



Fin Whales of New England & Eastern Canada Wildlife Guide

Encounter the "Greyhounds of the Sea"



Second only to the **Blue Whale** in size, the **Fin Whale** is one of the largest animals ever to live on Earth. Often called the "**Greyhound of the Sea**" because of its sleek body and surprising speed, this magnificent whale can reach lengths of **85 feet (26 meters)** while gracefully cruising through the nutrient-rich waters of New England and eastern Canada.

Although they don't breach as frequently as humpback whales, fin whales are a favorite among experienced whale watchers because of their impressive size, smooth movements, and elegant appearance. Their long, streamlined bodies often glide effortlessly across the ocean, making every sighting unforgettable.

For travelers on a New England & Canada cruise, spotting a fin whale is a special bonus and a reminder that these waters are home to some of the planet's most extraordinary marine life.



Meet the Fin Whale



Fin whales are among the largest mammals on Earth.

Adults typically reach:

- **65–85 feet (20–26 meters)** long
- **40–80 tons (36–72 metric tons)**

They are recognized by:

- Long, streamlined body
- Dark gray coloration
- Small dorsal fin positioned far back
- Tall, narrow blow reaching up to **20 feet (6 meters)**

Their streamlined shape makes them one of the fastest whales in the ocean.

Where to See Fin Whales



Excellent viewing areas include:

Gulf of Maine

- Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary
- Bar Harbor
- Offshore Maine waters

Bay of Fundy

- Grand Manan Island
- Saint Andrews
- Fundy coastal waters

Québec

- Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park
- Tadoussac
- Lower St. Lawrence Estuary

Newfoundland

- Iceberg Alley

- Gros Morne area
- Northeast coast

These productive waters provide abundant food throughout the summer.



Best Time to See Fin Whales



Fin whales are most commonly seen during:

Best Viewing Season

May through October

Peak months:

- June
- July
- August
- September

Summer feeding season offers the highest chance of sightings.



What Do Fin Whales Eat?



Fin whales primarily feed on:

- Krill
- Copepods
- Herring
- Capelin
- Sand lance
- Small schooling fish

Using a feeding method called **lunge feeding**, they surge through dense schools of prey with their mouths open before filtering food through their baleen plates.

⚡ The Fastest of the Great Whales



Fin whales have earned the nickname "**Greyhounds of the Sea.**"

They can:

- Reach speeds approaching **25–30 miles per hour (40–48 km/h)** over short distances.
- Travel long distances efficiently.
- Cover hundreds of miles during seasonal movements.

Their speed and graceful swimming make them one of the ocean's most elegant whales.



Wildlife Photography Tips



For successful photos:

- Watch for tall, straight blows.
- Keep your camera ready—fin whales surface briefly.
- Use burst mode.
- Look for long, rolling backs before the dorsal fin appears.
- Be patient—multiple surfacings often occur before the whale dives.



Seeing Fin Whales from Your Cruise Ship



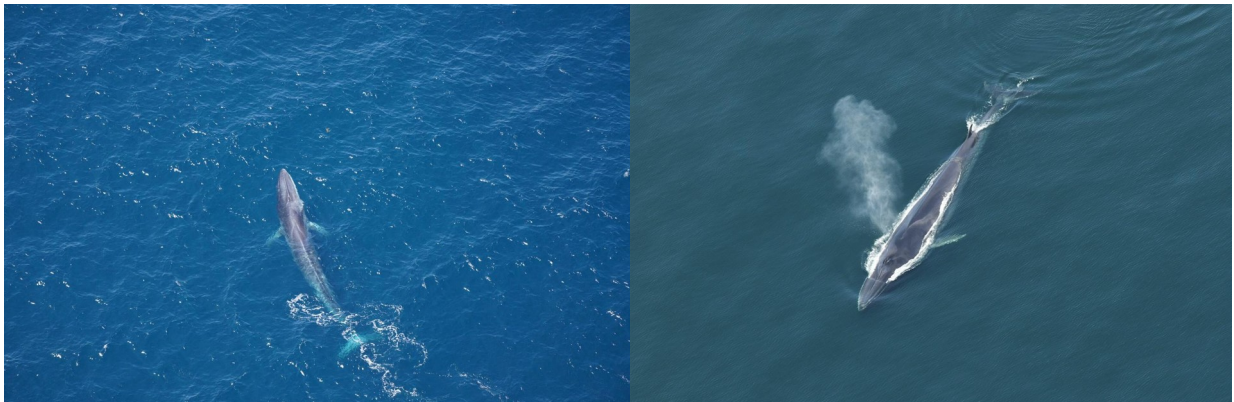
Fin whales are occasionally spotted directly from cruise ships while sailing through:

- Gulf of Maine
- Bay of Fundy
- Gulf of St. Lawrence
- Newfoundland waters

They're often identified by their tall blow and long, graceful back breaking the surface.



Conservation



Fin whales face several ongoing challenges, including:

- Ship strikes
- Fishing gear entanglement
- Ocean noise
- Climate change
- Changes in prey availability

Marine protected areas and responsible whale-watching practices play an important role in helping these giants thrive.

Premium Travel Group Tip

Many travelers focus on spotting humpbacks, but don't overlook fin whales. Their sheer size and graceful movements are breathtaking. If you're on deck during scenic cruising, keep scanning the horizon for a tall, narrow blow followed by a long, sleek back gliding through the water—it could be one of the ocean's fastest giants.

Continue Exploring New England & Canada Wildlife

Continue your wildlife adventure with our related guides:

- Humpback Whales Guide
 - Atlantic Puffins Guide
 - Bald Eagles Guide
 - Moose Wildlife Guide
 - Harbor Seals Guide (*coming soon*)
 - Dolphins Guide (*coming soon*)
 - Wildlife Photography Guide (*coming soon*)
 - Wildlife You Can See from Your Cruise Ship (*coming soon*)
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Fun Facts

- The **Fin Whale** is the **second-largest animal on Earth**, surpassed only by the Blue Whale.
- Fin whales can reach **85 feet (26 meters)** in length—longer than many commercial aircraft.
- They are known as the "**Greyhounds of the Sea**" because of their streamlined bodies and impressive speed.
- One unique feature is their **asymmetrical jaw coloration**: the lower right jaw is white, while the lower left side is dark gray or black—a rare trait among mammals.
- Fin whales are baleen whales, filtering enormous amounts of tiny prey from the water instead of using teeth.



Why You'll Love Seeing a Fin Whale

While they may not leap dramatically from the water like humpbacks, fin whales possess a quiet elegance that's equally impressive. Watching one of the largest animals on Earth glide effortlessly across the ocean is a humbling experience. Their immense size, graceful movements, and remarkable speed remind us that some of nature's greatest wonders don't always seek attention—they simply inspire it.



Joe's Logbook

One of the things I love about whale watching is that every species has its own personality.

Humpbacks often steal the spotlight with their spectacular breaches, but fin whales impress you in a different way. They're smooth, graceful, and incredibly fast. The first time you see one, you quickly realize just how massive it is as that long back seems to go on forever before the dorsal fin finally appears.

Because they're less flashy than humpbacks, many people don't realize they've just witnessed the second-largest animal on Earth. That's what makes spotting one so special. It's a reminder that not every unforgettable wildlife encounter comes with a dramatic splash.

If you're cruising through the Gulf of Maine, the Bay of Fundy, or the St. Lawrence region, spend some extra time on the open deck with a pair of binoculars. You might be lucky enough to spot one of these incredible giants quietly making its way through the Atlantic—and trust me, it's a sight you'll never forget.  