

## Reference Guide

Thank you for filling out an Observation Form and contributing to our Citizen Science Project. This simple reference guide is intended to help you fill out the form, including a few tips for identifying the animals you are observing. Please keep in mind this guide is not comprehensive and it is a good idea to make use of any guide books you might have with you. We will collate the data on these forms to learn more about the distribution and occurrence of animals on the coast and look for trends across seasons and over time. As well, it is an opportunity to record human activities such as logging and poaching as well as rare animal behaviours or sightings. For Cetacean (whales, porpoises and dolphins) sightings please use “Cetacean Observation Form.” This form will be given to the B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network.

### What Have I Seen?

#### Birds

We are only interested in observations of aggregates of sea birds (numbers of 100 or more), vagrants, and any rare sightings. We are also particularly interested in sightings of sandhill cranes, so please record any observations of these beautiful birds that you make.



#### Sandhill Crane

*Adult weight male:* 5kg (11lbs) *Adult female weight-* 3.34kg (7.4lbs)

*Description-* outstretched neck in flight, bustle of feathers on rump visible when standing. Grey body, white cheeks and bright red cap. *Things to note-* What kind of habitat are they using (bog, forest edge, estuary, beach)? Was there any disturbance in the area (e.g. logging)? Did you see a nest? If so, where? Are the cranes interacting with other species?

\*Sandhill Cranes are often confused with Great Blue Herons. When observing a look at the beak, cranes have a shorter beak, herons have a longer beak. Also look at the neck, in flight cranes have a straight neck, herons a crooked neck. The bright red cap of the crane also differs from the heron.

#### Marine Mammals

Please refer to the Cetacean Observation Form and Reference Guide for whale, porpoise and dolphin sightings. For all other marine mammals, please refer to the information below.



#### California Sea Lion

*Adult male:* 2-2.4m (6.8-8ft)

*Adult female:* 1.4-2m (4.5-6.5ft)

*Description:* smaller than Steller sea lions with a smaller head. Chocolate brown. On land they walk on front flippers.



#### Northern Elephant Seal

*Adult male:* 3.7-4.9m (12-16 ft)

*Adult female:* 2.1-3.7m (7-12 ft)

*Description:* pronounced nose, short stubby front flippers. On land they move like a worm. In the water they often are mistaken for floating “deadheads”.



#### Steller Sea Lion

*Adult male:* ~3m/700kg

*Adult female:* ~ 2.3m/300 kg

*Description:* in water look dark brown or black, on land have golden/tan color on head and back, huge wing-like front flippers.



**River Otter**  
 may be seen in the ocean, rivers or streams, frequently along shore, long tails (apx. 2/3 length of the body), webbed hind limbs



**Sea Otter**- usually seen in ocean, rarely on land, shorter tail than a river otter, paddle shaped hind limbs, spend much time floating on their backs, resting, grooming and eating

### Terrestrial Mammals

We have listed animals of particular interest to us below.



**Black Bear**

*Adult weight male:* 70-225kg (150-500lbs)

*Adult weight female:* 40-180 kg (90-400lbs)

*Description:* black fur, face profile is straight with long muzzle, small eyes, rounded ears

*Tracks:* claws shorter than those of grizzly and often don't show up in track



Front paw



Back paw



**Black Bear – white morph (Spirit or Kermode Bear)**

black bear size and profile with white/beige coat



**Fisher**

*Adult length:* 84-119 cm (33-47 in)

*Description:* dark brown fur with black legs and tail, call sounds like a scream

*Tracks:* front-right, hind-left, five toes, fifth one not always visible, narrow heel pad, claw mark often visible

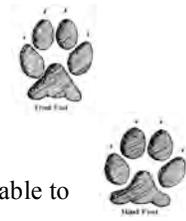




**Grey Wolf**

*Description:* massive long legged appearance, large and blocky muzzle, often run with tail up

