHOLOCATION AND CAN SURFACE ANYWHERE UNEXPECTEDLY.

GO SLOW

Reduce speed to under 7kn at first sign of any whale.

STAY

100 Yards distance from GRAY whales.

POSITION

parallel to the whale(s). Do not leap frog or stop in the path of any whale.

WEAR FACIAL COVERINGS - STAY 6 FEET APART FROM OTHERS - CHECK LOCAL ORDINANCES



SHARE THE WATER PROGRAM EFFORTS

- **Distribute** Be Whale Wise and Share the Water **educational materials to boaters**, including four days at 2022 Seattle Boat Show
 - **Quarterly webinars** on seasonal species and vessel-whale viewing regulations, **targeting recreational boating audiences**
 - Staff **presentations** for marinas, boating and yacht clubs
 - **Daily posts** on Orca Network and Share the Water Facebook pages when reporting whale sightings



SHARE THE WATER POSTCARDS – side 1

SHARE THE WATER

Act respectfully & responsibly when operating any type of watercraft around WHALES & all marine mammals ~

In WA State:

STAY 300/400 YARDS FROM ENDANGERED SOUTHERN RESIDENT ORCAS

200 YARDS FROM BIGG'S TRANSIENT ORCAS

100 YARDS FROM BALEEN WHALES & ALL MARINE MAMMALS



SLOW TO UNDER 7 KNOTS AT FIRST SIGN OF ANY WHALE
MAINTAIN PARALLEL COURSE TO THE WHALES
(DO NOT APPROACH OR STOP IN FRONT OF)





SHARE THE WATER

All marine mammals deserve & need space, and are protected by law.



Report Sightings to Orca Network's Whale Sighting Network

Call: 360-331-3543 or toll free 866-ORCANET (672-2638)

Email: info@orcaneetwork.org & CC' alisa@orcaneetwork.org

Post to our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/OrcaNetwork/

Please include: Date & Time - Species (if unknown please describe) - Number of Animals - Location of Cetacean(s) - Direction of Travel - Any Behaviors Observed. And any photos/videos.

Species you may encounter in the Salish Sea

(Note: Some species inhabit the inland waters year-round, others seasonally based on prey availability. Some native species might rarely be seen while others outside their range are seen often while here.) Learn more at our website: www.orcaneetwork.org

Orcas/Killer Whales:

Southern Resident Orcas (fish-eating type)

Bigg's Transient Killer Whales (mammal-eating type)

Baleen Whales:

Humpback

Gray

Minke

Fin (rare)

Dolphins:

Pacific white-sided

Common ☀

Bottlenose ☀

☀ = outside range

Porpoise:

Harbor

Dall's

All marine mammals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Killer whales have special protection in Canadian and U.S. waters. Please educate yourself – see regulations and guidelines at www.bewhalewise.org

Report harassment of whales

(Include watercraft name, registration #, & description, and photos/video when possible.)

In WA/US waters call NOAA Enforcement:

1 800 853 1964

In CANADIAN waters call DFO Violations Hotline:

1 800 465 4336

Report dead, injured, or stranded marine mammals

NOAA'S West Coast Region Stranding Hotline:

1 866 767 6114 (US: WA, OR, CA).

Report entangled marine mammals

Entanglement Reporting Hotline:

1 877 SOS WHAL (or 1 877 767 9425)

Whale Warning Flag

www.sjcmrc.org/other-content/whale-warning-flag/

Cover photo taken by Gayle Swigart

POSTCARD- Side 2

Includes:

Species info

Enforcement
contact info

Stranding/
entanglement
reporting

Be Whale Wise
and Whale Flag
links

WHEN PEOPLE SEE WHALES, THEY LOVE THEM AND WANT TO HELP



Puget Sound is an urban waterway,
boats are a part of it



Education, awareness and involvement
effect more change than shaming and blaming



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Susan Berta – susan@orcaneetwork.org

Website: www.OrcaNetwork.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OrcaNetwork
www.facebook.com/ShareTheWater



Community Based Approaches to Improving Boater Awareness and Behavior Around Whales



Frances C. Robertson

San Juan County Marine Program
San Juan County Marine Resources Committee



SUSTAINING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY.



-
- Long history of County & MRC work on behalf of SRKW.
 - Focus on community engagement, boater outreach and education.

