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## Review: Marine Mammals

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### Whales:

- Characteristics:
  - Belong to the order of mammals called Cetacea
  - Blubber - thick layers of fat that keeps mammals warm in colder waters
- Types of Whales:
  - Baleen Whales - filter feeders that eat plankton and small fish
  - Baleen Whales open their mouths and take in enormous amounts of water containing zooplankton
  - The baleen acts as a filter taking all the small organisms needed for feeding
  - Examples: Blue, Finback, Humpback, and Gray Whales
- Toothed Whales - they have peg like teeth used to catch fish, seals, and penguins
  - After catching their prey they usually swallow it whole
  - Examples: Sperm, Killer (Orca), Pilot, and Beluga Whales
- Reproduction:
  - Fertilization and development is internal
  - Gestation is 11 to 18 months depending on the species and breed about every three years
  - Mother push young to the surface to take first breath and provide parental care for their young
- Breathing & Movement:
  - Uses the blowhole, which is a giant nostril
  - Top speed of 55 km/hour by propulsion is from the up and down motion of the tail
  - Spyhopping - when a whale raises its head above the water's surface to look around
  - Lobtailing - when whales wave their tails and smash it on the waters surface
  - Breaching - when a whale is nearly completely out of the water
- Communication:
  - Whales use a series of clicks and sounds [produce songs]
  - Echolocation - form of sonar that bounces off object and return a location

### Dolphins:

- Characteristics:
  - Belong to the order of mammals called Cetacea
  - Actually small whales that range in size from 2-4 meters
  - Extremely social & intelligent and fast enough to keep up with speed boats
- Reproduction:
  - Gestation is 11-12 months
  - Paternal care and development
- Communication:
  - Use a sound called a click that act as a sonar to detect fish and obstacles

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## Sea Otters:

- Characteristics:
  - Belong to the order of mammals called Carnivora
  - Found in the Pacific Northwest and inhabit nearshore environments
  - It has extremely dense fur that traps air against the body for insulation
  - Unfortunately, sea otters were hunted extensively for their fur and nearly became extinct
  - Keystone Species - species on which other species depend upon, such that if they were removed the ecosystem would change drastically
- Feeding:
  - Dive to the sea floor to forage on crustaceans, mollusks and echinoderms (sea stars and urchins)
  - Must eat approx. 25-30% of their body weight per day
  - Sometimes use a tool to help them open hard shells
- Communication:
  - Use body contact like nosing one another and head-jerking
  - Adults use vocalizations like low cooing sound and pups use a high-pitch squeal
- Reproduction:
  - Males show up in the areas where females have territory
  - However, the males need approval for mating and if they don't they move on
  - Can birth one pup at a time on land, in the water and occasionally on ice floes
- Maternal Care:
  - Females are very good caregivers to their offspring and spend up to 8 hours nursing each day
  - Females also play with their offspring, teaching them valuable skills

## Seals and Sea Lions:

- Characteristics:
  - Belong to the order of mammals called Pinnipedia [fin-footed]
  - Streamlined bodies for swimming and thick layer of blubber for insulation, food reserves and buoyancy
  - Seals and Sea Lions are protected in US waters under the Marine Mammal Protection Act
  - The Caribbean monk seal was declared extinct in 2008
- Habitat:
  - They typically live in the cold ocean waters and can make caves in the snow to live in
- Feeding:
  - Predators, feeding mainly on fish and squid [Leopard seals will eat penguins and small seals]
- Mating and Reproduction:
  - Males issue deep throaty calls to attract females and to warn others that his female is taken
  - Males are very territorial and will fight for the right to mate with up to 50 females
  - Mothers carry their young for approximately 10 months and have just one pup a year
  - Pups stay on land for about a month until their waterproof fur grows in
- Seals vs. Sea Lions
  - Seals - no external ears, short neck, posterior and anterior flippers cannot move forward
  - Sea Lions - external ears, long neck, posterior and anterior flippers can move forward