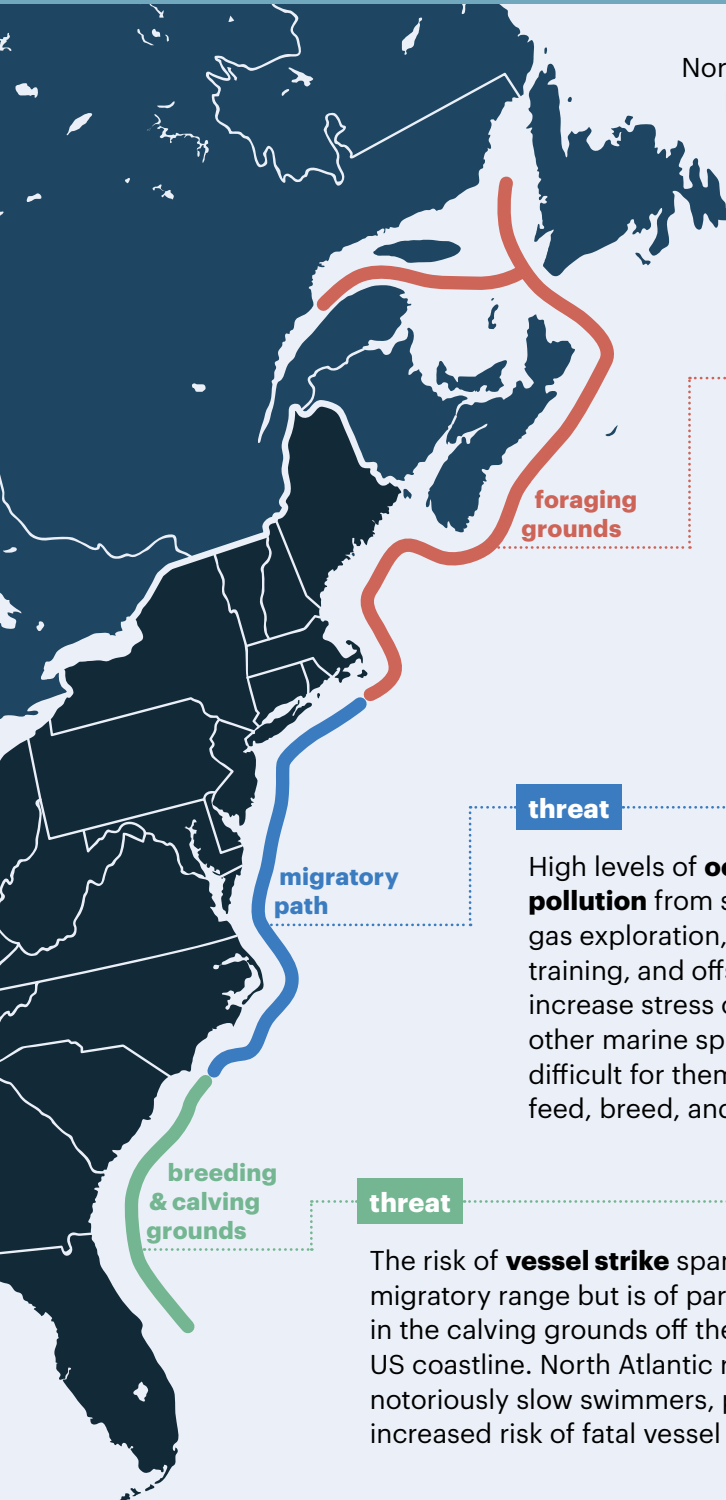




North Atlantic Right Whale *Eubalaena glacialis*

North Atlantic right whales are listed as critically endangered on the IUCN red list. Their population and reproductive rates have been in steady decline since 2010.

Since NOAA declared an unusual mortality event for the species in 2017, there have been 34 confirmed deaths and 15 presumed dead. Scientists estimate that fewer than 340 remain.



threat

Entanglements in vertical fishing lines from lobster and crab traps as well as gillnets cause chronic stress and physical pain, leading to decreased reproduction rates and often death. 85% of right whales show signs of entanglement.

solution

Reduce the amount of vertical fishing lines in critical habitats through **seasonal closures** and use of **on-demand fishing** gear, both of which require additional support from state and federal government.

threat

High levels of **ocean noise pollution** from shipping, oil and gas exploration, naval sonar training, and offshore development increase stress on right whales and other marine species and make it difficult for them to communicate, feed, breed, and survive.

solution

Reduce shipping speed, optimize ship design, implement seasonal closures to development, and advocate for additional mitigation measures such as bubble curtains during drilling can significantly decrease ocean noise pollution.

threat

The risk of **vessel strike** spans the entire migratory range but is of particular concern in the calving grounds off the Southeastern US coastline. North Atlantic right whales are notoriously slow swimmers, putting them at increased risk of fatal vessel strikes.

solution

Increase boater awareness using tools like **Whale Alert** and implement **seasonal speed restrictions** of 10 knots or less for vessels of all sizes in critical habitats to help protect whales from horrific injuries and death.

Fun Facts about North Atlantic right whales

1 Right whales get their name from the whaling days, they were considered the “right” whale to hunt due to their slow pace, thick blubber, and tendency to float after being killed.

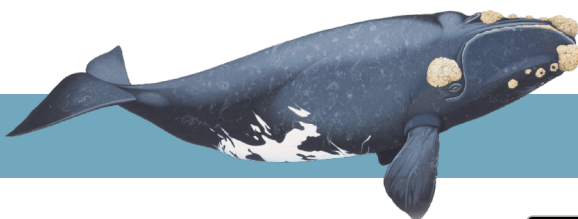
2 They have large rough patches of skin on their heads called callosities that vary in shape and size. These unique patterns are what scientists use to identify individual whales.

3 Right whale blowholes are uniquely shaped, producing a spout of water that looks like the letter “V” and providing a telltale way to spot them from the shore.

4 Whales play a critical role in supporting a healthy marine ecosystem, serving as a carbon sink throughout their lifespan. A whale can store up to 33 tons of carbon dioxide—1,500 times more the amount a tree can absorb.

5 Right whales communicate with one another through calls that can be heard from more than 20 miles away. These calls help them track one another when traveling, share information about food, and find mates.

6 Whales have a critical economic value. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has estimated the value of one whale at \$2 million, based on its ecotourism revenue, carbon capture capacity, and fishery enhancement.



Take Action



Download our Whale Alert app.

Whale Alert gives you the power to help protect right whales by reporting sightings that help boaters, mariners, scientists, and policy makers take action to protect and reduce risks to whales.



Visit **rightwhales.org** to stay involved and get the latest news on North Atlantic right whales.

Sources:

- <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/2017-2022-north-atlantic-right-whale-unusual-mortality-event>
- <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/vessel-strikes>
- <https://www.andersoncabotcenterforoceanlife.org/blog/right-whale-population-declines-for-10th-straight-year/>