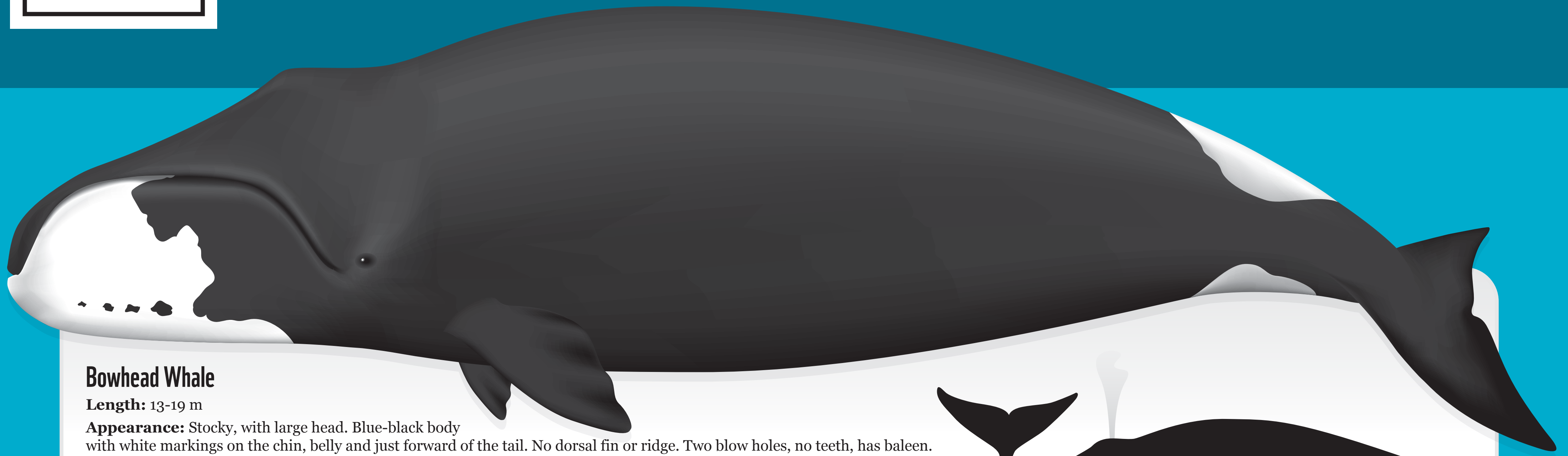




Marine Mammals of Hudson Strait

The following marine mammals are common to Hudson Strait, however, other species may also be seen. It's possible for marine mammals to venture outside of their common habitats and may be seen elsewhere.



Bowhead Whale

Length: 13-19 m

Appearance: Stocky, with large head. Blue-black body with white markings on the chin, belly and just forward of the tail. No dorsal fin or ridge. Two blow holes, no teeth, has baleen.

Behaviour: Blow is V-shaped and bushy, reaching 6 m in height. Often alone but sometimes in groups of 2-10.

Habitat: Leads and cracks in pack ice during winter and in open water during summer.

Status: Special concern



Beluga Whale

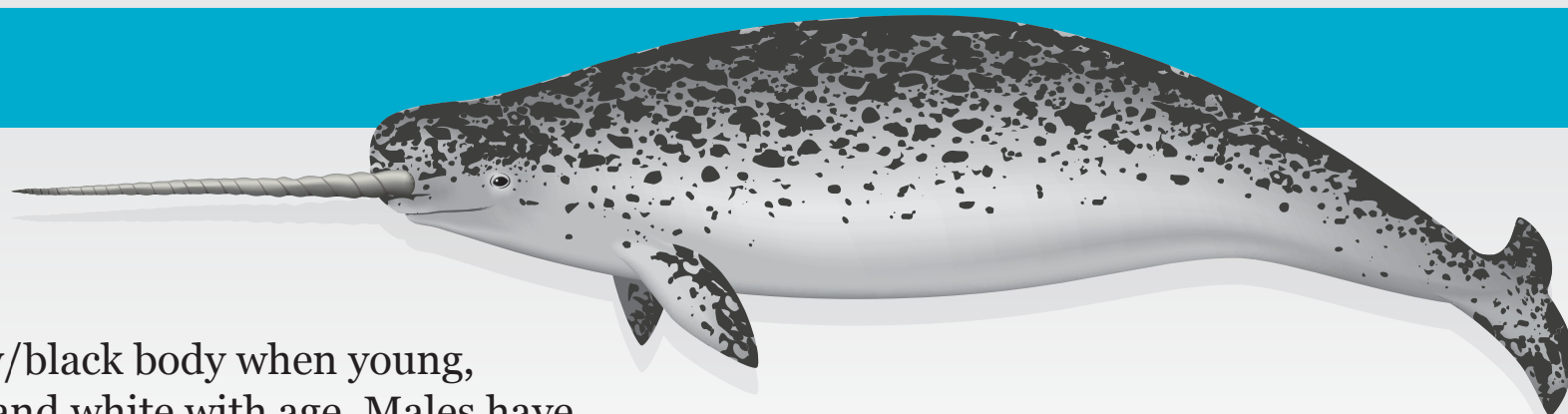
Length: 4-5 m

Appearance: Adults are almost entirely white with a tough dorsal ridge and no dorsal fin. Young are grey.

