#### **Orcas**

The Orcinus, commonly called as orca or killer whale is largest members of the dolphin family.

Males are larger than females and grow to an average of 20-26 feet (6-8 m) and weigh 12,000 lb or more (5,400 kg). Whereas, Females evolve to an average of 18-22 feet (6-7 m) and weigh between 8,000–11,000 lb (3,500-5,000 kg).

Calves weigh about 400 lb at birth (180 kg) and are between 7-8 feet long (2-3 m).The largest male orca on record measured 32 feet (9.8 m) and weighed over 20,000 lb (9,000 kg), while the largest female measured 28 feet (8.5 m) and weighed 15,000 lb (6800 kg).

They are identified by Unique markings and dorsal fin shape which varies in shape and size, often with distinctive nicks and scars. The saddle patch also differs from whale to whale in shape, size, color, and scarring.

Although orcas tend to aggregate in cold water, they live in all the world's oceans, from the Antarctic to the tropics and tend to go wherever their food source is, making their movement patterns much less predictable.

The life cycle of orcas is like that of humans. Average lifespan of female orcas in the wild is 50 years, with several individuals living as long as 80 – 100 years (estimated).  
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Between ages 12 and 15, their dorsal fin begins to grow taller and straighter, indicating the onset of sexual maturity. Male orcas typically don’t mate until after the age of 20

#### **Pods**

J Pod

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* J pod spends more time than the other pods in the inner Salish Sea, traveling as far north as Texada Island on BC’s Sunshine Coast.
* They appear year-round in the waters of the San Juan Islands and Southern Gulf Islands, lower Puget Sound (near Seattle), and Georgia Strait. This 24-member pod tends to frequent the west side of San Juan Island in mid to late spring.
* J pod is currently composed of four matrilines (a societal system where all the whales are descended from their mother’s line, not their father’s).

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MEMBERS

Current J pod members: J16 Slick, J17 Princess Angeline, J19 Shachi, J22 Oreo, J26 Mike, J27 Blackberry, J31 Tsuchi, J35 Tahlequah, J36 Alki, J37 Hy’Shqa, J38 Cookie, J39 Mako, J40 Suttles, J41 Eclipse, J42 Echo, J44 Moby, J45 Se-Yi’Chn, J46 Star, J47 Notch, J49 T’ilem I’nges, J50 Scarlet, J51 Nova, J53 Kiki.

K Pod​

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* K pod is the smallest of the three pods in the Southern Resident killer whale community with only 17 members. The most recent calf born into K pod is K44 (male, born 2011), the first known calf of K27.
* There are several whales in K pod that are easy to identify because of their dorsal fins.Spock (K20) has a tall and straight dorsal fin and was thought to be a male until 2004 when she gave birth to a calf.  Raggedy (K40) received her name from the many nicks on the edge of her dorsal fin.
* K pod is made up of four matrilines (a societal system where all the whales are descended from their mother’s line, not their father’s) whose oldest members (K4, K7, K8, and K18) are all deceased.

MEMBERS

Current K pod members: K12 Sequim, K14 Lea, K16 Opus, K20 Spock, K21 Cappuccino, K22 Sekiu, K25 Scoter, K26 Lobo, K27 Deadhead, K33 Tika K34 Cali, K35 Sonata, K36 Yoda, K37 Rainshadow, K38 Comet, K42 Kelp, K43 Saturna, K44 Ripples.

L Pod

* L pod is by far the largest of the three Southern Resident pods. Its members currently total 33. L25, (estimated to have been born in 1928) is both the oldest member of L pod and the oldest whale in the Southern Resident community.  The pod’s newest calf, L124, was born into the population in December 2018.
* L pod’s population has fluctuated a great deal, raising concern among scientists. They seem to have the lowest survival rate of all the Southern Resident pods.  In fact, their population has decreased sharply since 1994.
* L pod is made up of eleven matrilines (a societal system where all the whales are descended from their mother’s line, not their father’s).  Of these, L2, L12, L25 and L26 are still living.  Luna (L 98) was orphaned in Canada in 2001 and eventually died there in 2005 after colliding with a tugboat.

MEMBERS

Current L pod members: L22 Spirit, L25 Ocean Sun, L41 Mega, L47 Marina, L54 Ino, L55 Nugget, L72 Racer, L77 Matia, L82 Kasatka, L83 Moonlight, L84 Nyssa, L85 Mystery, L86 Surprise!, L87 Onyx, L88 Wave Walker, L89 Solstice, L90 Ballena, L91 Muncher, L92 Crewser, L94 Calypso, L193 Lapis, L105 Fluke, L106 Pooka, L108 Coho, L109 Takoda, L110 Midnight, L113 Cousteau, L115 Mystic, L116 Finn, L117 Keta, L118 Jade, L119 Joy, L121 Windsong, L122 Magic, L123 Lazuli.