*Tracks:* tracks should display four toes, should be able to see claws

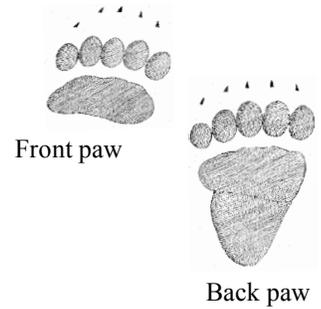


**Grizzly Bear**

*Adult weight:* 180-680 kg (400-1500lbs)

*Description:* brownish/yellow in color, distinctive shoulder hump: dish-in profile between eyes and end of snout

*Tracks:* five digits on front and back paws



**Mink**

*Photo:* (<http://bioimages.vanderbilt.edu/>)

*Description:* body is slim and long, fur is glossy and dark brown or black, with patch of white under chin, legs are short, feet are webbed

*Tracks:* often found in the inter-tidal zone, only about an inch, five toes, front tracks usually only show four



**Pine Marten**

*Adult length:* 48-63 cm (19-24 in)

*Description:* similar in size to a house cat, brown fur, lighter cream colored area on upper chest, bushy tail, rounded ears

*Tracks:* similar to Fisher only smaller

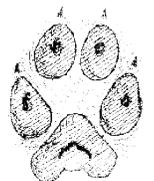


**Red Fox**

*Adult weight:* 2.7-6.8 kg (6-15lbs)

*Description:* rusty red fur, white fur on underside, bushy tail with white on tip

*Tracks:* tracks have four toes and claws although fur on the paws makes the individual toes hard to see, triangular shaped pad at the back on the paw is unique to the red fox



**Short Tailed Weasel (Ermine)**

*Adult length:* 17-33 cm (7-33in)

*Description:* medium brown fur with cream colored (can be lighter white if seen in snow) fur on underside, short legs, small ears, often nocturnal

*Tracks:*



**Wolverine**

*Adult length:* 90-100 cm (35-39 in)

*Description:* size of medium-sized dog, brown fur with side stripes of yellow

*Tracks:* should be able to see all five toes and claws



Front paw



Back paw

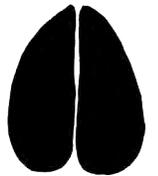


**Moose**

*Adult weight:* 540-720 kg (1200-1600lbs) for males, 400kg (880lbs) for females

*Description:* roughly 2m (6ft) high, antlers (on males only) at 90 degree angle to ground, long legs, males have sac which hangs from neck

*Tracks:* similar to deer but twice as big (usually 10-12 cm (5-6in), slightly pointed at the tip

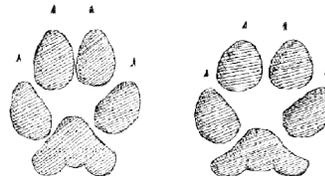


**Coyote**

*Adult weight:* 9-22kg (20-50lbs)

*Description:* roughly .6m (2ft) high, tall ears, elongated nose/muzzle, bushy tail, often by themselves

*Tracks:* hind print smaller (right) than front (left) print, two toes on inside are smaller than those on the outside



## Filling out the form...

We have asked for your name and contact information in the event we have questions specific to your observations. This information will not be given out for any reason.

**Unit Effort:** Indicate the # of hours or days spent observing wildlife/(over the) length of the entire trip. For example, if you were able to make observations for 8 hours over a 14 day trip due to other activities, weather etc., you would write “8hr/14d”. We realize this will be an estimate, but this information will help put your sightings into the context of time spent observing.

**1-Species Sighted:** Record the species you saw. If you see multiple species at the same time, record each species separately under separate sightings.

**2-Date:** List the day/month/year on which you made the observation

**3-GPS Coordinates:** Provide latitude and longitude coordinates or UTM northing and easting (if you use the latter, please cross out Lat. / Long.)

**4-Time:** Note the time of your observation using a 24 hour (military) time format, hour/minute

**5-Location Description:** Record the name of the specific area where you saw the animal. For example, “traveling north on beach, Yeo Island, south end of Bullock Channel”. Describe in relation to known areas or landmarks if necessary.

