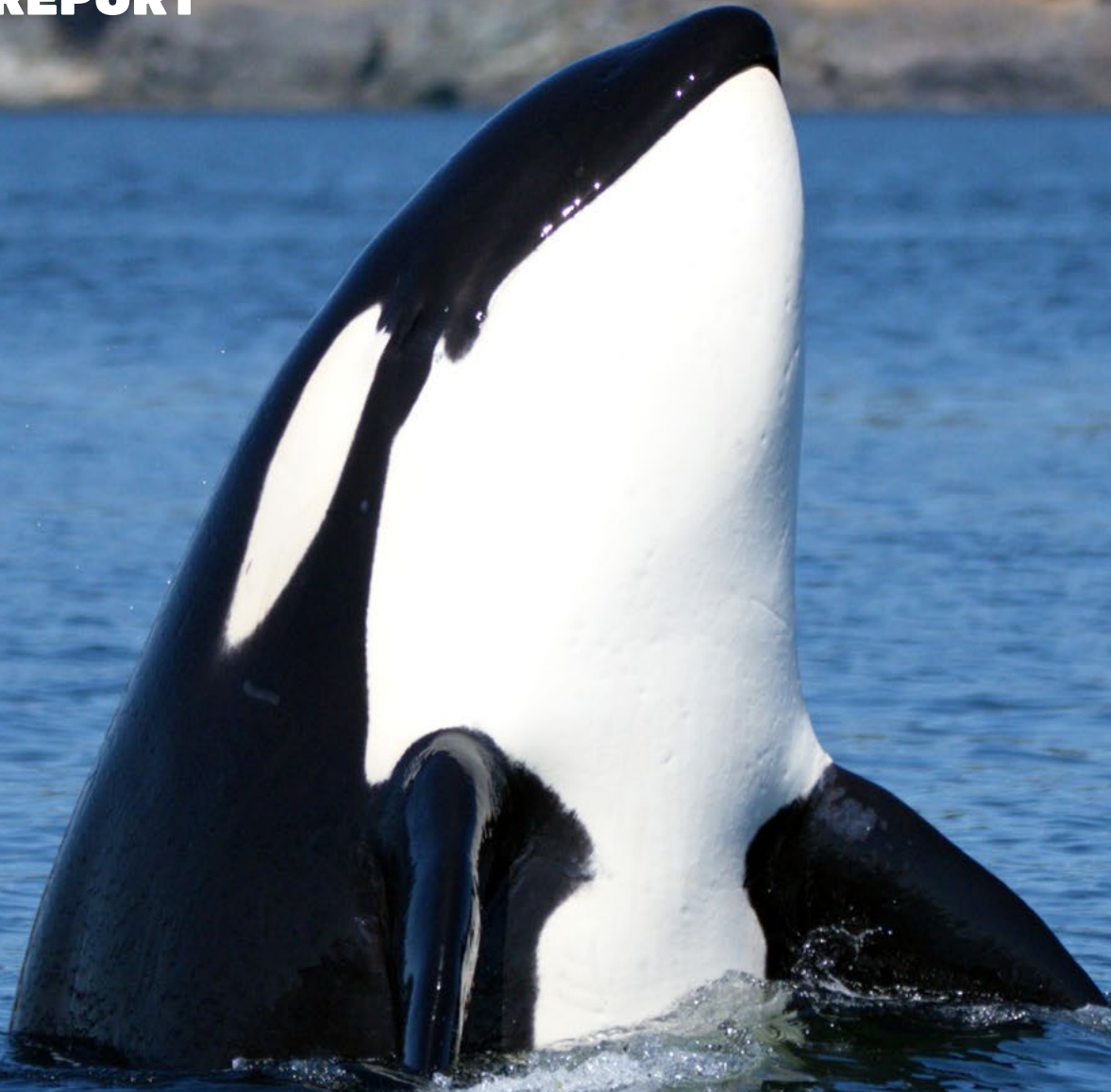
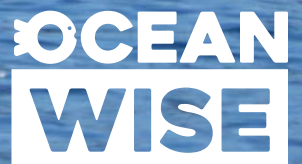


OCEAN WISE WHALE BLITZ

2024 REPORT



📷 Ocean Wise | Bigg's killer whale T109A2A
spyhopping during a 2024 Whale Blitz event



OCEAN WISE WHALE BLITZ

In 2022, the Ocean Wise Sightings Network launched the Whale Blitz, an annual series of land-based whale watching events located along the southern coast of British Columbia. Whale Blitz watches are held in mid-July in celebration of World Orca Day and the anniversary of northern resident killer whale A73 'Springer' being returned to her pod after rescue and rehabilitation (July 14th, 2002).

Each event aims to provide coastal community members and visitors with an opportunity to participate in citizen science, gain species ID skills, and learn about whale conservation. Cetacean sightings recorded during these watches are reported in real time through the Ocean Wise WhaleReport app, thus alerting professional mariners to the presence of whales to help prevent ship strikes and disturbance.

