


GREY WHALES

of Clayoquot Sound: a quick ID guide for mariners

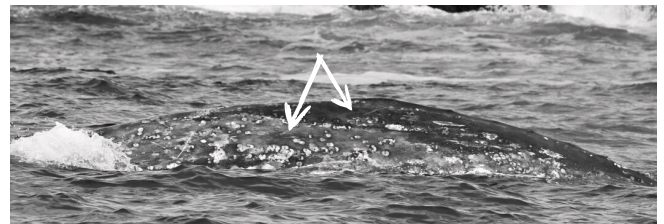
 Sydney Dixon

Who is included

This field guide includes the Grey Whales that have been observed, photographed and identified **most frequently** in Clayoquot Sound in recent years.

Individuals are listed with both their **alphanumeric name** as well as their **nickname** if applicable. Above each photograph you will find information (if known) on the individual whale's **date of record in Clayoquot Sound**, **birth date**, **relation** to other local whales, and **sex**. Additional notes about the individual's unique identifying markings, behaviour and history may be found under each whale's photograph.

Below you will find a quick example of features used to identify individuals.



(above) two toned colouration



(above) white dash close to first knuckle

For more ID assistance, please refer to Cedar Coast's 2019 Grey Whale Catalogue or reach out to Pacific Wildlife Foundation

CSG589 - "Orange Crush"

First recorded in 1977 ♀



Greg Potter

2019



Greg Potter

2019

CSG589 aka "Orange Crush" is one of the longest visiting and most frequently sighted Grey Whales in Clayoquot Sound. In fact, she was the most frequently reported whale in 2021. Orange Crush has been observed milling and feeding closely with other whales and it is not uncommon to see her socializing. Compared to other Greys in the area, Orange Crush appears to prefer feeding closer inshore. She can be easily identified by her two-toned port flank and bright white dash mark very close to the first knuckle on her starboard side. She is known to feed in areas of high vessel traffic, most notably Entrance Rocks near Cow Bay. Vigilance and caution is recommended in front of Surf Beach and around Whaler Island as well.

CSG157 - "Harmony"

First recorded in 1975 ♀



Greg Potter

2021



Greg Potter

2021

CSG157 aka "Harmony" is one of the longest visiting Grey Whales to Clayoquot Sound. She earned her name from historical tendency to be very "friendly" towards boats; however, this behaviour has not been seen in several years and should never be encouraged. Harmony is a very large, mature whale that rarely lifts her fluke when she sounds.

CSG298 - "Bar"

First recorded in 1979 ♂



Greg Potter

2019



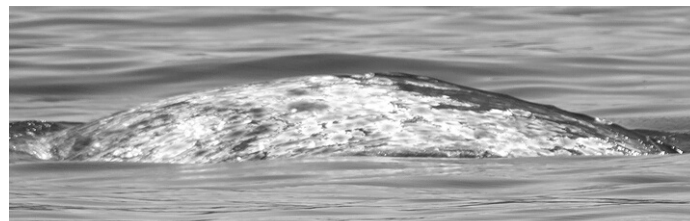
Greg Potter

2021

CSG298 aka "Bar" can easily be identified by the large white rectangular shaped marking on the port side of his body. He has a white dash, similar to CSG589 on the starboard side of his body; however, Bar's white dash is shorter and further down his knuckles. When Bar feeds, he typically covers a large distance whilst feeding as opposed to making tight circles or remaining stationary.

CSG973 - "Snowflake"

Born in 2017 to CSG27 "Big White"



Greg Potter

2021



Greg Potter

2021

CSG973 aka "Snowflake" is a very light coloured whale with a dark streak along the ridge of its back. Snowflake has a tendency to move erratically, and can be unpredictable around vessels. Snowflake has been observed socializing with its mother, Big White, in years following weaning. The pair has not been seen together since 2020, which was the last time Big White has been documented in Clayoquot Sound.

CSG42 - "Marcus"/"Scarface"

Born in 2002 to CSG33 "Elvis" ♂



Greg Potter

2019



Greg Potter

2019

CSG42 aka "Marcus" or "Scarface" is a very dark coloured whale with bright white patches. CSG42 is the survivor of a vessel strike and bears propeller scars behind his blow hole. The scarring appeared in 2008. CSG42 is often seen associating with another male, CSG23 aka "Pattern". The duo is nearly always seen together at Long Beach in the Spring.

CSG1081 - "Mustang"

Unk year of record



Greg Potter

2021



Greg Potter

2021

CSG1081 aka "Mustang" can most easily be identified by the mark on its top right flank that vaguely resembles the Ford Mustang logo. This individual was seen quite frequently in the spring of 2021, often associating with CSG589 "Orange Crush". This whale is absent from the Pacific Wildlife Foundation catalogue.