Community based approaches to minimizing vessel disturbance



Community Engagement
Boater Outreach
Whale Warning Flag



What we do



Community Engagement

Workshops
Presentations
Partnering in local efforts
NWSC network
State & Federal participation



Boater Outreach

Boat shows
Dock talks
Distribution of outreach materials



Whale Warning Flag

Social prompt
Alerts boaters to presence of whales
Used coastwide

The Whale Warning Flag

COAST WIDE ALERT

Has the potential to protect all whale species
and create a sustained
behavior change in the boating community.

WIDE ADOPTION

Distribute through partners in BC & WA.
Whale Watch industry
Recreational boating sector
State boating program



whaleflag.org



Photo: Katy Foster, taken under permit

Thank you

www.whaleflag.org

Website: www.sjcmrc.org & www.sanjuanco.com/1629/Marine-Resources

Facebook: @SJCMarineResourcesCommittee

Email: francesr@sanjuanco.com

twitter: @distanffins



The WhaleReport Alert System

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference, April 2022

Jessica L. Scott

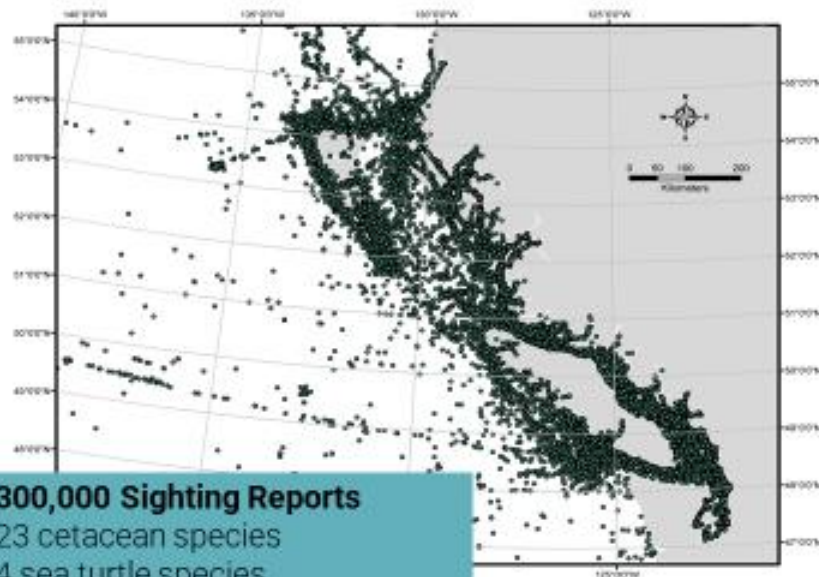
Senior Manager, Whales Initiative

jessica.scott@ocean.org



The BC Cetacean Sightings Network

One of Canada's most enduring and successful citizen science programs. We conduct outreach with coastal communities and collect cetacean sightings from a diverse network of observers across the coast for conservation-based research.



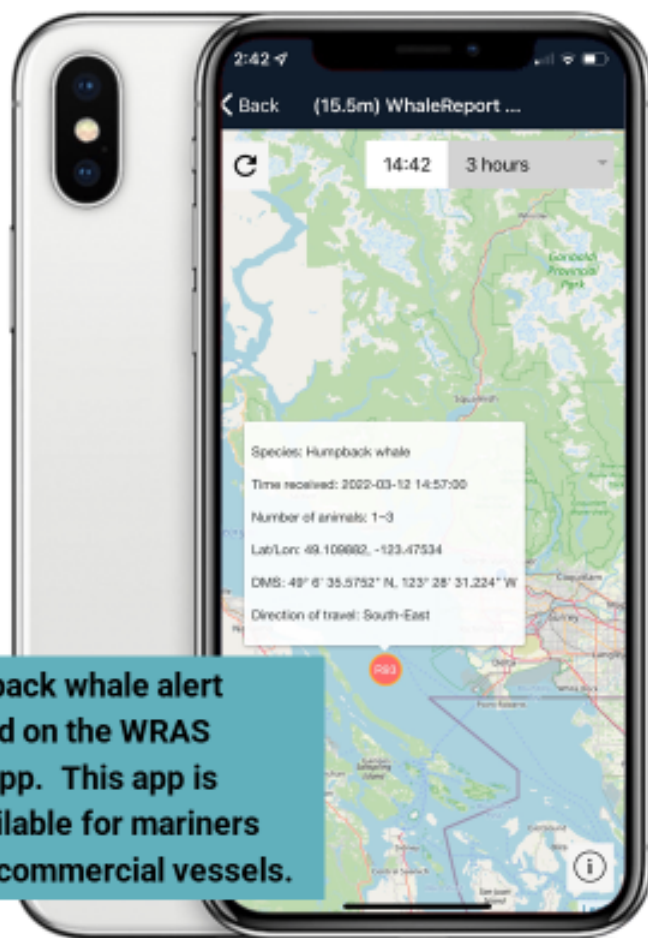
300,000 Sighting Reports
23 cetacean species
4 sea turtle species