Behaviour: Blow is low and hardly visible. Not much of the body is visible out of the water. Found in small groups, but sometimes hundreds to thousands during annual migrations.

Habitat: Found in open water year-round. Prefer shallow coastal water during summer and water near pack ice in winter.

Status: Endangered



Narwhal

Length: 4-5 m

Appearance: Dark grey/black body when young, becoming speckled grey and white with age. Males have a spiralled tusk up to 3 m long. Dorsal ridge, no dorsal fin.

Behaviour: Blow is puffy. Not much of the body is visible out of the water. Often in groups of 15-20 but can be hundreds.

Habitat: Can navigate under heavy ice cover by using cracks and holes to breathe.

Status: Special concern



Hooded Seal

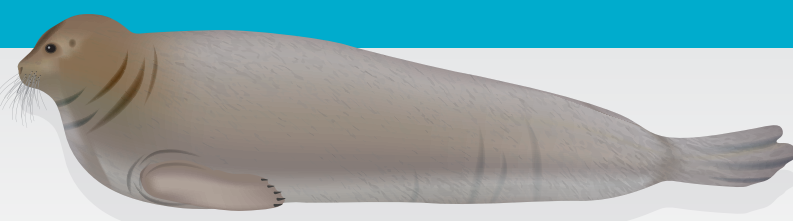
Length: 2-3 m

Appearance: Silver-grey with irregular dark blotches over most of the body. Males have characteristic inflatable black "hood" on forehead and inflatable balloon-like nose membrane.

Behaviour: Solitary, except during pupping (mid-March to early April), mating (late winter) and moulting (June-August).

Habitat: On drifting pack ice and in deep waters.

Status: Not at risk



Bearded Seal

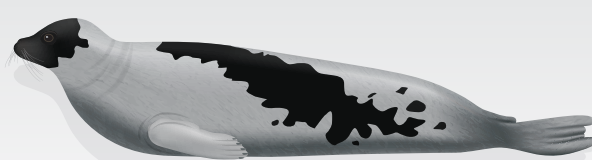
Length: Up to 2.5 m

Appearance: Grey to dark grey with brown tinge on head and light grey underside. Long, white whiskers and square shaped front flippers.

Behaviour: Solitary, but form small groups during mating and moulting (March-May).

Habitat: Water less than 200 m depth and commonly found with drifting sea ice.

Status: Data deficient



Harp Seal

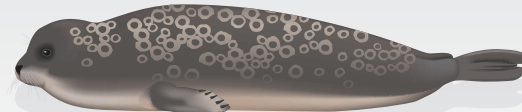
Length: Up to 2 m

Appearance: Light grey body with black or brown head and long, black 'harp-shaped' saddle on the back.

Behaviour: Form large groups in April-May. When migrating, the seals leap out of the water like dolphins.

Habitat: On pack ice for majority of the year, dispersing widely in open waters during summer months to feed.

