

Aerial survey for the right whale

Dates: April to November

Recurrence: Annually, since 2017

Location: Gulf of St. Lawrence and Atlantic Canadian waters

Aircraft: Cessna 337 / Twin Otter

Description

Aerial surveillance is one of the means used to monitor the North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*) in Canadian waters. With approximately 350 individuals, this species is in danger of extinction.

When weather conditions permit, observers criss-cross Canadian waters on board small aircraft and collect data on the presence of marine mammals, particularly right whales. As soon as a right whale is observed, additional photos and data are collected to support the measures put in place by fisheries management teams for promoting the survival of this species. This important work is carried out in collaboration with several departments, governments and external partners.

Objectives

1. Assess the abundance and distribution of the right whale and other marine mammals in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Atlantic Canadian waters;
2. Collect photos of right whales, feeding catalogues and databases;
3. Provide support for fisheries management measures;
4. Provide support to disentanglement teams; and
5. Prepare scientific advice for the recovery of the species.

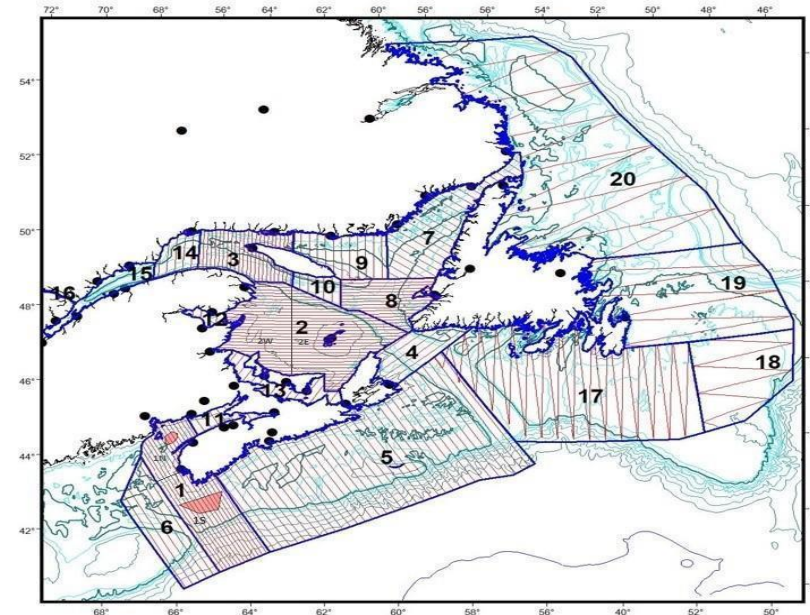
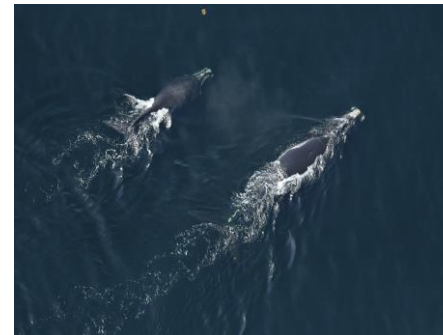


Figure 1: Area covered by aerial surveys in eastern Canada



Aerial photo of two right whales



Marine mammal observer aboard a small Aircraft