



Look for whales during Watch Weeks

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Best Watching Sites and Times

Winter Whales - Southbound

Winter Whale Watching Week - Sat, Dec 26, 2009- Fri., Jan 1, 2010 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Trained volunteers will be present at the 26 sites listed on the map (right) to show visitors the gray whales.

This is not the only time you can see the whales. About 18,000 gray whales will pass by in about 4 weeks, from mid-December to mid-January. The same locations are still great viewing spots.

The main body of whales is about 5 mile off shore, but some can be seen as close as 1-2 miles off shore.

During the southern migration whales seldom stop to eat, but travel steadily to the Baja lagoons of Mexico.

Spring Whales - Northbound

Spring Whale Watching Week - Sat., March 20 - Sat., March 27, 2010 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Trained volunteers will be present at the 26 sites on the map (right) to show visitors the gray whales.

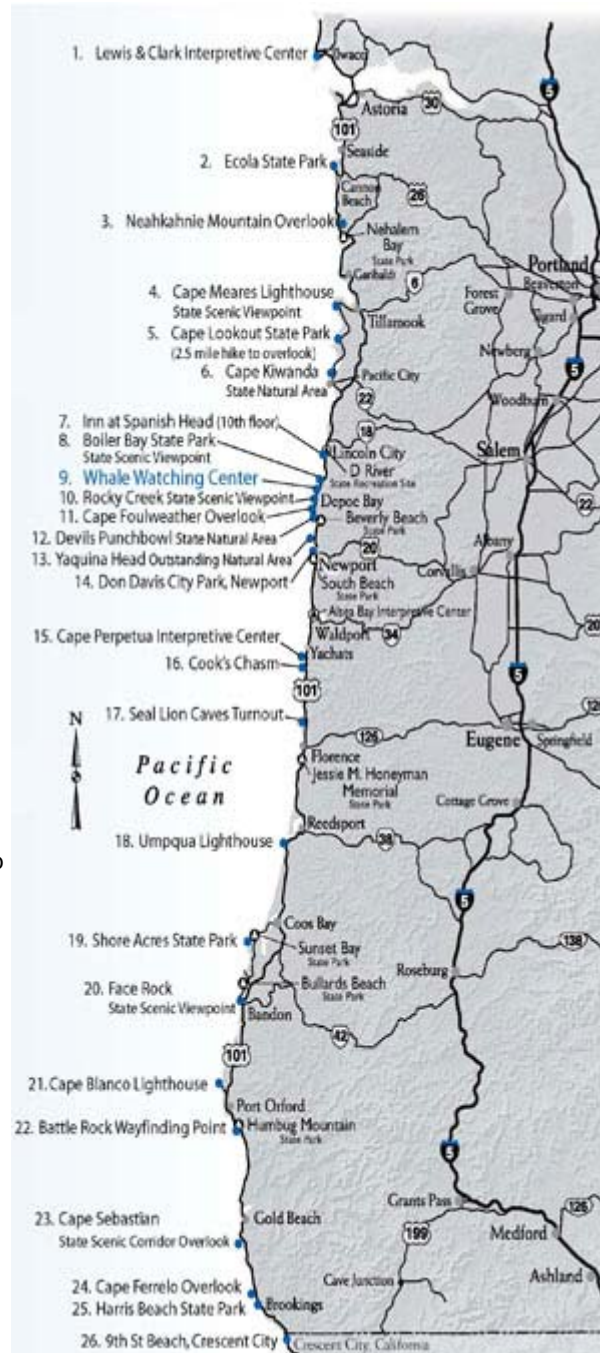
This is not the only time you can see the whales. About 18,000 whales will pass by our coast during March, April, May and June on their way to Alaska's Bering Sea.

Juveniles pass first followed by adults. Last are the mothers and babies.

Many of them come close to shore feeding on Oregon's great food supply. In April and May you may be able to see mothers and calves resting in protected coves close to shore. We see this quite often from the Whale Center. The same locations on the map are still great viewing spots.

Summer Whales

There are about 200-400 gray whales that do not go as far north as Alaska to feed in the summer. We generally have feeding whales on the central coast from July through October. These whales are very close to shore while feeding and can often be seen from many of the same locations on the map.



Whale Watching Tips

For year-round whale watchers and those watching for the first time, here are a few whale watching tips.

- Gray whales may possibly be seen year-round on the Oregon, Washington and northern California coastlines.
- Winter migration has the highest numbers (30 per hour) but the whales are usually farther off shore (1-5 miles) because of stormy weather..
- During the spring migration (northbound), the whales are more spread out (6 per hour) but they are closer to shore (1/2 - 3 miles), sometimes stopping to eat.
- Summer feeding whales are very close to shore and eat tiny mysid shrimp that live in the kelp beds. They may feed for hours in the same location.
- Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Focus your binoculars and have them ready, but watch with your eyes. When you locate a blow, then bring up your binoculars for a closer look.
- Learn the diving and feeding habits of the whales (see the [Whale Watching Center](#) brochure) so you will know how often and where they may surface.
- Morning light (with the sun at your back) is often helpful for spotting blows. Afternoon light reflects off the water and makes viewing difficult.
- Calmer days are better whale watching days, by land, sea or air!
- Any spot with an ocean view may yield whale sightings, but higher locations are better than sandy beaches.