94% of sightings reported in near real time via our WhaleReport app

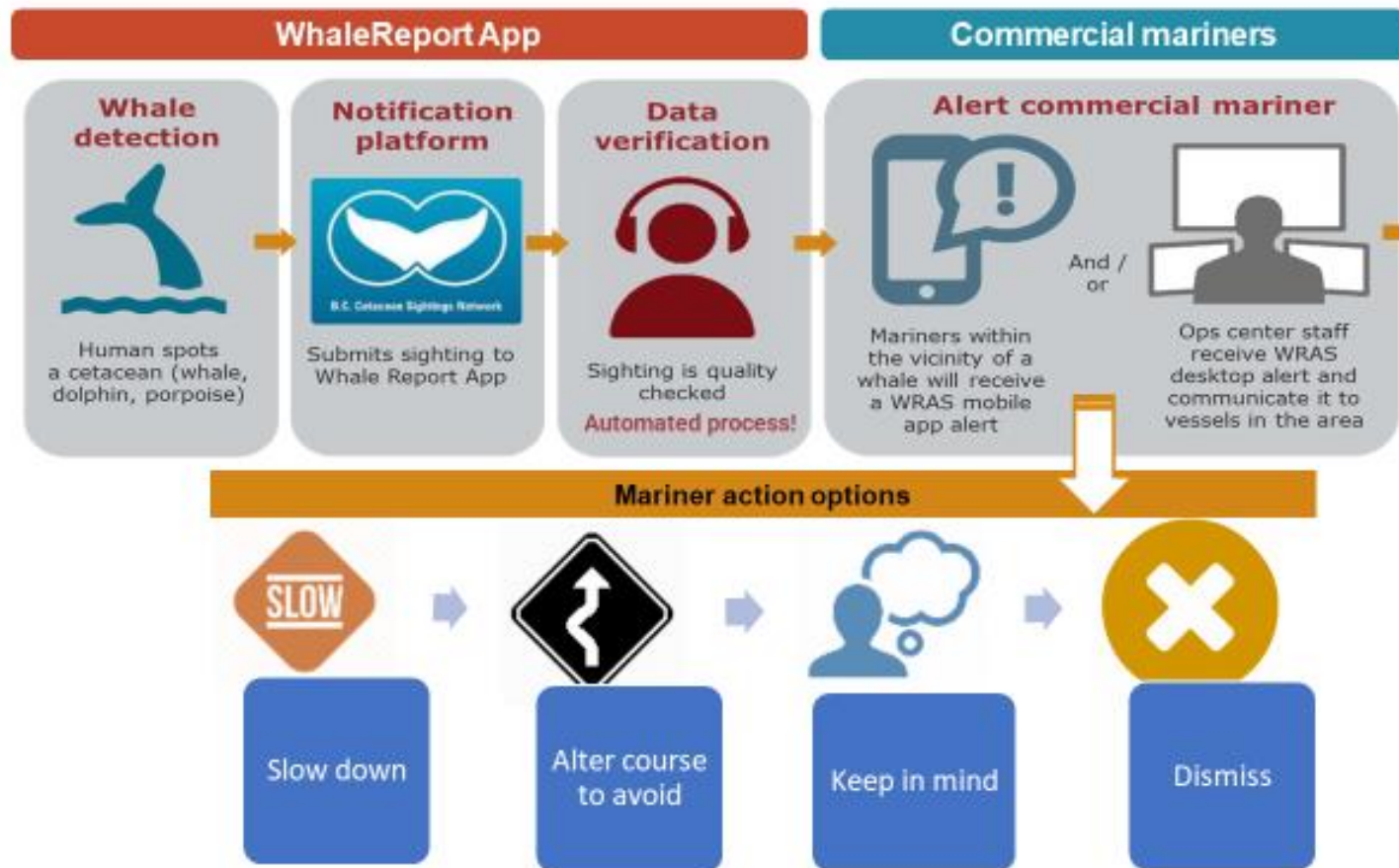


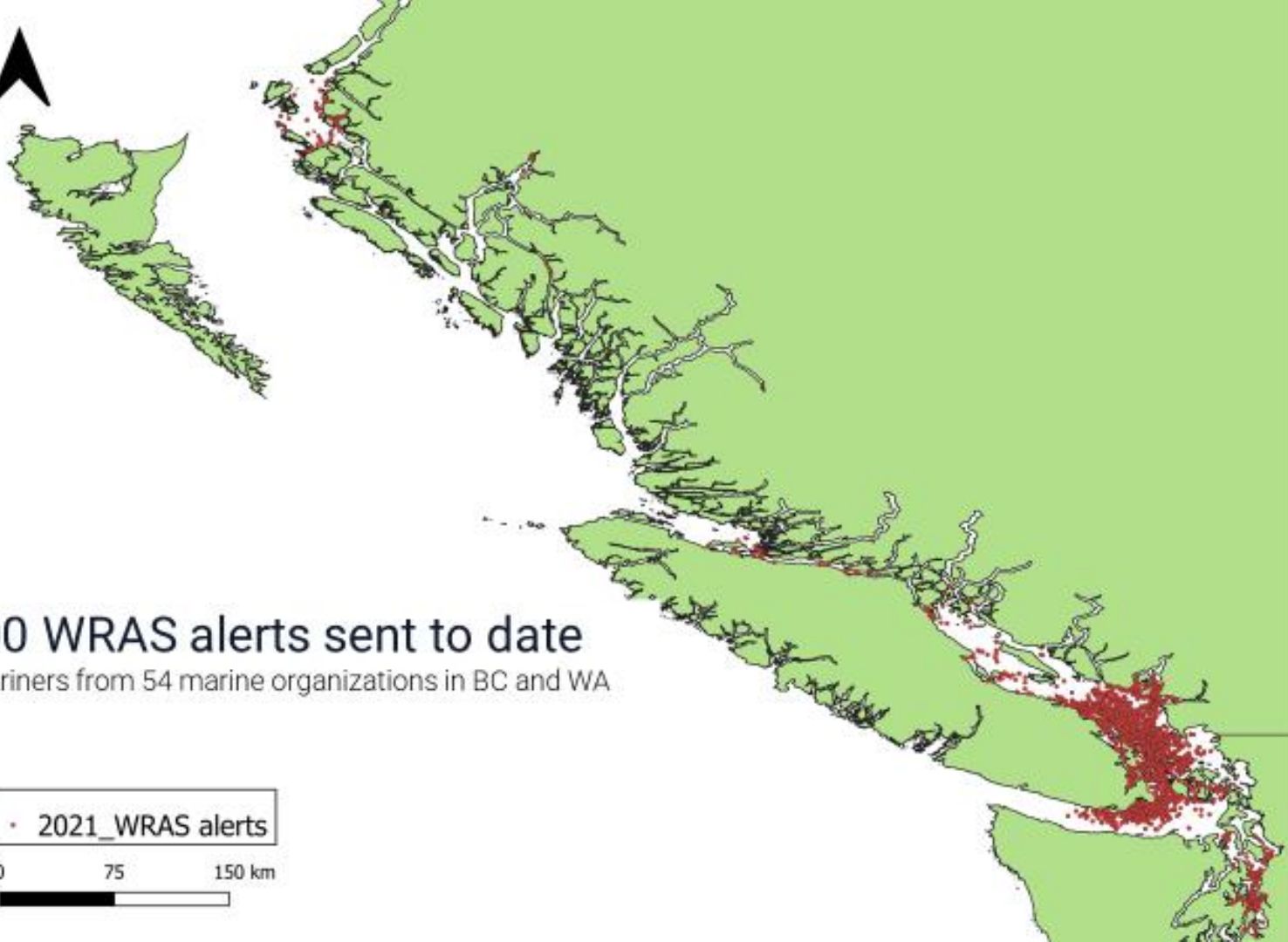
The WhaleReport Alert System (WRAS)

- Reduces vessel strike and disturbance for whales by privately alerting mariners of large commercial vessels of whales in their vicinity: accessible via phone or desktop computer.
- Developed with a working group of professional mariners
- Informed by real-time sightings reported via WhaleReport
- Only sightings where the observer reported their species ID confidence as "certain" or "probable" will generate alerts
- Decay time for alerts ranges from 30 minutes to 12 hours (depending on species)



How the WRAS works:





Over 20,000 WRAS alerts sent to date
to professional mariners from 54 marine organizations in BC and WA

• 2021_WRAS alerts

0 75 150 km



What's next for the WRAS?

