



A SPECIAL PLACE

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary protects one of the world's most important humpback whale habitats. Between November and April, more than half of the North Pacific humpback whale population returns here to mate, give birth, and nurse their young. The sanctuary is co-managed by NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the State of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources.



The sanctuary protects humpback whales and their habitat by working with the community to reduce harmful impacts and monitor their health.



Sanctuary programs focus on educating the public about humpback whales in Hawai'i and other ocean life.



The sanctuary enhances awareness of Native Hawaiian culture and its values to protect humpback whales and the marine life of Hawai'i.



Research is conducted by the sanctuary and its partners to broaden the understanding and protection of humpback whales.

Background photo: Jason Moore/NOAA, under NOAA Permit #16240



TO LEARN MORE

Stop by our visitor centers to learn more about Hawai'i and its unique marine environment, its cultural significance, and how your national marine sanctuary and marine national monument are protecting these extremely important areas.

Sanctuary Visitor Center

The scenic beachfront visitor center in Kihei on Maui provides a unique setting to learn about the sanctuary. Volunteer docents share knowledge about the marine environment.

Kalepolepo Fishpond

One of Maui's last remaining Native Hawaiian fishponds is located in front of the sanctuary visitor center. Tours are offered by reservation.



Mokupāpapa Discovery Center

Housed in Hilo's historic, century-old Koehnen Building, Mokupāpapa features the unique geography, resources, and cultural connections of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The center features a 3,500-gallon saltwater aquarium, interactive educational exhibits, life-size models of wildlife found in the Northwestern and main Hawaiian Islands, and artwork inspired by those islands and Hawaiian culture.

THINGS TO DO



Wildlife Viewing

Hawai'i marine environments nurture many marine species beyond humpback whales. In addition to large animals, Hawaiian waters are also home to important coral reefs, which sustain thousands of marine plants and animals. Extensive coral reef colonies are also found in the remote Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. This vast area supports a dynamic habitat containing an incredible diversity of coral, fish, birds, marine mammals, and other flora and fauna, many of which are unique to the Hawaiian Island chain. Hawaiian marine wildlife remains fragile and vulnerable. Care should be taken when viewing.

Whales & Dolphins*

- Over 20 species in Hawaiian waters
- Look for spouts and breaching
- Give them space, do not approach
- Best seen from boats



Hawaiian Monk Seals*

- Only about 1,400 remain
- Haul out on beaches to rest
- Feed both during day and night
- Endemic - found nowhere else



Sea Turtles*

- Green sea turtles are most common
- Rest on shore during the day
- Require air to breathe
- Swim close to shore



Seabirds & Shorebirds*

- More than 30 species
- Foraging, breeding, nesting habitats
- Endemic, resident, migratory species
- Nest in coastal and upland areas



Ocean Etiquette

- Keep your distance and watch quietly
- Don't feed wildlife
- Keep pets on leash
- Dispose of trash properly



Threats

- Human disturbance
- Marine debris
- Changing ocean conditions
- Feral and invasive animals



*These animals are protected under federal and state law. Photos (left to right): NOAA, under NOAA Permit #14097; Paul Wong/NOAA; Ed Lyman/NOAA; Paul Wong/NOAA; HIMS/NOAA, under NOAA Permit #14097; Ed Lyman/NOAA, under NOAA Permit #932-1905



Whale Watching

During the winter and spring, humpback whales are easily seen from shore. Many companies offer whale watching tours to observe whales on the water.



Snorkeling and Diving

Coral reefs in sanctuary waters are some of the best places to be immersed among sea life. You may even hear humpback whales sing.



Surfing

Hawai'i is a year-round surfing destination for beginners and veteran surfers. While surfing, always be cautious of submerged rocks and powerful waves.



Paddle Sports

Canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards provide unique on-water experiences. Businesses provide rentals, lessons, and tours for paddlers of all skill levels.



Fishing

Whether from shore or charter fishing boat, there are many places to fish in the sanctuary. Please follow all regulations so that future anglers can enjoy this activity.



Boating

Whether by motor or sail, while deep-sea fishing, wildlife or whale watching, you are almost guaranteed to have a wonderful time in the sanctuary.



Cultural Experiences

Learn more about Native Hawaiian culture. Participate in cultural canoe tours, Hawaiian fishpond restoration, and Hawaiian dance and music classes.



Volunteer

The sanctuary needs you! Be a volunteer and participate in wildlife monitoring, beach cleanups, and more. Contact us to learn about great opportunities.

