The following marine mammals are common to Hudson Strait, however, other species may also be seen.

It’s possible for marine mammals to venture outside of their common habitats and may be seen elsewhere.

### Bowhead Whale
- **Length:** 13-20 m
- **Appearance:** Stocky, with large head. Blue-black body with white markings on the chin, belly and just forward of the tail. No dorsal fin or ridge. Two blow holes, no teeth, has balena.
- **Behaviour:** Blow is V-shaped and bushy, reaching 6 m in height. Often alone but sometimes in groups of 2-10.
- **Habitat:** Leads and cracks in pack ice during winter and in open water during summer.
- **Status:** Special concern

### Beluga Whale
- **Length:** 4-5 m
- **Appearance:** Adults are almost entirely white with a tough dorsal ridge and no dorsal fin. Young are grey.
- **Behaviour:** Blow is low and hardly visible. Not much of the body is visible out of the water. Found in small groups, but sometimes hundreds to thousands during annual migrations.
- **Habitat:** Found in open water year-round. Prefer shallow coastal water during summer and water near pack ice in winter.
- **Status:** Endangered

### Narwhal
- **Length:** 4-5 m
- **Appearance:** Dark grey/black body when young, becoming speckled grey and white with age. Males have a spiralled tusk up to 3 m long. Dorsal ridge, no dorsal fin.
- **Behaviour:** Blow is puffy. Not much of the body is visible out of the water. Often in groups of 12-20 but can be hundreds.
- **Habitat:** Can navigate under heavy ice cover by using cracks and holes to breathe.
- **Status:** Special concern

### Harp Seal
- **Length:** Up to 2 m
- **Appearance:** Grey to dark grey with brown tinge on head and light grey underside. Long, white whiskers and square shaped front flippers.
- **Behaviour:** Solitary, but form small groups during mating and moulting (March-May).
- **Habitat:** Water less than 200 m depth and commonly found with drifting sea ice.
- **Status:** Data deficient

### Hooded Seal
- **Length:** 4-5 m
- **Appearance:** Silver grey with irregular dark patches over most of the body. Males have characteristic inflatable black “hood” on forehead and inflatable balloon-like nose membrane.
- **Behaviour:** Solitary, except during pupping (mid-March to early April), mating (late winter) and moulting (June-August).
- **Habitat:** On drifting pack ice and in deep waters.
- **Status:** Not at risk

### Bearded Seal
- **Length:** Up to 2.5 m
- **Appearance:** Grey to dark grey with brown tinge on head and light grey underside. Long, white whiskers and square shaped front flippers.
- **Behaviour:** Solitary, but form small groups during mating and moulting (March-May).
- **Habitat:** Water less than 200 m depth and commonly found with drifting sea ice.
- **Status:** Not assessed

### Walrus
- **Length:** 2-3.5 m
- **Appearance:** Big, stocky body with small head, thick, brown skin, a broad flat muzzle, white whiskers, and two distinctive trunks.
- **Behaviour:** Occur in tight groups on ice floes or on land.
- **Habitat:** Shallow water and coastal beaches in summer and at the edge of fast ice in winter.
- **Status:** Special concern

### Killer Whale
- **Length:** Up to 27 m
- **Appearance:** Black body with white throat, belly and underside and white spot behind eye. Triangular dorsal fin in the middle of the back. Male dorsal fin can be up to 2 m in height.
- **Behaviour:** Blow is tall and column shaped; approximately 4 m in height. Typically forms groups of 2-20.
- **Habitat:** Coastal water and open sea, often in water less than 200 m in depth.
- **Status:** Special concern

### Polar Bear
- **Length:** Up to 3 m
- **Appearance:** White, but can appear yellow, or light brown.
- **Behaviour:** Solitary, except during breeding (late March-May) and cub rearing.
- **Habitat:** Majority of time is spent on sea ice.
- **Status:** Special concern

### Distance Requirements When Around Marine Mammals

**Changes in navigation should not be assumed if they compromise safe operations**

- **Slow down and avoid abrupt course changes**
- **Do not approach**
- **Do not maneuver**
- **Distance Requirements**

