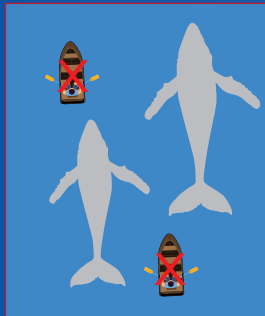
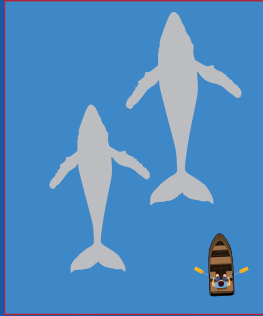
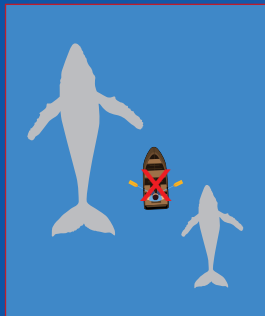
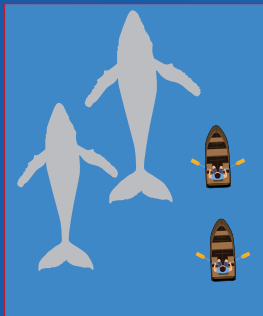


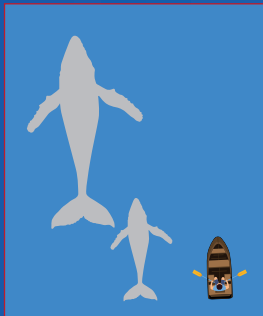
Don't split a group of whales - keep to the side



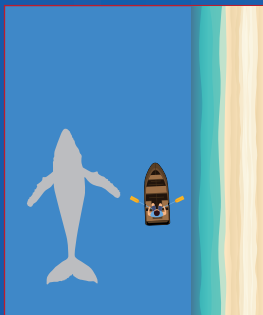
Don't encircle whales



Never split a mother and her calf



Never block whales against the coast



### Leaving the encounter:

When departing from watching whales, determine where the animals are relative to the vessel to avoid collisions or coming too close, and increase speed gradually once the vessel is 300m from the animals.

Please help us to protect these animals by being respectful and following these guidelines



### For further information please contact:

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Heather Menzies, Travel Coordinator,  
Pitcairn Islands Tourism,  
Adamstown,  
Pitcairn Islands  
Website: <http://www.visitpitcairn.pn/>  
Email: [tourism@pitcairn.pn](mailto:tourism@pitcairn.pn)  
Tel: +64 9 984 0165



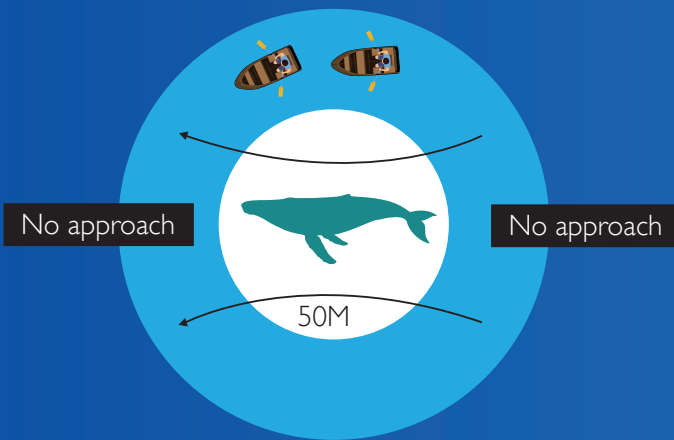
## The Pitcairn Islands Whale Watching Code of Conduct

Humpback whales frequent our shores from May to October. They are particularly vulnerable as they arrive after a long migration to reproduce and give birth. They are also part of a sub-population which is considered to be endangered.

Like us, whales need space to choose mates, socialise and rest. Mothers choose our tranquil waters to guarantee their calves the best conditions to be born and grow quickly.

When we get too close, approach too fast or make too much noise, we may disrupt these activities and cause the animals' unnecessary stress.





### Approaching whales in a vessel:

- Approach areas of known or suspected whale activity with extreme caution.
- Approach whales slowly and cautiously from the side and never from the front or directly from behind.
- Maintain a steady parallel course at a speed no greater than 5 knots or no greater than the slowest animal.
- Minimise abrupt changes in direction, speed, gear or engine noise.
- Do not approach nearer than 50m of a whale (100m if a mother and calf are observed)
- If any whales approach within 50m of your vessel, slow down gradually and put the engine in neutral until the animals are observed at the surface, clear of the vessel.

### Observations from a boat:

Do not drop or lower an anchor from your vessel within 300m of a whale.

Leave the boat engine running, in neutral when watching whales.

Do not intentionally chase whales.

No more than 2 vessels should observe a whale or group of whales at any one time.

Vessels should not spend more than 30 minutes observing a whale or group of whales.

Do not make any loud or sudden noises which may disturb the animals.

Do not try to touch the whales

If at any time, whales show signs of distress then the boat should move away to at least 300m from the animals at a slow speed of less than 5 knots - signs of distress include abrupt changes in speed or direction, changes in diving behaviour and changes in breathing pattern.



### In-water observations:

No intentional SCUBA diving with whales.

No intentional swimming or snorkelling with whales except by locals from the Pitcairn Islands.

If a whale approaches you whilst swimming, snorkelling or diving, do not make any rapid movements and move away slowly to avoid startling it; do not try to touch it or swim towards it.

Locals who are swimming/snorkelling should not approach closer than 30m to a whale

Underwater flash photography or lighted filming should not be used.



### Observations from the air:

Anyone wishing to use an unmanned aerial vehicle (i.e. a drone) to observe whales must first contact the Environmental, Conservation and Natural Resources Division to determine whether permission is required.