Protecting Humpback Whales

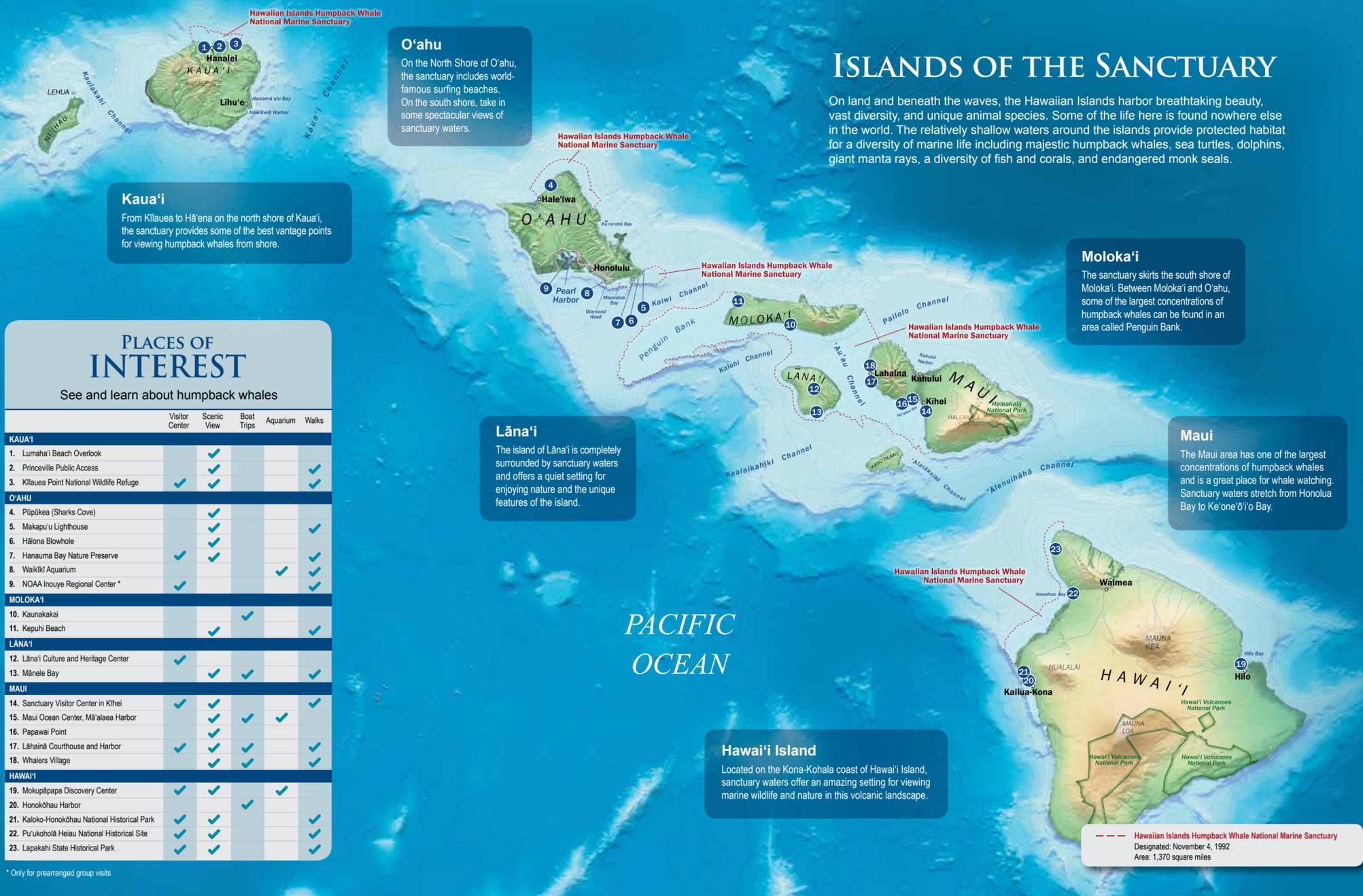
Federal and state regulations prohibit approaching humpback whales by any means within 100 yards or within 1,000 feet when operating an aircraft. Interception or "leapfrogging" into the path of a humpback whale is also prohibited.

All whales, dolphins, and seals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Humpback whales are additionally protected by Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary regulations and Hawai'i state law. See NOAA regulations: 50 CFR Sections 216.11, 216.19, and 15 CFR 922.184.

For more information:

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary
726 South Kihei Road
Kihei, Hawai'i 96753
Phone: (800) 831-4888
Email: humpbackwhale@noaa.gov

SANCTUARY MAP



Kauai
From Kilauea to Ha'ena on the north shore of Kauai, the sanctuary provides some of the best vantage points for viewing humpback whales from shore.

O'ahu
On the North Shore of O'ahu, the sanctuary includes world-famous surfing beaches. On the south shore, take in some spectacular views of sanctuary waters.

ISLANDS OF THE SANCTUARY

On land and beneath the waves, the Hawaiian Islands harbor breathtaking beauty, vast diversity, and unique animal species. Some of the life here is found nowhere else in the world. The relatively shallow waters around the islands provide protected habitat for a diversity of marine life including majestic humpback whales, sea turtles, dolphins, giant manta rays, a diversity of fish and corals, and endangered monk seals.

Molokai
The sanctuary skirts the south shore of Molokai. Between Molokai and O'ahu, some of the largest concentrations of humpback whales can be found in an area called Penguin Bank.

Maui
The Maui area has one of the largest concentrations of humpback whales and is a great place for whale watching. Sanctuary waters stretch from Honolulu Bay to Ke'one'o'i'o Bay.

