

**Humpback Whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)  
of the Sultanate of Oman**

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**ABSTRACT**

Data are presented on the general distribution and abundance of humpback whales off the coast of the Sultanate of Oman, with particular reference to observations made during an offshore seismic survey in the Arabian Sea in November 1997. Additional information is presented on seasonal occurrence, ecology and behaviour, external appearance, conservation, mortality, incidental capture and population status and identity of Oman's humpback whales. The data generally support the notion of year-round residency of humpback whales off the coast of Oman, but indicate the need for further research to establish whether the low frequency of positive records during summer months is a true reflection of seasonal distribution. Other research on humpback whales in the region is recommended.

**KEY WORDS:** Humpback whale; distribution; population identity; ecology; Gulf of Oman; Arabian Sea.