**6-Observed From:** From where did you make your sighting?

**7-Confidence Level:** How confident are you in what you saw?

**8-Sighting Distance:** How far away from the animal were you? Please circle unit of measure used (meters or feet)

**9-Number of Animals:** If animals are few in number (e.g. <25), try to account for individual animals, for example “5 wolves”. When recording flocks of birds, estimates such as “roughly 250” will work.

**10-Physical Description(s):** Make notes about colouration (colour of coat), health (does the animal look healthy? i.e. well fed, scars or injuries), distinctive markings, adult or juvenile, male or female (if apparent). If your sighting is of a dead animal, indicate this and describe the circumstances as best you can (was it shot, was it killed by a predator or is it unclear how it died).

**11-Animal Behaviour:** Describe what the animal was doing: feeding, resting, walking, running, sleeping, flying, or swimming.

**12-Other Observations or Remarks:** Record anything else you find noteworthy or unusual regarding the animals you have observed or the conditions in which you observed them.

**If your observations are of human activities such as active logging, mining, or poaching, fill out only the relevant portions of the sighting, boxes 2-8, and then describe your observations in box 12.**

### Sources:

Bear-tracker, <http://www.bear-tracker.com/>, June 7, 2007

Wikipedia, <http://www.wikipedia.com/>, June, 07, 2007

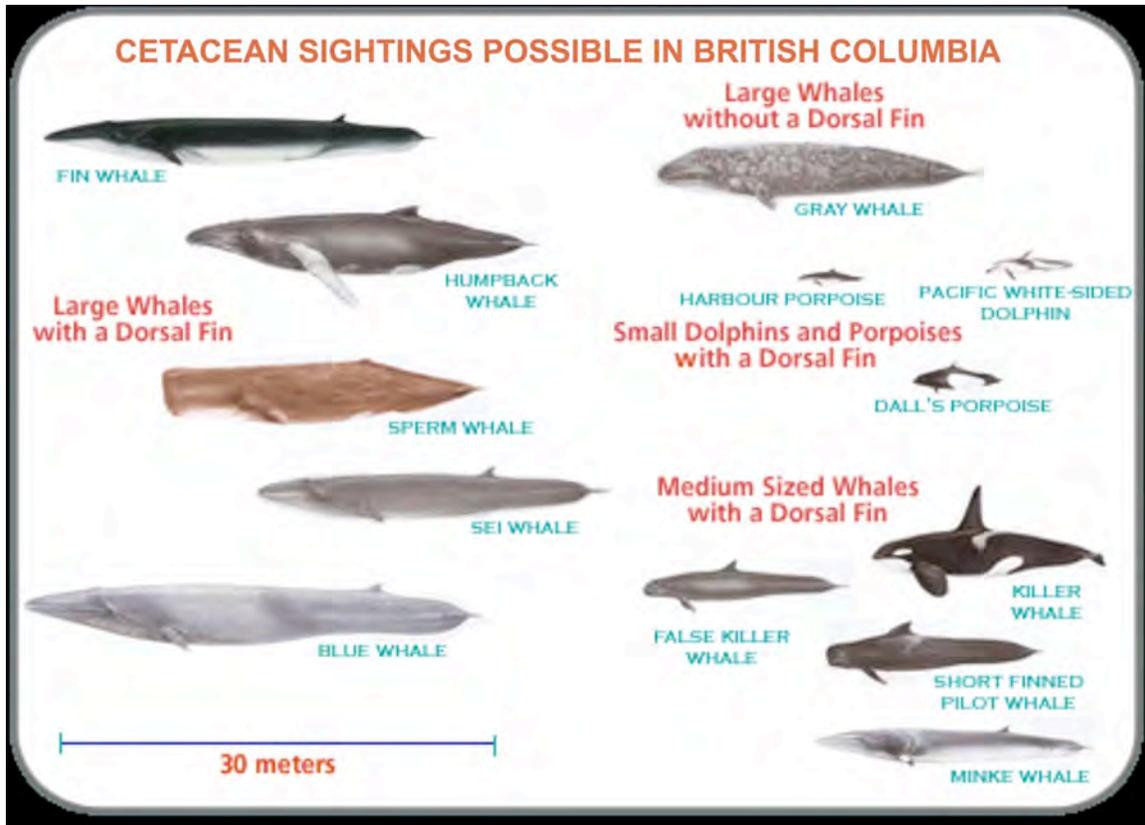
Animal Tracks of Glacier National Park, Shea, David S., 1986, Glacier National History Association

