

! WARNING

Endangered Right Whales need help!

So what is happening to them?

(Baleen whale)
North Atlantic Right whale

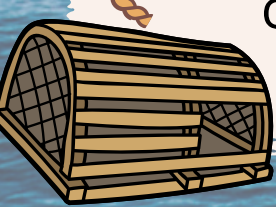


Eubalaena glacialis

Endangered

-> Threats

Entanglements: Entanglements cause cutting of the skin which leads to infection and death if it escalates. 85% of Right whales have been entangled at least once in their lives. There are fewer than 70 breeding females left and only around 360 individuals left in the world, many of these whales have been effected by entanglements



Vessel strikes: With the whales migration routes being close to ports and shipping routes, collisions from boats are increasing. Collisions from propellers cause cuts, broken bones, and internal injuries which can lead to death. The faster the boat the more damage is caused.



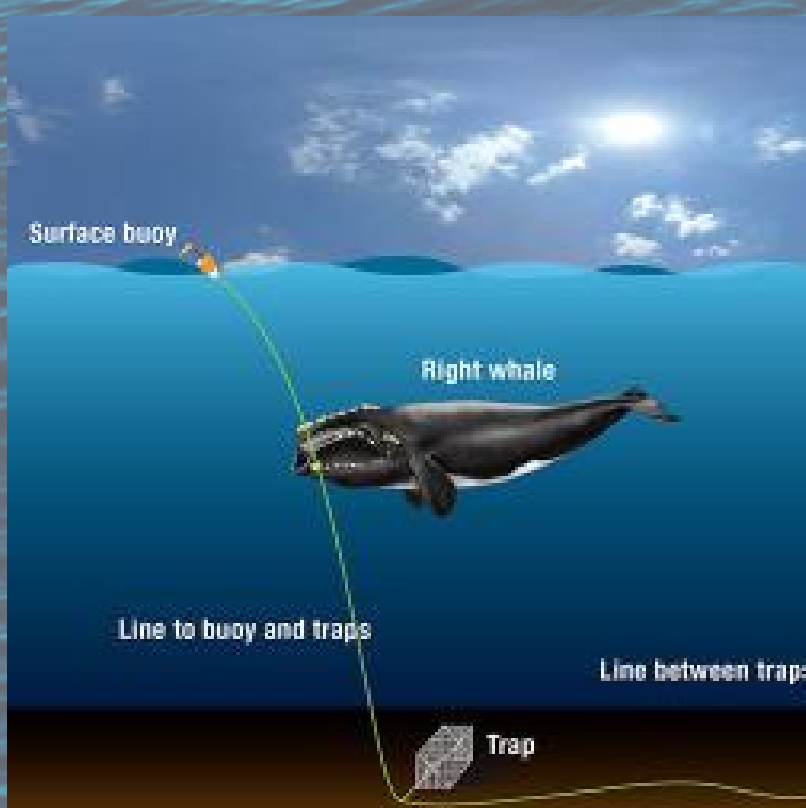
Real life example



A calf of a well known breeding female named Juno was recently involved in a vessel strike. Fortunately the calf is still alive and is able to nurse but it is uncertain that the animal will continue to develop normally and feed off plankton when it grows older. This calf was lucky, There has been 12 deaths and 3 injuries from vessel strikes along with 30 injuries from entanglements for these amazing creatures. We need to do what we can to get new laws in place, and fast!

Along with being important predators of plankton species like their favourite: copepods, Right whales have an interesting way of helping the environment: When a whale poops that poop gives nutrients to the ocean and all the microscopic organisms within it. These organisms then reduce carbon dioxide emissions and increase oxygen over time.

-> impacting the environment and us?



New laws = New hope?

New proposed solutions have been put in place to reduce the risks of the top 2 greatest threats :

1. -> fishing gear like crab traps and pots are known to injure whales, so a solution is make weaker parts in the rope by introducing a special clip that will break if pressure is applied to the rope (ex. A whale pulling it).
2. -> A solution for reducing vessel strikes is keeping a 500 yd "no-approach zone" where no vessels are allowed to approach the whales in any way. Maintaining a low speed where the whales are present is also an option.

Thankfully new speed laws are being proposed that now includes boats that are 35-65 ft that need to travel 10 knots or less in seasonal designated areas. This is important because smaller vessels have encounter for 5 out of the 10 lethal strikes since 2008. The coast of Georgia (along with north Florida and South Carolina) is the only known breeding ground in the world for Right Whales, so these game changing laws need to come into effect soon to save the species!