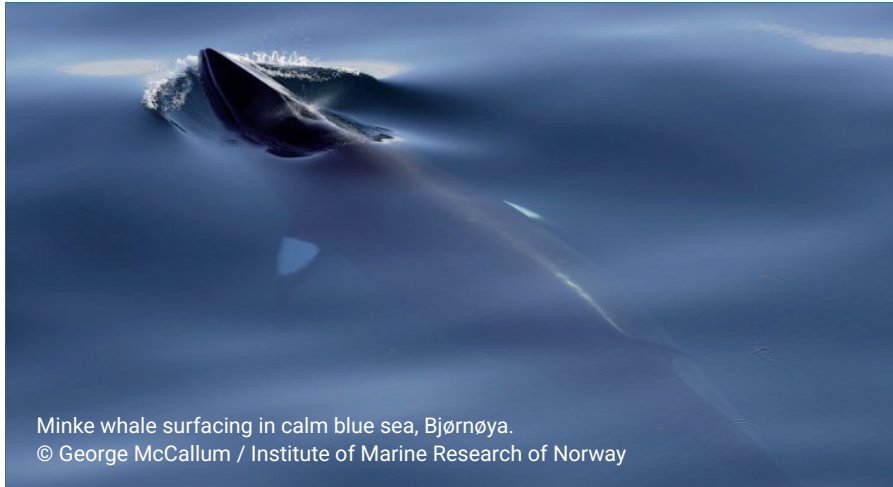


Mike whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*



 Sildreki  Tikaagullik  Hrefna  Vågehval  Vuotnabossu  Vågehval



The common minke whale is the most abundant **baleen whale**, has a wide distribution, and can be found in all ocean basins. It is the smallest and one of the most streamlined **baleen whale** species in the North Atlantic. Their small size and agility meant they were not heavily targeted in **industrial whaling** times. Nowadays in the North Atlantic they're the most hunted **large whale species** as they represent a food resource for many people, but **populations** are not at risk.

Adult length 9 metres
Adult weight 9,000 kg
Maximum age 60 years
Eats krill, schooling fish
Group size usually solitary in the NA

Predators killer whales
IUCN status least concern (2023)
NEA abundance >180,000
Hunted in  20 whales/year
 mean 2019-2023  9 whales/year
 513 whales/year

Main threats:



Climate change



Hunting

Mike whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*



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Common minke whales play a crucial role in marine **ecosystems**, especially in the Northeast and Central Atlantic. They gobble up over 1.8 million tonnes of **prey** each year, including commercially important fish like herring, cod, and haddock. In Icelandic waters alone, they consume about 1 million tonnes of fish annually. Studies suggest these feeding habits might affect the yields of commercial fisheries, but the exact impact is still being figured out. Surprisingly, even though minke whales feast on capelin, which is a key part of their diet, their increased predation might actually benefit capelin stocks by keeping cod **populations** in check.

The uncommon sight of two common minke whales off Norway. Minke whales are most often seen alone in the North East Atlantic © Kjell Arne Fagerheim / Institute of Marine Research of Norway



There are two recognised **species** of minke whale: the common minke, and the Antarctic minke (living only in the southern hemisphere). There are three **subspecies** of the common minke whale: the North Atlantic minke, the North Pacific minke, and the dwarf minke whale. Minke whales in the northern hemisphere are easy to distinguish by the characteristic white band across their **flippers**.



Research: How do common minke whales migrate across the North Atlantic, and what research efforts to learn more about this are currently ongoing?