- Efficacy testing using AIS data to determine ship responses to alerts
- Currently working with the Canadian and US Coast Guard to investigate how WRAS alerts could be sent directly to select vessels via Area-Specific Messaging via the Coast Guard's Automatic Identification System (AIS)
- Incorporating acoustic detections and visual detections from other sightings networks/hydrophone network
- Contact: jessica.scott@ocean.org

Thank you to our funders and supporters!



Canada



Photo taken under DFO
License MML-18

Eyes on the Water:

Citizen Science in the Salish Sea

Susie Washington-Smyth
Coordinator, SGIWSN



Whales in the Salish Sea

- Island communities care about *all* the whales in Salish Sea.
- Canadian government has responsibility to protect the endangered SRKW under the Species at Risk Act.
- Measures created to protect critical habitat for SRKW:
 - Interim Sanctuary Zone
 - ECHO programs voluntary Vessel Slowdown
 - Vessel approach guidelines
 - Fishery closures



Southern Gulf Islands Whale Sighting Network

1. Integrated partnership with SIMRES for scientific support, training, hydrophone & photographic data
2. Record frequency, distribution & types of whales in the Southern Gulf Islands (Saturna, Pender and Mayne Islands)
3. Monitor & assess compliance in Interim Sanctuary Zones
4. Monitor compliance with fishing and marine mammal regulations
5. Collaborate with cetacean researchers and government agencies

