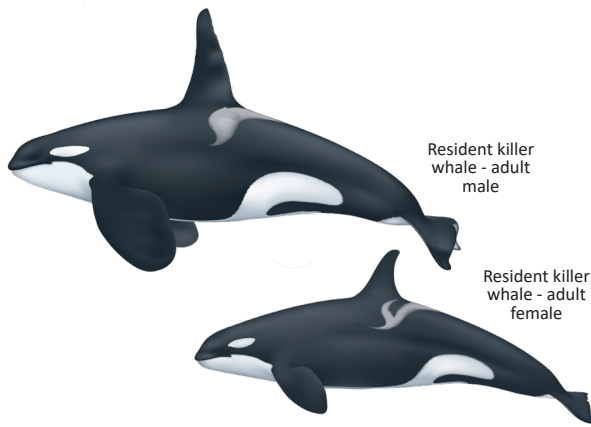


Tale of Two Killer Whale Species



New research recognizes two well-known killer whale types in the North Pacific as separate species.



Resident killer whales



Bigg's killer whales

Once known as transients

Illustrations by: Uko Gorter

New scientific name	<i>Orcinus ater</i>		<i>Orcinus rectipinnus</i>	
Size	Males ≥ 24ft	Females ≥ 21ft	Males ≥ 27ft	Females ≥ 23ft
Coloration	"Open" saddle patches with varying amounts of black and gray pigmentation		"Closed" or uniformly gray saddle patches, often heavily scarred	
Dorsal fin	Males: very tall (up to 6.5 feet) may lean forward	Females: curved with rounded tip	Males: tall (at least 5 feet) with a wider base	Females: slightly triangular with a pointed tip and wider base
Group structure	Larger group size; offspring of both sexes stay with their mothers throughout their lives		Smaller group size; offspring of either sex may disperse from their mother's group	
Prey	Marine fish with a preference for Chinook salmon, occasionally eat squid		Marine mammals and occasionally squid	
Hunting	Highly vocal while foraging; use echolocation to detect prey		Typically silent while foraging	
Range	Seasonal ranges		Roam widely in search of prey, some seasonal patterns	
Acoustics	Population-based differences in call types with distinct family dialects		Regional differences in call type	