

The Humpback Whale

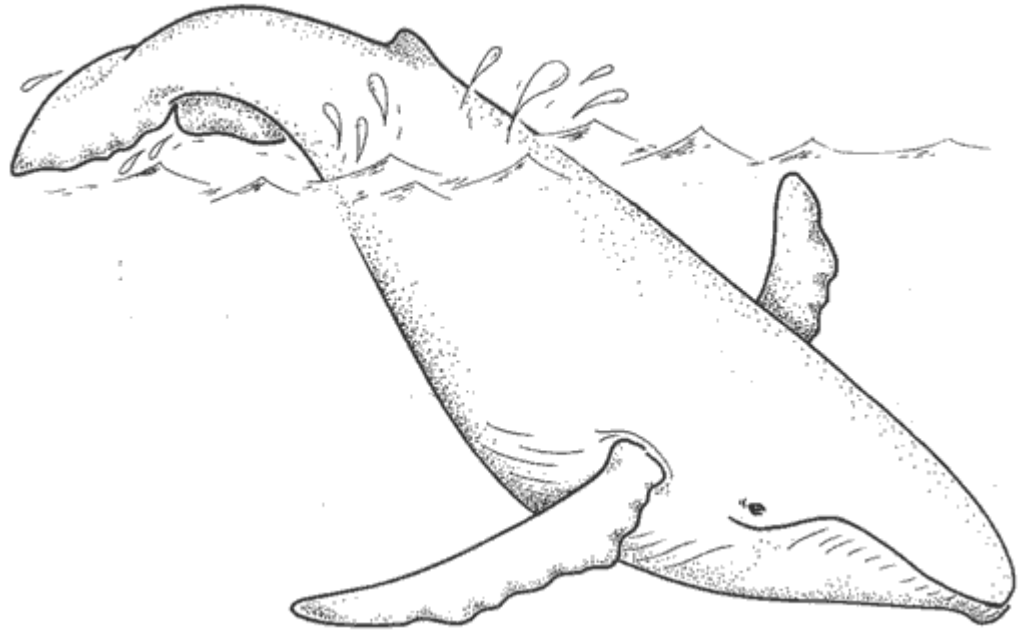
This humpback whale is starting a dive... many whales will throw their tail high into the air just before disappearing. Biologists take pictures of the scratches and designs on whale tails, also called flukes, for identifying individuals as they travel great distances in our oceans.

Humpbacks are one of the more spectacular whales to watch, due to their spyhopping (raising their head out of the water to look around) and breaching (jumping out of the water) and generally playful behaviour. They are also well known for their advanced communication via "singing" and vocalizations that scientists are recording for analysis.

Peter's song *The Whales Are Waiting*, off the first recording and often performed as a concert finale, explores the idea that they are highly intelligent creatures... waiting to see if humans will be smart enough to preserve the habitats that all living things need to survive.

What do you think this whale is thinking?

What would he or she be saying if we could understand their beautiful "singing"?



Drawing by Susan Summers