## Reference Guide

### What Have I Seen?

#### Cetaceans

This information was taken directly from the B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network. All sightings will be forwarded to the Network to add to the provincial database.



modified from Vancouver Aquarium, Marine Science Center, <http://www.wildwhales.org/identify/index.html>, 2007, June 4, 2007

### Filling Out the Form...

We have asked for your name and contact information in the event we have questions specific to your observations. This information will not be given out for any reason.

*1 - Unit Effort:* Indicate the # of hours or days spent observing wildlife/(over the) length of the entire trip. For example, if you were able to make observations for 8 hours over a 14 day trip due to other activities, weather etc., you would write "8hr/14d". We realize this will be an estimate, but this information will help put your sightings into the context of time spent observing.

- 2 – *Species Name*: If unsure of species identity, please note body shape and size, presence or absence of dorsal fin, body colouration, and any other distinguishing features under physical description. Pictures are always very helpful!
- 3 – *Date*: List the day/month/year on which you made the observation.
- 4 – *Time*: Note the time of your observation using a 24 hour (military) time format, hour/minute
- 5 – *GPS Coordinates*: Provide latitude and longitude coordinates or UTM northing and easting (if you use the latter, please cross out Lat. / Long.)
- 6 – *Location*: Record the name of the specific area where you saw the animal. For example, “traveling north in Lama Pass, just off of McLoughlin Bay”. Describe in relation to known areas or landmarks if necessary.
- 7 – *Sea State*: Describe the sea conditions using the following options:

- A. Sea is smooth
- B. Light air, small ripples
- C. Wind felt on face; wave crests, has glassy appearance
- D. Crests begin to break; whitecaps begin to form at 10 knots
- E. Frequent whitecaps (seas to 3ft (1m))
- F. Moderate waves from 4-5ft (1.5-2.5m); some spray carried
- G. Large waves 5-7ft (2-3m); more spray
- H. Swell forms 8-10ft (3-4m); foam blown in streaks
- I. Moderately high waves to 16ft (5m); crests break into spindrift
- J. High waves to 20ft (7m); dense foam; visibility reduced
- K. Exceptionally high waves to 30 ft (9m)
- L. Waves to 35ft (11m); very limited visibility
- M. Waves to 50ft (15m); air filled with foam and spary

- 8 – *Wind Speed*: Choose one of the following categories to describe the wind speed:

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 0: 0 knts (calm)                | 7: 28-33 knts (near gale)   |
| 1: 1-3 knts (light air)         | 8: 34-40 knts (gale)  |
| 2: 4-4 knts (light breeze)      | 9: 41-47 knts (strong gale)   |
| 3: 7-10 knts (gentle breeze)    | 10: 48-55 knts (storm)  |
| 4: 11-16 knts (moderate breeze) | 11: 56-63 knts (violent storm)  |
| 5: 17-21 knts (fresh breeze)    | 12: 64+ knts (hurricane....so you might want to stop whale watching!) |
| 6: 22-27 knts (strong breeze)   |   |