#### 400 m
- **Marine mammals**

#### 100 m
- **Fast ice in winter.**

#### 2 km
- **Shallow water and coastal beaches in summer and at the edge of fast ice in winter.**

#### 5 km
- **Majority of time is spent on sea ice.**

- **Maneuver around marine mammals**

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**Sources:**
- Narwhal
- Bowhead Whale
- Beluga Whale
- Killer Whale
- Harp Seal
- Hooded Seal
- Bearded Seal
- Walrus
- Polar Bear

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**Images:**
- Marine Mammals of Hudson Strait
- Bowhead Whale
- Beluga Whale
- Killer Whale
- Harp Seal
- Hooded Seal
- Bearded Seal
- Walrus
- Polar Bear

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**Note:**
- It's possible for marine mammals to venture outside of their common habitats and may be seen elsewhere.
- Distance Requirements
- Changes in navigation should not be assumed if they compromise safe operations.
**Hudson Strait Mariner’s Guide**

**SUMMER**

Seals are common throughout the area

- Frequently used shipping route 2013
- Whale distribution (bowhead, beluga, narwhal, killer whale)
- Walrus distribution

**WINTER**

Ice free areas have higher marine mammal abundance

- Frequently used shipping route 2013
- Open water (polynyas and shore lead)
- Polar bear denning areas
- Sea ice coverage

**WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS, ENCOUNTERS, AND INCIDENTS**

Report to: Department of Fisheries and Oceans,
Steve Ferguson, 204-983-5057, steve.ferguson@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

You may be asked to provide:
- Date and time you found the animal or witnessed the incident
- Specific location, including latitude and longitude (if available) or driving directions (if accessible by land)
- Species or type of animal, including a description of the size, colour, features
- Condition of the animal – alive, sick or injured, freshly dead, badly rotting away
- Number of animals involved
- Your contact information, including name and phone number

**LOCAL COMMUNITY HUNTER AND TRAPPER ORGANIZATION PHONE NUMBERS WILDLIFE SIGHTINGS, ENCOUNTERS, AND INCIDENTS**

Contact the nearest community for local knowledge of marine mammals.

**Aklavik:** 819-496-2222
**Arviat:** 867-837-2836
**Aupaluk:** 819-491-7070
**Baker Lake:** 867-793-2520
**Cape Dorset:** 867-897-8978
**Chesterfield Inlet:** 867-898-9063
**Coral Harbour:** 867-925-8622
**Cape Dorset:** 867-897-8978
**Iqaluit:** 867-979-6848

**Synopsis:**

- Seal distribution (hunted, harp, ringed, bearded)
- Harvest areas
- Be courteous of community boats and hunting parties.

**NOTE:**

For navigation purposes, please use maps provided by the Canadian Hydrographic Service.

- Seal distribution
- Walrus distribution
- Harvest areas
- Be courteous of community boats and hunting parties.

**Table:**

<table>
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**Legend:**

- Frequently used shipping route 2013
- Whale distribution (bowhead, beluga, narwhal, killer whale)
- Walrus distribution

**Harvest areas:**

- Be courteous of community boats and hunting parties.

**Map:**

- Hudson Strait
- Wager Bay
- Labrador Sea
- Davis Strait
- Frobisher Bay
- Hudson Bay
- Ungava Bay
- Foxe Basin
- Gull Bay
- Gulf of Boothia
- Coral Harbour
- Whale Cove
- Baker Lake
- Kangiqsualujjuaq
- Qaunajuk
- Quaqtaq
- Pangnirtung
- Akulivik
- Arviat
- Aklavik
- Coral Harbour
- Cape Dorset
- Baker Lake
- Iqaluit
- Nunavik Marine Region

**Contact Information:**

- Nunavik Marine Region: 888-742-9742
- Wildlife Sightings: 888-742-9742
- Walrus Sightings: 888-742-9742
- Polar Bear Sightings: 888-742-9742

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**Additional Resources:**


**Supplementary Information:**