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**REPORT WHALE SIGHTINGS AT 1 866 I SAW ONE TO HELP
VANCOUVER AQUARIUM'S CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY ACTIONS**

Vancouver, B.C. – This summer, as you head out in your boat to enjoy a day on the water, you are likely to catch sight of resident cetaceans—whales, dolphins and porpoises— and sea turtles that live along the coastline. Report your sightings to the Vancouver Aquarium's B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network at 1 866 I SAW ONE (1 866-472-9663) or www.wildwhales.org to help protect and conserve these animals.

"The Vancouver Aquarium's B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network relies on the participation of the public to help gather information that is being provided to scientists across the province," explains Caitlin Birdsall, program coordinator. "We use the information to monitor the species' movements and activities along B.C.'s expansive coastline to better understand their behaviours and help inform important research, conservation and recovery actions."

Some species, such as the killer whale, are large, distinctive and easy to identify. Other species, however, are more difficult to distinguish. A printable Species ID Guide is available online at www.wildwhales.org/identifying-species. It provides observers with clues, such as body shape and colour, behaviours and group size, to determine which species were seen.

The following are key observations to note:

- Location
- Time
- Species
- Number of animals
- Sighting distance
- Behaviours, such as breaching, fluking, and feeding
- If possible, photos/video to accompany a sighting

Observers can report their sightings by calling 1 866 I SAW ONE (1 866-472-9663) or log in online at www.wildwhales.org. A personal logbook is also available to frequent sighters for easy tracking.

Observers like Catherine Smith, who has been living on Quadra Island for over 30 years, bring valuable information to the Network. "I mostly listen for the whales as they have a distinctive sound when they blow. I leave windows and doors open as much as possible so I can catch the blow at any time when I am home. I also scan for boats that appear to be moving slowly as they often indicate they have seen a whale and are waiting for it to surface again."

It is estimated that B.C.'s coastline is home to approximately 18 species of cetaceans – including the killer whale, harbour porpoise, and pacific white-sided dolphin – as well as two species of sea turtles. "Six of these species are either endangered or threatened," adds Birdsall. "When analyzed, these sightings reports help researchers better understand cetacean habitat and are used to educate boaters and coastal citizens about the threats these species face in their natural habitats."

The B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network is a network of over 2,700 observers across B.C., including whale watching operators, lighthouse keepers, charter boat operators, tugboat captains, B.C. Ferries personnel, researchers, government employees, recreational boaters and coastal residents.

B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network

In collaboration with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Vancouver Aquarium's B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network collects data on cetaceans and sea turtles in British Columbia. Public sightings are reported by residents, boaters and professionals and are used to inform research, conservation and recovery actions. Report your sighting to 1 866 I SAW ONE, www.wildwhales.org or sightings@vanaqua.org.

The Vancouver Aquarium

The Vancouver Aquarium is a global leader in connecting people to our natural world, and a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, education, research and direct action. Learn more at www.vanaqua.org.

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Note: pictures and footage are available.

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