

Blue whale

The blue whale is the largest animal on Earth. Whales are not fish; they are mammals with warm blood - like us!

Size

Blue whales grow to around 30m in length.

Fully grown, a blue whale weighs up to 200 tonnes.

This makes the blue whale the largest animal ever known, bigger than any known dinosaur.

Even baby blues are big. When they are born they weigh around 3 tonnes. They feed on the mother whale's milk for one whole year as they grow.

Blue whale fun facts

- Their scientific name is '*Balaenoptera musculus*.'
- They eat krill - tiny shrimps (around 4 tonnes a day).
- Blue whales have no teeth.
- Blue whales communicate with their family members by singing.
- Blue whales can live up to 90 years.

Pods

Blue whales usually swim alone, or in family groups of around 2 or 4.

Baby whales are called CALVES.

These family groups are known as *pods*.

Where?

Blue whales live in all our oceans except for the Arctic Ocean.

Endangered

In the twentieth century, the number of blue whales in the ocean fell dramatically as they were hunted for their meat and blubber.

In many parts of the world, hunting for whales, otherwise known as whaling, is now banned.

In recent years, whale numbers have slowly risen.