

Public Misconceptions and Stereotypes. Are They Hindering Conservation Efforts?

The images featured on this poster clearly show the perception of whales by the general public, as well as how outreach education efforts can change that perception.

In May 2018, members of the NARWC Education Committee were invited to participate in the 2018 Volvo Ocean Race Stopover to promote the *Sharing the Seas: Safe Boating for Sailors and Whales* program. The Volvo Events Committee provided a graphic designer to develop an outreach banner for each organization hosting a booth at the Stopover event.

Although NARWC Education Committee members provided information and NARW images to the Volvo staff, the first banner featured a cartoon image of a whale. This demonstrated a lack of understanding of whales and the seriousness of the topic.

Several revisions, based on guidance from members of the Education Committee, were necessary to create a poster that was both accurate and on point. One intermediate version featured a bowhead whale rather than a NARW.

Quotes Heard from Sailors During Outreach Efforts:

"I never see whales. They obviously do not live where I sail."

"The whales know we are there and will get out of our way."

"A whale came right up to my boat to say 'Hi!'"

For more information visit:
www.seeaspout.org/sail



We'd like to thank Sail Newport, coordinators for the Volvo Ocean Race, and GT3 Creative for the banner donation.

111 A total of 111 whale-sailboat collisions and 57 near-misses were identified between 1966 and 2010, the majority of which (75 per cent) were reported between 2002 and 2010.

Understanding the behavior of marine animals and identifying different species ensures the protection of the ecosystem and safe navigation for sailors.

If you see the tail, will you know the whale?
There are 89 species of whales, dolphins, and porpoises worldwide. Approximately 40 species live in the Northwest Atlantic, including along the US East Coast.

Any vessel behavior that alters a whale's natural behavior is illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

VHF Ch. 16.
If you see a whale in distress or a dead whale, call the USCG on VHF Ch. 16.

Watch for signs of whales on the water. If you see a whale...

- Reduce your speed and drop sail
- Turn on engine to create noise
- Post a look out
- Maintain a safe distance
- Stay parallel to the whale's course and don't approach head-on or cut off the whale's path.

Vessel strikes and entanglement are the leading causes of whale mortality. 83% of North Atlantic right whales have scars from entanglement.

450 Only about 450 North Atlantic right whales remain; they are one of the most endangered whale species in the world.

WDC WHALE AND DOLPHIN CONSERVATION 30 YEARS OF PROTECTING WHALES AND DOLPHINS

EXPLORATION 2018 ONE OCEAN 2018 VOLVO OCEAN RACE STOPOVER

BEFORE

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PROGRESS

SHARING THE SEAS:
SAFE BOATING FOR SAILORS AND WHALES

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Audubon Society of Rhode Island WDC WHALE AND DOLPHIN CONSERVATION

AFTER