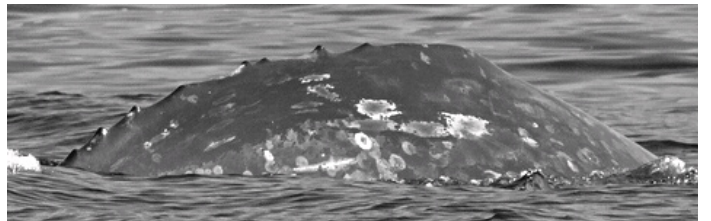
CSG722 - "Jagger"

First recorded in 2009



Greg Potter

2021



Greg Potter

2021

CSG722 aka "Jagger" is most frequently recorded in Cow Bay. Jagger is named for the Rolling Stones lip-esque marking on the underside of its tail but can more readily be identified by the large light patches on both its port and starboard side.

CSG34 - "Admiral"

First recorded in 1987 ♀



Sydney Dixon

2019



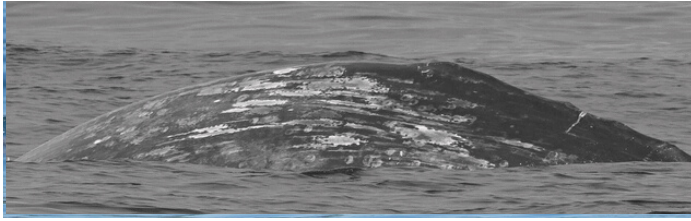
Greg Potter

2021

CSG34 aka "Admiral" is easily identified by the very large propeller scars on her port flank. The scars are generally filled with lice and are orange in appearance. Admiral's feeding spots vary, she is well known in both Clayoquot and Barkley Sounds. In 2021, Admiral stayed in Clayoquot Sound's sheltered waters into December, and is often seen with CSG589 "Orange Crush". To our knowledge, this whale never lifts her fluke when she sounds.

CSG26 - "Top Spot"

First recorded in 1975



Greg Potter

2021



Greg Potter

2021

CSG26 aka "Top Spot" can most easily be identified by the white spot in front of her dorsal ridge. She is one of our less predictable whales, sightings of Top Spot vary year to year and she can be found anywhere between Long Beach and Estevan Point.

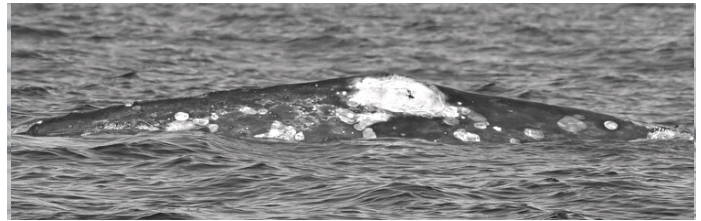
CSG1007 - "Lasso"

First recorded in 2017



Claudia Tersigni

2019



Greg Potter

2021

CSG1007 aka "Lasso" can be identified by the large scarring on top of the dorsal ridge. Lasso was tagged by researchers and suffered a major injection as a result. In 2021, DFO administered antibiotics which seems to have halted the infection. In previous years, "Lasso" has been an extremely boat curious whale. Please exercise caution and do not encourage "friendly" behaviour.

CSG2 - "Calf of Collage"

Born in 2002 ♀



Claudia Tersigni

2019



Claudia Tersigni

2019

CSG2 aka "Calf of Collage" is a female grey whale born in 2002 to CSG222 "Collage". In 2015, CSG2 gave birth to a calf CSG627 making her part of a three generation lineage of grey whales returning to Clayoquot Sound to feed. In 2021, CSG2 was harassed by killer whales but lived to tell the tale! She can change direction a lot when feeding, don't let her surprise you.

DIDN'T FIND THE WHALES YOU ENCOUNTERED?

Check Cedar Coast's official 2019 Identification Catalogue or reach out to Pacific Wildlife Foundation for more information.

Individuals positively identified in Clayoquot Sound in recent years but not included in this guide include: CSG23 "Pattern", CSG38 "Baby Saddle", CSG28 "Black Jack", CSG760 "Indigo", CSG349 "Ditto", CSG627, CSG508, CSG14, CSG530, CSG1088

FOR ASSISTANCE WITH HUMPBACK WHALE IDENTIFICATION

Please refer to Pacific Wildlife Foundation's online catalogue at: <https://clayoquotwhales.ca/> or Marine Education and Research Society's Catalogue: of Humpback Whales of Northern Vancouver Island Version 9 (April 2021).

Note: SIMRS is proud to collaborate with government and multiple non-governmental organizations and to provide our colleagues with open access data. It is our goal to meaningfully deepen our community's understanding of marine mammals in B.C. waters and to help mitigate against threats and disturbances.