SIMRES 



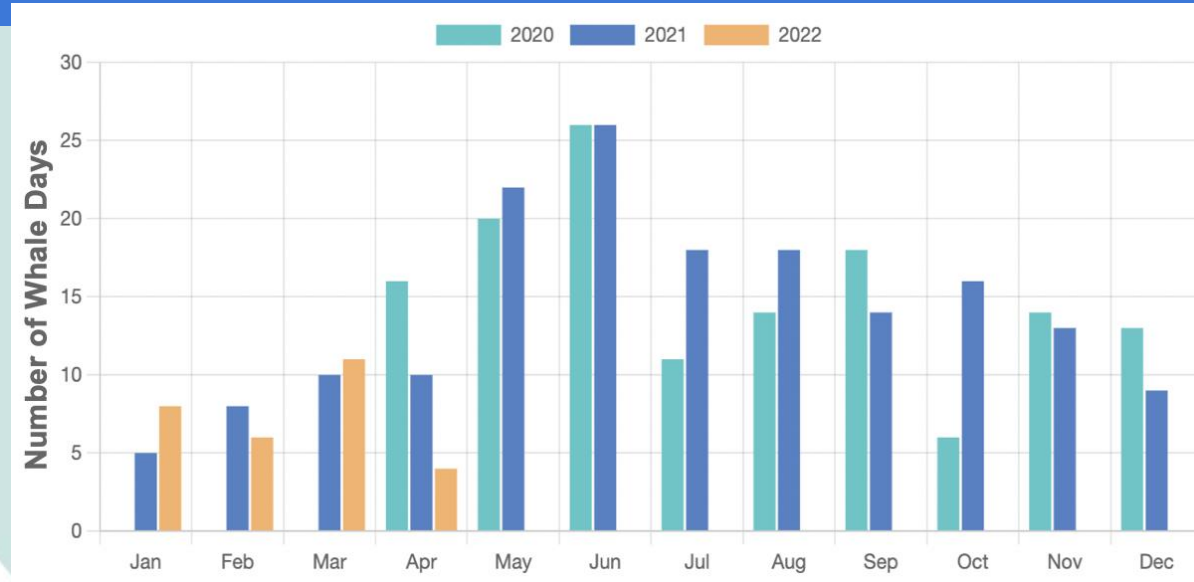
**OCEAN
WISE**



SIMON FRASER
UNIVERSITY

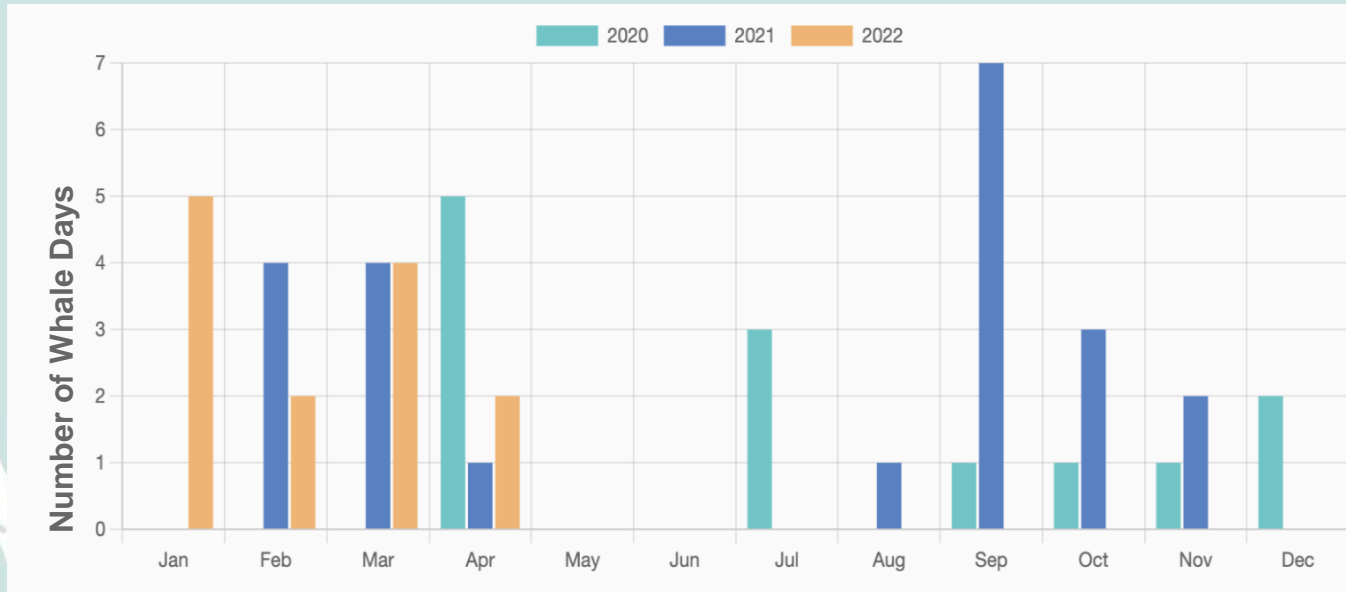
We have found –

Whales are here year round



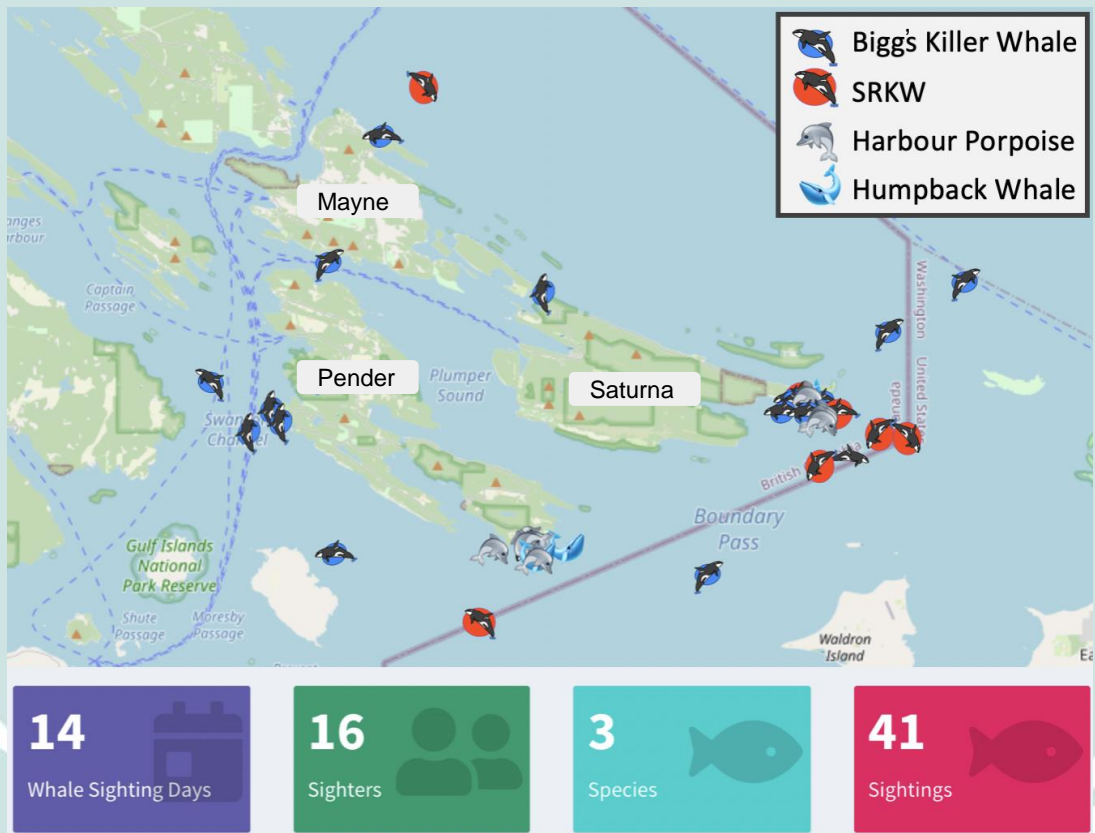
Killer whale and humpback whale days per month collected by SGIWSN/SIMRES: Saturna (April 2020 - April 2022), Pender (2021 - 2022) and Mayne (2022) (SRKWs documented every month except May and June for last two years)

