



# SCOTTISH ENTANGLEMENT ALLIANCE

Understanding marine animal entanglement in Scottish waters

## Background to this project:

The organisations involved in preparing this booklet are working together to find ways to reduce the risk of large marine animals becoming entangled in fishing gear. This work was initiated by SCFF and our aim is to work closely with fishermen to raise awareness, improve our understanding of the issues and develop practical solutions.

This booklet was the first step towards achieving these goals. Since the first publication of this booklet the partnership has won EMFF funding, to find out more about this project visit [www.scottishentanglement.org](http://www.scottishentanglement.org)



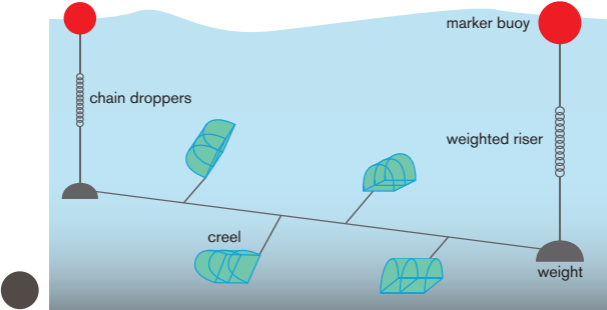


More information on entanglement and strandings can be found at: [www.scottishentanglement.org](http://www.scottishentanglement.org)

This best practice guide is supported by:



# Set-up to reduce the risk of entanglement





## Setting Creels

- 1 **Set riser length** to water depth  
(suggested set-up in picture above)
- 2 Use a **weighted rope** on the riser
- 3 **Minimise** soak time
- 4 Only set creels when **actively fishing**
- 5 Immediately report **all** incidents of entanglement  
(phone numbers at end)

***Aim:** To reduce excess rope in the water column to minimise the risk of entanglement in riser line.*

## Encountering an entanglement:

- Look for buoys and lines moving or unusually clumped near an animal.
- Remember your own safety when approaching a wild animal and **NEVER** enter the water. Large whales are extremely powerful and unpredictable.
- Seek advice from the Scottish Entanglement Alliance before attempting a rescue. Cutting an animal free could result in partial disentanglement only. This may leave the animal at risk and lead to loss of gear.



***Aim:** Report all entanglements to improve knowledge and minimise damage to fishing gear*

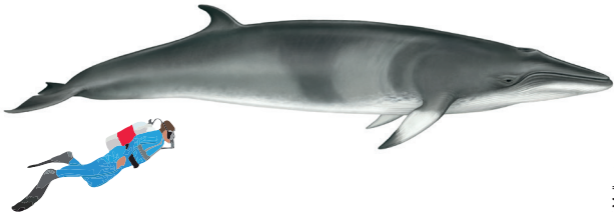


## Key information to record and report:

- **Take photos** wherever possible (remember your phone has a camera)
- **Location** of animal: record coordinates
- **Description:** species, size, injuries, presence of tags
- **Condition:** alive, mobile, injured, inactive, if dead is it fresh or decomposing
- All information shared will be treated in strictest confidence

*Aim: To gather as much information as possible to assist in rescue attempts, and improve our understanding and guidance*

# Minke whale



Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water





## Minke whale

### Size

Length: 7-8.5m (23-28ft)

Weight: Up to 9 metric tons (10t)

### Behaviours

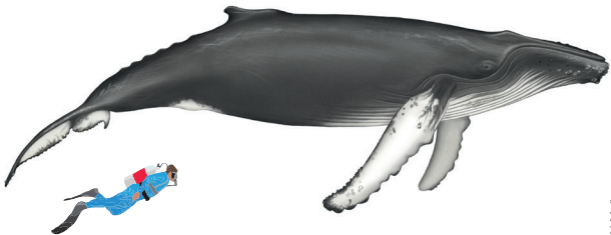
Feed on wide variety of fish (herring, cod and sandeels)

Can be seen at surface feeding beneath flocks of seabirds

Dive times are typically 10 minutes

Usually does not produce a visible blow

# Humpback whale



Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water



## Humpback whale

### Size

Length: 11.5-15m (38-50ft)

Weight: 23-40 metric tons (25-45t)

### Behaviours

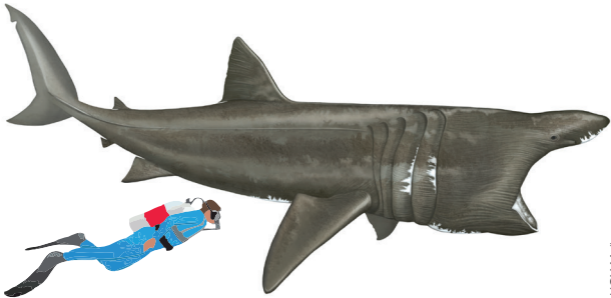
Feeds on young schooling fish such as sandeels, herring and mackerel

Often seen lunge feeding

Dive times are typically around 5 minutes

Typically raises tail (fluke) when diving

# Basking shark



Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water



## Basking shark

### **Size**

Length: 6.7 to 8.8m (22-29ft)

Weight: c. 2 metric tons (1.9t)

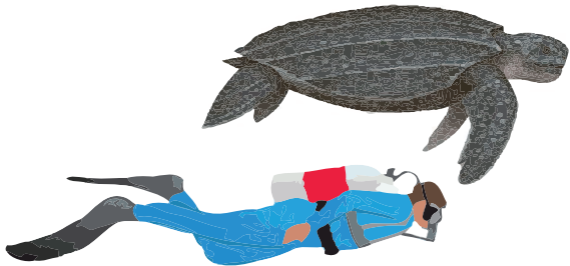
### **Behaviours**

Feeds on zooplankton (small copepods, fish eggs, larvae)

Feeds by swimming with mouth open

Dorsal fin and tail fin can protrude from the water, can look like two sharks following each other

# Leatherback turtle



Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water



## Leatherback turtle

### **Size**

Length: up to 2m (6.5ft)

Weight: up to 600kg (1320 lbs)

### **Behaviours**

Feeds on jellyfish

Summer visitor to Scottish waters

Commonly seen at the surface,  
and can look like an upturned saucer.

Head protrudes from the water

## Reporting entanglements:

To report an entangled animal (live or dead) please contact:

Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme - **01463 243030**

Outside office hours – **07393 798153**

Coast Guard - **VHF ch. 16**

Or email **[entanglement@sac.co.uk](mailto:entanglement@sac.co.uk)**

