

Where Are the Whales? Experts Stumped By “Missing” Whales in Hawaii & Florida

Video Source: [NewsBeat Social](#)

As explained in the video above, there is no cause for alarm yet, but experts are surprised and curious over the absence of the Alaskan whales that usually migrate to Hawaii by January. [Nature World News](#) describes the humpback’s typical migratory pattern:

Each year thousands of [humpback whales](#) migrate upwards of 3,000 miles from Alaska to Hawaiian breeding grounds, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In order to travel such great distances – the farthest migration of any mammal, in fact – humpbacks spend summer months building up fat stores by filter-feeding on tiny crustaceans.

[Related Article: Seal Spotted Surfing Humpback Whale In Australia](#)

Humpback whales are protected under the Endangered Species Act and federal law prohibits approaching [within 100 yards](#) of them by boat. Despite past population declines threatening the species, experts are not yet concerned about their slow arrival to Hawaii.

“They don’t necessarily show up in the same place at the same time every year,” former sanctuary co-manager Jeff Walters said.

The whales may also be spending more time up north because of El Niño patterns and warmer waters or because their population has increased, experts say.

Interestingly, the same sort of thing is also happening in Florida. [Nature World News](#) also described the situation there:

[Related Article: SeaWorld to End Orca Shows–But Not Captivity of These Incredible Creatures](#)

Florida is not yet seeing its normal traffic of endangered [North Atlantic right whales](#). On the lower Atlantic coast of the United States, right whales usually make their way through by this time of year – but researchers think warmer weather in Florida is preventing the whales from venturing further south yet, according to an article in the [Daytona Beach News-Journal](#).

But cooler weather is expected on the Florida coast soon. So far, only a few right whales were seen off a beach north of St. Augustine. Only one whale, a humpback, has been past Flagler Beach near Daytona Beach, which usually sees whales too by now.

Generally, the migrating right whale population that arrives along this coastline is thought to total around 510.

The “missing” whales are not late enough yet to create concern, but experts are certainly keeping a closer eye out for their arrival. And theories about their slow migration pattern are arising. The first is that warmer climate and waters are inviting the mammals to stay north longer or to live further north requiring further travel south.

[Related Article: Breathtaking Footage Of a Paddleboarder’s Beautiful Encounter With Two Whales](#)

And the second theory is that as the whales are being protected more, their numbers are growing, which means more food hunting is needed and a slower, group migration south results.