SRKW Sightings: Southern Gulf Islands 2020 - 2022



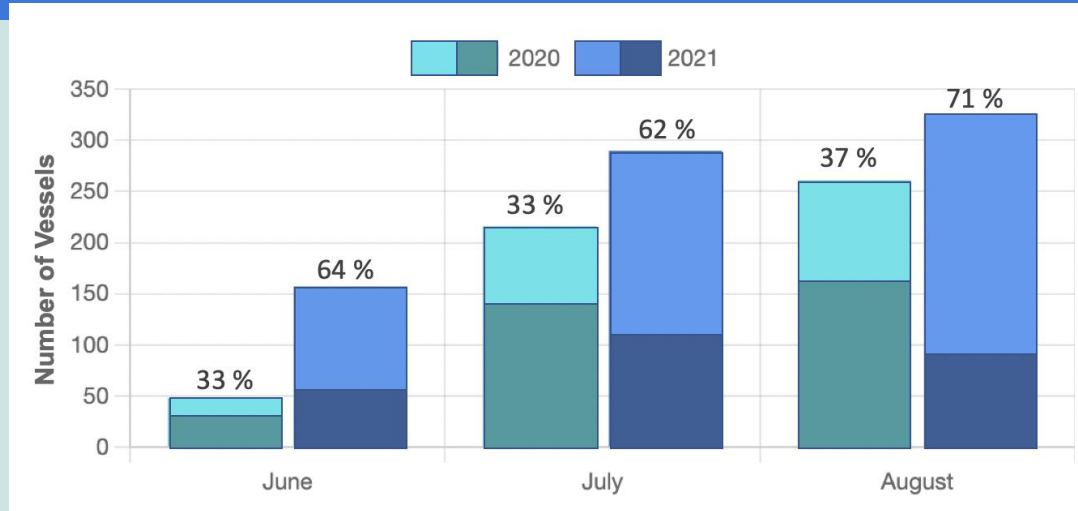
SRKW whale day/month data collected by SGIWSN/SIMRES: Saturna (April 2020 - April 2022), Pender (2021 - 2022) and Mayne (2022) SFU researchers contributed sightings between June-September for 2020 and 2021

March 2022 Sightings...



And, we found –

Vessel infractions are common in ISZs



Vessel infractions (on bottom), compliance (on top)

**Compliance rate documented by SFU whale researchers.
Recorded with range finder at northern end of Saturna Island ISZ for 2020 & 2021
No Fines Issued For Any Of These Infractions**

Key findings

1. Year round presence of whales (including SRKW)
2. Despite marine mammal & fishing regulations, recreational boaters often non-compliant (eg. distance from whales & illegal fishing)
3. Safe Places for SRKWs are critical * ISZs don't work as designed (too small, not year round, compliance/enforcement inadequate)
4. For the 6 months ECHO program is operational, high compliance of commercial vessel slowdown



Next Steps

- Continue and share our research
- Incorporate hydrophones, infrared camera
- Work with other whale researchers, NGO partners, federal scientists & policy makers
- Advocate for year-round & enforceable sanctuaries for SRKW and year round vessel slowdown in Boundary Pass
- Advocate for no exceptions and enforcement of 400 m distance for all boats from all killer whales