- 9 – *Physical Description*: Make notes about pectoral, dorsal and tail fins, any distinctive markings, whether adult or juvenile, male or female (if apparent). If your sighting is of a dead animal, indicate this and describe the circumstances as best you can.
- 10 – *Animal Behaviour*: Is the animal resting, feeding, traveling, bow riding, breaching?
- 11 – *ID Confidence*: How confident are you in your identification of the species?
- 12 – *Body Length Estimate*: Give an estimate of the body length of the animal.
- 13 – *No. in Group*: Give the number of animals sighted and indicate whether this value is exact or approximate, or give a range for larger groups (e.g. 200 to 250 Pacific white-sided dolphins).
- 14 – *Sighting Distance*: Choose one of the following ranges for the sighting distance:

- |                         |                              |                                 |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;10 m (33 ft)</b> | <b>25-100m (82.5-330 ft)</b> | <b>300-1000m (990-3,300 ft)</b> |
| 10-25m (33-82.5 ft)     | 100-300m (330-990 ft)        | > 1km (3,300 ft)                |

- 15 – *Sighting Platform*: Did you view the animal from a kayak, sailboat, motor boat <25 ft, motor vessel 25-60 ft, motor vessel >60 ft, ferry, plan/helicopter, land (close to water), land (high above water), or other?
- 16 – *Unusual Identifiable Sightings*: Particular things that might be unique or unusual such as a dolphin with an injured dorsal fin, or a rarely seen behaviour such as beach rubbing.

*17 – Notes and Observations:* Please include any other notes that are relevant to the sighting. For example, how did you first spot the animal? Did you see a blow? If you took pictures, please include any notes such as image# in this section so that we know which images go with which sightings.



Citizen Science Project  
Raincoast Conservation Foundation  
Observation Form

<b>Sighting #</b>		
1-Species Sighted:	2-Date(dd/mm/yy):	3-GPS coordinates (degrees:minutes):
	4-Time(24 hr)-hh:mm	Lat. <span style="float: right;">Long.</span>
5-Location Description:		
6-Observed From: <input type="checkbox"/> Land (hiking)		7-Confidence Level:
<input type="checkbox"/> Kayak <input type="checkbox"/> Power/Sail Boat <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Certain <input type="checkbox"/> Probable <input type="checkbox"/> Possible <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain
8-Sighting Distance: _____ m ft	9-Number of Animals:	
10-Physical Description(s):		
11-Animal Behaviour:		
12-Other Observations or Remarks:		
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Please return completed observation sheets to:		
<b>Nicola Temple, Raincoast Conservation Foundation</b>		
by mail: PO Box 2429	by email: <a href="mailto:nicola@raincoast.org">nicola@raincoast.org</a>	by fax: 250-655-1339
Sidney, BC V8L 3Y3		
Raincoast staff thank you for your contribution, through these observations, to our research and campaigns.		

Citizen Science Project  
Raincoast Conservation Foundation  
Cetacean Observation Form

<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b> (only if questions arise from observation)		
<b>Sighting #</b> :		1 - Unit Effort:	
2 - Species Sighted:	3 - Date(dd/mm/yy):	5 - GPS coordinates- degrees: minutes	
	4 - Time (24 hour)-hh:mm	Lat.	Long.
6-Location(use chart)			
7-Sea State:		8-Wind Speed:	
9-Physical Description:			
10-Animal Behaviour:			
11-ID Confidence: <input type="checkbox"/> Certain <input type="checkbox"/> Probable <input type="checkbox"/> Possible <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain			
12-Body Length Estimate: <input type="checkbox"/> < 3m (<10ft) <input type="checkbox"/> 3-8m(10-25ft) <input type="checkbox"/> 8-16m(25-50ft)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 16-26 m(50-80) <input type="checkbox"/> >26m (>80ft)			
13-No. in Group: <input type="checkbox"/> Exact <input type="checkbox"/> Approximate <input type="checkbox"/> Range    From <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> to <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/> Animals			
14-Sighting Distance:		15-Sighting Platform:	
16-Unusual identifiable sightings (ie dolphin with mangled fin)			
17-Notes and Observations			

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Cetacean Observation Form

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