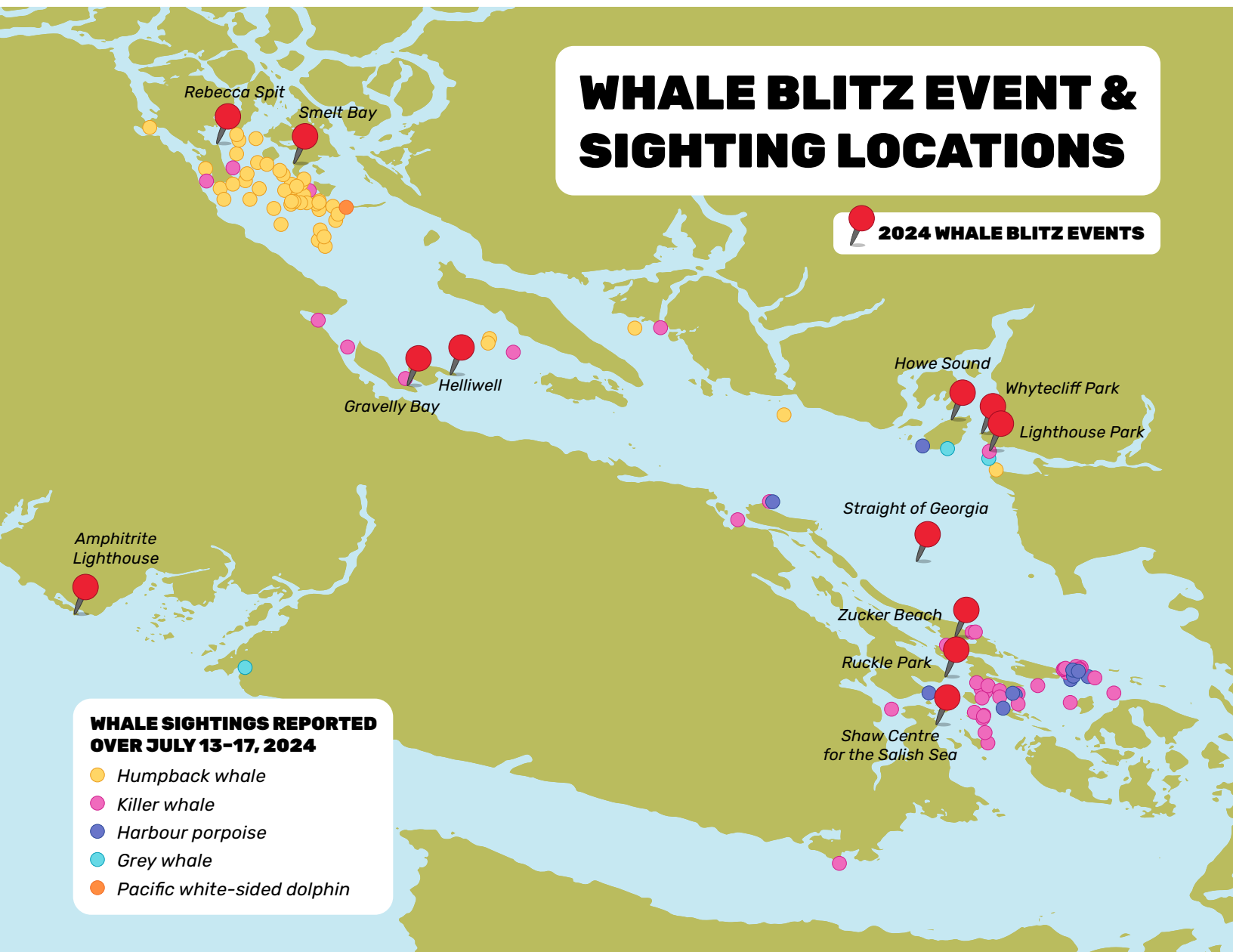


📷 **Ocean Wise** | Pod of Bigg's killer whales spotted during a 2024 Whale Blitz event

2024 EVENTS

This year's Whale Blitz consisted of 12 educational, whale watch events from July 13th to 17th. These watches took place in locations throughout the Gulf Islands, in the Pacific Rim on Vancouver Island, and in Vancouver, including our first ever virtual Whale Blitz event hosted throughout Howe Sound. In total, these events engaged 674 people – a 33% increase in engagement from the 2023 events, and a 63%

increase from 2022. Whale species spotted during the Whale Blitz events included one sighting of humpback whales and two sightings of killer whales. Sightings reported to the Ocean Wise Sightings Network over the entire five-day period included humpback whales, killer whales, harbour porpoises, grey whales, and Pacific white-sided dolphins.



SIGHTINGS BY THE NUMBERS

Number of whale species reported over July 13–17, 2024

1 PACIFIC WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN



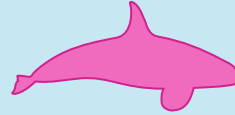
3 GREY WHALES



13 HARBOUR PORPOISES



56 KILLER WHALES



63 HUMPBACK WHALES



WHALE REPORT ALERT SYSTEM

Real-time sightings made during the Whale Blitz are also sent in the form of alerts to the WhaleReport Alert System (WRAS). This tool privately informs authorized shipmasters and pilots aboard large commercial vessels (ferries, freighters, tugs, cruise ships) of cetacean occurrence in their vicinity. This awareness better enables vessels to undertake adaptive mitigation measures, such as slowing down

or altering course in the presence of cetaceans, to reduce the risk of collision and disturbance. Sightings reported from the south coast of BC during the Whale Blitz generated a total of 138 alerts to professional mariners, ensuring the safety of whales nearby. To learn more about the Whale Report Alert System, visit ocean.org/whales/WRAS.



OCEAN WISE SIGHTINGS NETWORK

The Ocean Wise Sightings Network (OWSN) is one of Canada's most enduring and successful citizen science programs. For over 20 years, the OWSN has engaged in education and outreach throughout British Columbia to encourage coastal citizens to become marine stewards by reporting their cetacean and sea turtle sightings in support of conservation-

based research. The OWSN manages an extensive, historic, and ever-growing database which provides an important resource for identifying and protecting critical habitat, highlighting areas of high risk, and reducing anthropogenic threats to at-risk cetacean (whale, dolphin and porpoise) species.



📷 Ocean Wise | Bigg's killer whale tail-slapping during a 2024 Whale Blitz event