



Cuvier's Beaked Whale

Ziphius cavirostris

Quick facts

Order Cetartiodactyla

Conservation status

Global *Least concern*



Global trend *Unknown*

Size 5.5 - 5.8 m (females larger), 7 m maximum for both sexes.

Weight 3,000 kg

Life span At least 30 years.

This large beaked whale has variable colouration (often partly white, particularly in older males) and males have tusks in the lower jaw. Widespread, but rarely recorded as far north as Britain; there have been 6 well-documented sightings, all since 1980.

Habitat

Oceanic species found in deep (>200 m) warm and warm-temperate waters, particularly around steep slopes such as canyons and escarpments.

Behaviour

Rarely seen, but sightings are usually of single animals or groups of 2 - 12 (occasionally up to 25). Larger groups partially segregated by age and sex. Extensive scarring on males is common, presumed due to aggression between males.

Diet & Feeding

Regularly dives over 1,000 km deep to feed mostly on squid, occasionally fish and crustaceans. On average, makes 12 foraging dives per 24 hour period, during the day and the night.

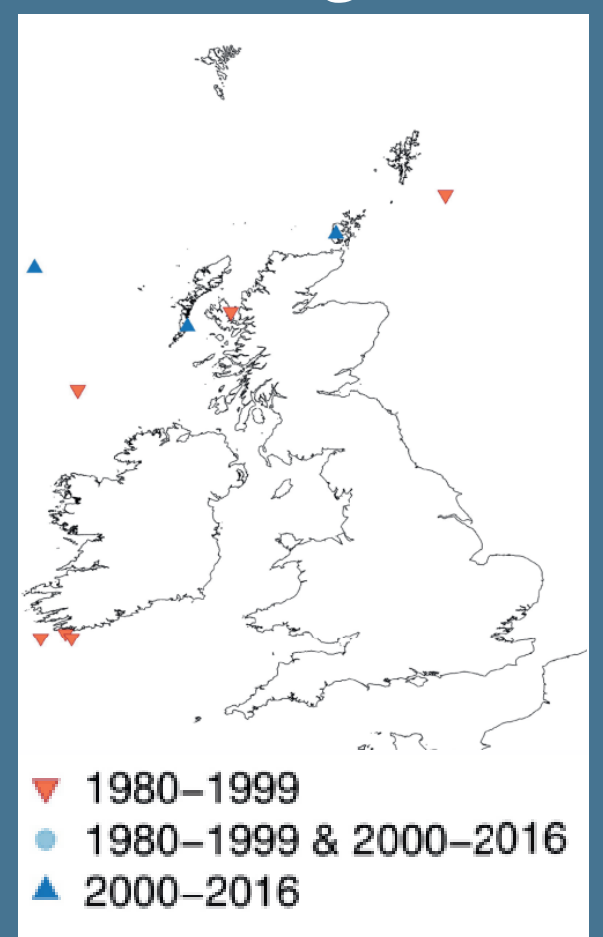
Reproduction

Little is known. No seasonal pattern has been found.

Conservation & Threats

Main threat is probably anthropogenic underwater noise, particularly high energy sounds such as sonar and seismic exploration (linked to mass strandings and tissue damage). Bycatch has been reported in several fisheries. Individuals have been found with plastic in the stomach and high tissue concentrations of heavy metals and selenium.

Range



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