Status: Not assessed



Ringed Seal

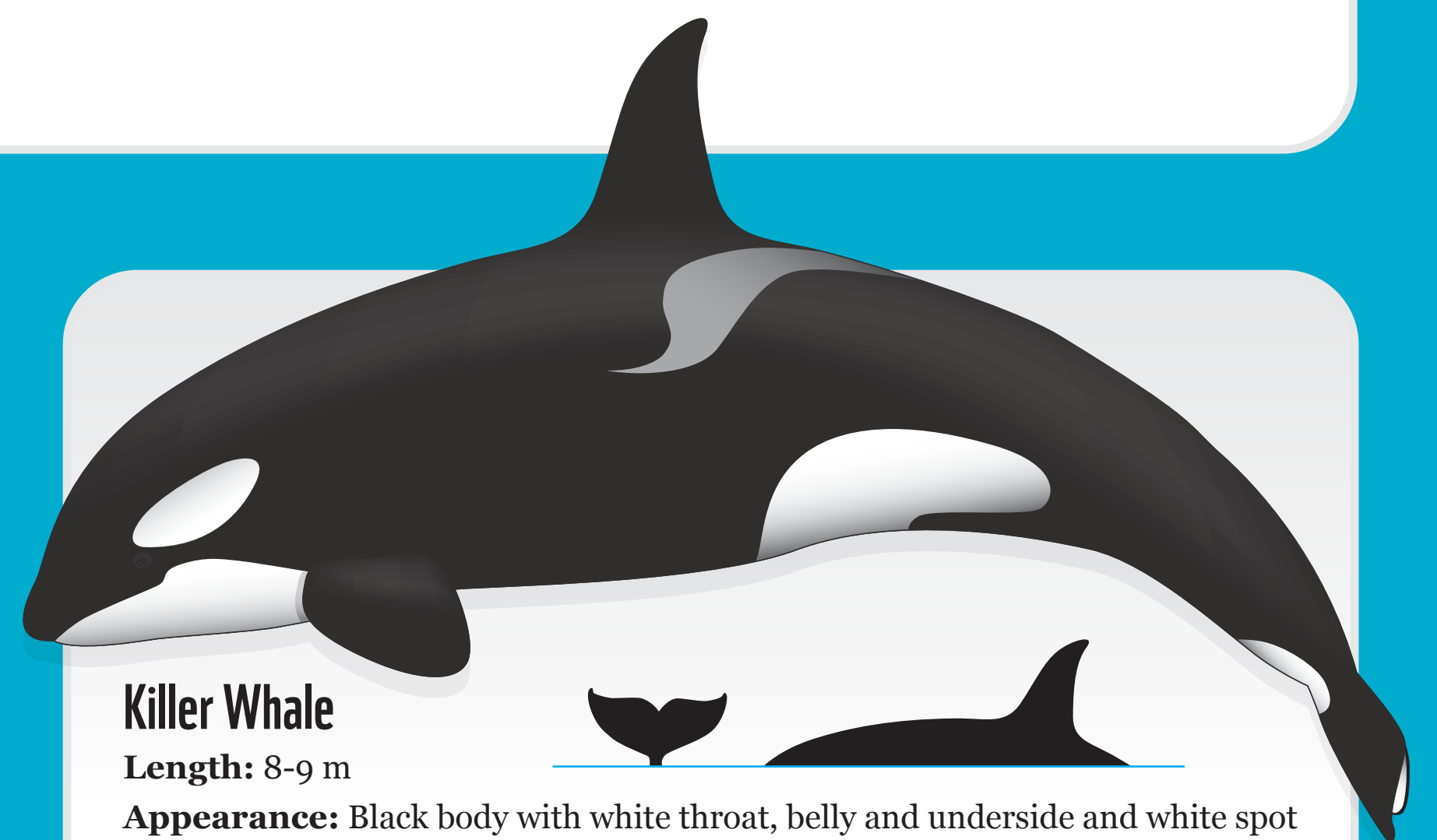
Length: Up to 1.5 m

Appearance: Dark grey body with light rings on the back and silver-coloured on the front.

Behaviour: Maintain breathing holes throughout winter.

Habitat: Associated with ice floes and pack ice.

Status: Not at risk



Killer Whale

Length: 8-9 m

Appearance: Black body with white throat, belly and underside and white spot behind eye. Triangular dorsal fin in the middle of the back. Male dorsal fin can be up to 2 m in high.

Behaviour: Blow is tall and column shaped; approximately 4 m in height. Typically form groups of 2-25.

Habitat: Coastal water and open seas, often in water less than 200 m depth.

Status: Special concern



Polar Bear

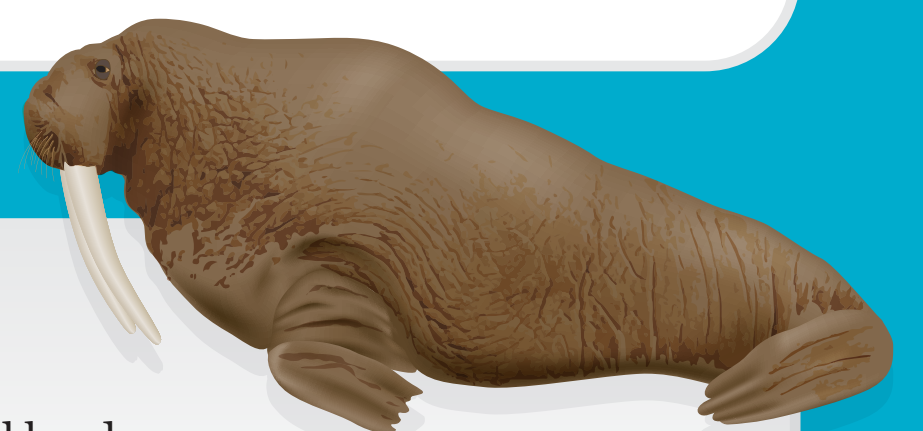
Length: Up to 3 m

Appearance: White, but can appear yellow, or light brown.

Behaviour: Solitary, except during breeding (late March-May) and cub rearing.

Habitat: Majority of time is spent on sea ice.

Status: Special concern



Walrus

Length: 2-3.5 m

Appearance: Big, stocky body with small head, thick, brown skin, a broad flat muzzle, white whiskers, and two distinctive tusks.

Behaviour: Occur in tight groups on ice floes or on land.

Habitat: Shallow water and coastal beaches in summer and at the edge of fast ice in winter.

Status: Special concern