Learn more at:
simres.ca



ANCHOR OUT OF EELGRASS + SALISH SEA GREEN BOATING

Jess Newley, Community Science and Education Manager

Friends of the San Juans





NEED

- Eelgrass is critical nursery habitat found at many popular anchorages
- Salmon depend on eelgrass, Southern Residents depend on salmon!
- Increased boat traffic = crowded anchorages
- Multiple outreach campaigns to be shared with boaters

GOALS

- Give boaters the tools and resources to leave a small wake
- Protect habitat that supplies food for Southern Residents Killer Whales
- Consistent messaging throughout Salish Sea
- Amplify other's messages
- Behavior change through Community Based Social Marketing





AUDIENCE

- Recreational Boaters
- Charter Companies
- Yacht Clubs

OUTREACH METHODS

- Yacht Club Presentations
- Popular Boating Magazines
- Website- sanjuans.org/greenboating
- Printed Green Boating Brochure and Map
- On shore signs for boaters at anchorages
- Anchor out zones



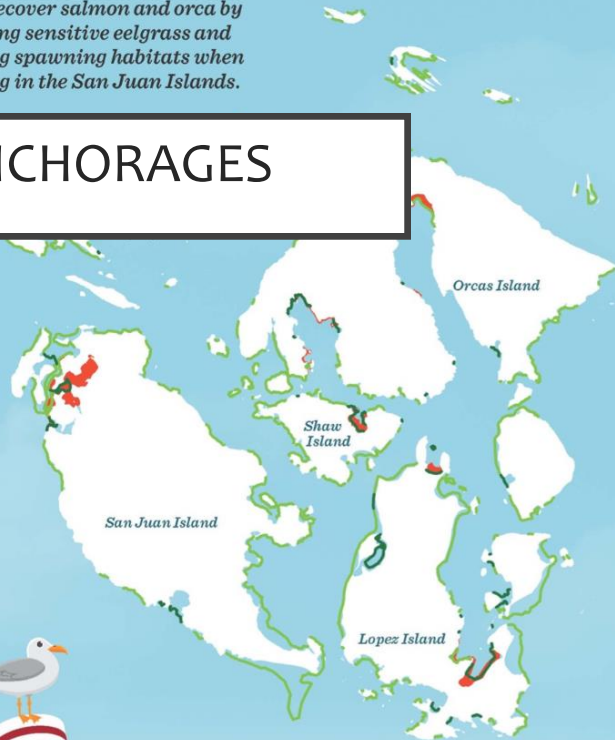
Scan here for electronic brochure + map

Anchor out of eelgrass

Help recover salmon and orca by avoiding sensitive eelgrass and herring spawning habitats when boating in the San Juan Islands.



SIGNAGE FOR ANCHORAGES



- Herring Spawning Habitat**
Anchor out of eelgrass or use mooring buoys to protect herring spawning grounds.
- Shallow Eelgrass Habitat**
Anchor deeper than 15 feet (at low tide) to avoid eelgrass in these areas.
- Eelgrass Habitat**
Anchor deeper than 25 feet (at low tide) to avoid eelgrass in these areas.

Six best practices for Salish Sea boaters



Prevent oil from getting into the water

Keep your boat in good working conditions and quickly clean even the smallest of spills. Don't use dish soap! In the event of an oil spill call 1 800 OILS 911.



Help other people know whales are near

Use the whale warning flag to warn fellow boaters of the presence of whales and be aware of the flag when you're cruising the area.

Visit WhaleFlag.org for more information.



When in doubt, anchor out!

Anchor in waters deeper than 25 feet to save important eelgrass for salmon, crab, and other wildlife. See map shown on left for eelgrass locations and depths.



Give whales space!

Stay 400 yards away from orcas, turn off depth finders, and reduce speed to 7kts and under.

Visit BeWhaleWise.org for more info.



Help keep marine animals safe

Use marine mammal reporting networks:

- (800) 562-8832 marine mammal stranding network
- (800) 853-1964 harassments and other violations



Pump out, don't dump out!

Download the free Pumpout Nav app to find your nearest pumpout location and keep our waters clean.




For more details:
sanjuans.org/greenboating

MEASURING SUCCESS



- Number of presentations, articles, and press
- Monitoring compliance in Anchor out Zones
- Number of Brochures and Placemats handed out
- Number of buoys installed

An underwater photograph of a kelp forest. Sunlight rays penetrate the clear blue water, illuminating the golden-brown kelp fronds. The kelp stalks are visible in the background, and the overall scene is serene and natural.

THANK YOU!
JESS@SANJUANS.ORG

Photo by Jess Newley



Friends *of the*
San Juans