Lana'i
The island of Lana'i is completely surrounded by sanctuary waters and offers a quiet setting for enjoying nature and the unique features of the island.

Hawaii Island
Located on the Kona-Kohala coast of Hawaii Island, sanctuary waters offer an amazing setting for viewing marine wildlife and nature in this volcanic landscape.

PLACES OF INTEREST

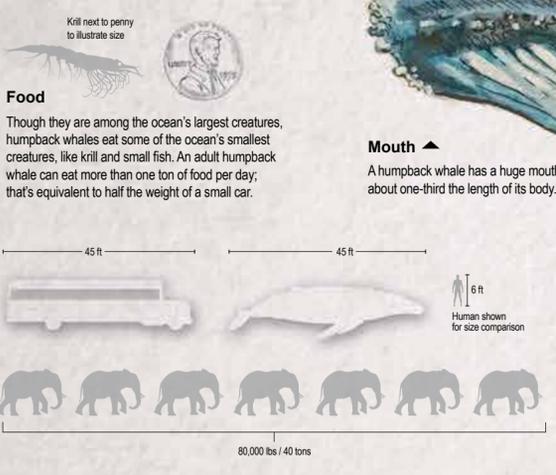
See and learn about humpback whales

	Visitor Center	Scenic View	Boat Trips	Aquarium	Walks
KAUAI					
1. Lumaha'i Beach Overlook		✓			✓
2. Princeville Public Access		✓			✓
3. Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge	✓	✓			✓
O'AHU					
4. Pōpōkea (Sharks Cove)		✓			✓
5. Makapu'u Lighthouse		✓			✓
6. Hālonā Blowhole		✓			✓
7. Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve	✓	✓			✓
8. Waikiki Aquarium		✓		✓	✓
9. NOAA Inouye Regional Center*	✓	✓			✓
MOLOKAI					
10. Kaunakakai			✓		✓
11. Kepuhi Beach		✓			✓
LĀNA'I					
12. Lāna'i Culture and Heritage Center	✓	✓			✓
13. Mānele Bay		✓	✓		✓
MAUI					
14. Sanctuary Visitor Center in Kihei	✓	✓			✓
15. Maui Ocean Center, Mā'alaea Harbor		✓	✓	✓	✓
16. Papawai Point		✓			✓
17. Lāhainā Courthouse and Harbor	✓	✓	✓		✓
18. Whalers Village		✓	✓		✓
HAWAII					
19. Mokuapāapa Discovery Center	✓	✓		✓	
20. Honokōhau Harbor			✓		✓
21. Kaloko-Honokōhau National Historical Park	✓	✓			✓
22. Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historical Site	✓	✓			✓
23. Lapakahi State Historical Park		✓			✓

* Only for prearranged group visits

HUMPBACK WHALE FUN FACTS

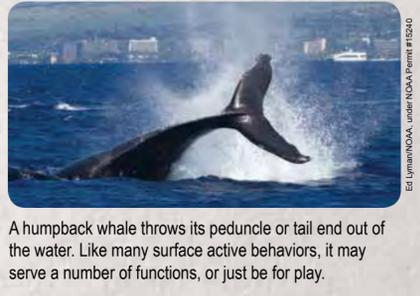
Once listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act, the Hawaii humpback whale population has rebounded. Up to 12,000 humpback whales return to Hawaii every year. Known as koholā in Hawaiian, the scientific name is *Megaptera novaeangliae*, which means "big-winged New Englander," referring to their 15-foot-long pectoral fins. These whales get the name "humpback" from the distinct hump that appears when they arch their back into a dive. The humpback whale is the state marine mammal of Hawaii.



Breathing
Humpbacks breathe through two blowholes (one for each lung) every seven to 15 minutes. However, they can remain submerged for up to 45 minutes. A humpback whale's lungs force air through the blowhole so fast that the air creates a mist fountain 15 to 20 feet high, which can be seen from miles away. Whales typically exchange over 90 percent of their air per breath, making their lungs much more efficient than humans'.



Identifying Whales
The fluke (tail) of each humpback whale is like a fingerprint: no two are the same. Each fluke has a unique shape and color pattern. These are used by researchers to identify individual whales.



Entanglement
A major human-caused threat to humpback whales is entanglement. Whales can get entangled in fishing gear, marine debris, and other items, resulting in potentially life-threatening situations. Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary coordinates a large, community-based whale entanglement response network, which consists of state and federal agencies, whale researchers, tour boat operators, fishermen, and private citizens. Upon reports of an entangled whale, authorized teams led by NOAA and the national marine sanctuary spring into action.



Baleen
Humpback whales have baleen instead of teeth. Baleen is made of the same material that makes up human fingernails. Up to 400 fringed, overlapping baleen plates per side hang from the upper jaw to filter out food. When a humpback whale opens its mouth underwater, it takes in up to 5,000 gallons of water. Using its tongue, it pushes the water out of its mouth through the baleen. Small krill and fish are unable to fit through the baleen and are left inside for the whale to swallow.

AMERICA'S UNDERWATER TREASURES

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 600,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The network includes a system of 13 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

National Marine Sanctuary
 Marine National Monument

Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.