

# Sea Watch Investigator Task

## Magnificent Marine Migrations - Voyage of the Gray Whale



**Objective - To use geographical mapping skills to locate and map cetaceans in the U.K.**

**What to do** - Read the sightings of the Pacific Gray Whales on their migration, find the location on your map and, using a key, plot the route that the whale takes.

**SIGHTING 1 - La Paz - Baja California, Mexico** End of January



Local divers spot the huge outline of the whales overhead, some of them are much smaller, the females must have their calves.

**SIGHTING 2 - San Luis Rio Colorado, Mexico** Still the end of January



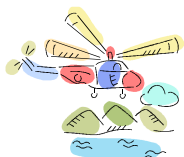
Out fishing for local Mexican Bonito, the fishermen spot the blow of a huge Gray Whale. They are happy that their small boat and fish lines will not hurt the whales.

**SIGHTING 3 - San Diego, California** Mid March



Practising for a Round the World Yacht Race, a sailor spots a pod (a group) of Gray Whales heading North.

**SIGHTING 4 - Los Angeles, California** End of March



A helicopter pilot spots a pod of females with their calves, surfacing to breathe, some of the males may have travelled further on their migration.

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### SIGHTING 5 - Santa Barbara, California End of March



A huge cargo ship heads for the port, it is travelling quickly. On the East Coast ships have to reduce their speed to 10 knots to help protect the Whales. Thankfully the ship avoids any collisions.

### SIGHTING 6 - Monterey Bay, California Early April



Monterey Bay is a Marine Sanctuary, a bit like a National Park. Conservationists, tracking the progress and numbers of Pacific Gray Whales, spot a small pod of males.

### SIGHTING 7 - Seattle, Washington Early May



Seattle is famous for its fish markets. Trawlers go out every day to fish. They know that in May huge numbers of Pacific Gray Whales make their journey north. They have been spotting pods for a few weeks now.

### SIGHTING 8 - Vancouver Island, British Columbia Still early May



Kayaking in these cold waters is a popular sport. Today the Kayakers are lucky, they have spotted a pod of Orcas and, in the distance, see a Pacific Gray breaching (jumping out of the water.) Sometimes they do this for fun!

### SIGHTING 9 - Kodiak Island, Gulf of Alaska Mid June



Passing by the pods, on their way further North, the passengers of a huge cruise liner cannot believe how big the Grays are. They can reach lengths of over 12 metres long, bigger than a bus!

### SIGHTING 10 - Bering Sea, Alaska Late July



At last the Whales have reached their feeding grounds. Hopefully the waters will be rich with krill for them to feed. Swift Antarctic Fur and Leopard Seals hear their calls in the icy waters.

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Use the distances below to plot on your US map and to help you work out calculations on the back page of the Pacific Gray Whale's passport.

Approximate distances between locations -

- La Paz - San Luiz Rio Colorado - 1160 miles
- San Luiz Rio Colorado - San Diego - 60 miles
- San Diego - Los Angeles - 135 miles
- Los Angeles - Santa Barbara - 110 miles
- Santa Barbara - Monterey Bay - 265 miles
- Monterey Bay - Seattle - 1020 miles
- Seattle - Vancouver Island - 110 miles
- Vancouver Island - Kodiak Island - 900 miles
- Kodiak Island - Bering Sea - 800 miles



*For information about how to watch for Cetaceans look at the following websites. They also give you details about where to watch in the UK and facts about different species.*

<http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/observing.php?uid=16>

How to watch cetaceans.

<http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/observing.php?uid=17>

Where to watch cetaceans in the UK.

<http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/speciesid.php>

UK species.