

Number of blue whales increasing

10th September, 2014



This is a good-news story about sea life. Scientists have reported that the numbers of blue whales in the eastern Pacific Ocean are the highest they have been in over a century. Researchers at the University of Washington report that there are now over 2,200 blue whales between Mexico and Alaska. Hunters killed nearly all the blue whales in that area and were close to extinction. Whaling became illegal in 1971 and the numbers of the world's largest mammal started increasing. It has taken over 40 years for the blue whale to recover. Lead researcher Dr Cole Monnahan was very happy at this positive news. He said: "For us, this is a great conservation success story."

Dr Monnahan said the number of 2,200 blue whales in the area might not rise any further. He said: "Before this study, some people thought that number should be going up, but if there were about 2,200 whales to begin with, then that is what the environment can support." Monnahan warned that the creature still needs to be protected, saying: "California blue whales are recovering because we took actions to stop catches and start monitoring. If we hadn't, the population might have been pushed to near extinction." He added that: "The recovery of California blue whales from whaling demonstrates the ability of blue whale populations to rebuild under careful management and conservation measures."

Sources: Fox News / TIME / California Academy of Sciences

Writing

Write about the differences between whales and dolphins. Which do you like better? Why?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

good news / scientists / whales / Pacific Ocean / hunters / extinction / whaling / story / rise / study / environment / protected / recovering / population / ability / conservation

True / False

- Scientists say there are more blue whales in the Atlantic Ocean. T / F
- The numbers of blue whales are at levels not seen for 500 years. T / F
- It was against the law to hunt and kill whales from 1971. T / F
- A scientist said it was a great conversation success story. T / F
- The scientist expects the number of whales to rise even further. T / F
- The scientist suggested the environment couldn't support more whales. T / F
- The scientist said the blue whale is safe enough not to be protected. T / F
- The scientist said conservation measures helped the blue whale. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. sea | a. return to normal |
| 2. close | b. rising |
| 3. illegal | c. watching |
| 4. increasing | d. near |
| 5. recover | e. shows |
| 6. further | f. marine |
| 7. creature | g. actions |
| 8. monitoring | h. against the law |
| 9. demonstrates | i. animal |
| 10. measures | j. more |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about the numbers of other whales?
- Do you think blue whale numbers will go up, down or stay the same?
- Who does the blue whale still need protecting from?
- Would you like a job monitoring blue whales? Why?
- How would the ocean environment change if whales became extinct?
- Can humans stop the extinction of other creatures?
- What three adjectives best describe whales, and why?
- What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. This is a good-news | a. extinction |
| 2. the highest they have been | b. success story |
| 3. close to | c. extinction |
| 4. the world's largest | d. any further |
| 5. this is a great conservation | e. to be protected |
| 6. might not rise | f. story about sea life |
| 7. there were about 2,200 whales | g. measures |
| 8. the creature still needs | h. mammal |
| 9. pushed to near | i. in over a century |
| 10. conservation | j. to begin with |

Discussion – Student B

- Do you like reading about good news or bad news?
- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think about blue whales?
- How good is this news?
- What do you think about the hunting of whales?
- What other creatures would you like to see increase in number?
- What other conservation success stories do you know about?
- Why wasn't it until 1971 that whaling became illegal?

Spelling

- in the atesnre Pacific Ocean
- close to niectxion
- Whaling became lalleig in 1971
- the world's largest mamma
- 40 years for the blue whale to croevre
- a great conservation uescscs story.
- might not rise any htreufr
- what the environment can ruoppts
- the cteerrua still needs to be protected
- stop catches and start irioomnntg
- the tplonpoiau might have been pushed to...
- rebuild under careful gataenmemn

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. d	3. h	4. b	5. a
6. j	7. i	8. c	9. e	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Sports

You think sports is the best thing to receive good news about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why news about their things isn't so interesting. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): shopping, money or global warming.

Role B – Shopping

You think shopping is the best thing to receive good news about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why news about their things isn't so interesting. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): sports, money or global warming.

Role C – Money

You think money is the best thing to receive good news about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why news about their things isn't so interesting. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): shopping, sports or global warming.

Role D – Global warming

You think global warming is the best thing to receive good news about. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why news about their things isn't so interesting. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): shopping, money or sports.

Speaking – Good news

Rank these with your partner. Put the best thing you like to hear good news about at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| • money | • your favourite sports team |
| • yourself | • wildlife conservation |
| • global warming | • shopping bargains |
| • war | • new technology |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.