

The South Pacific Helicopters Great Kaikōura Whale Count



Induction and informations
Winter 2025

Kaikōura Ocean Research Institute (KORI)



South Pacific Helicopters Great Kaikōura Whale Count

1- 30 June 2025



8 June
Kaikōura
Whale Festival
at Fyffe House
"World Oceans
day of celebrations"

To get involved email
GKWC2025@gmail.com



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The GKWC started since 2020 and we are happy to continue for a new month of whale insights this year!

It will take place from the **1st to the 30th of June**

+Key date: 8th of June, Whale Festival at Fyffe House

Contacts: gkwc2025@gmail.com

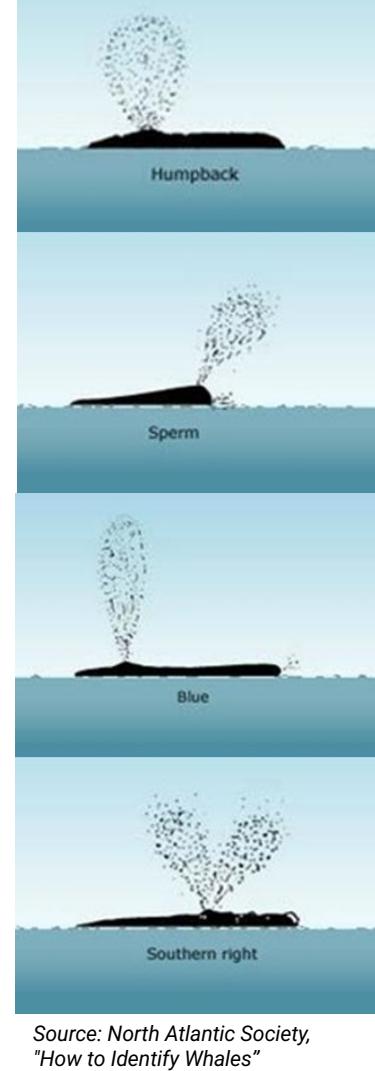
Website: <https://kori.org.nz/>

Facebook: Kaikōura Ocean Research Institute

Instagram: Kaikourakori

Some Whales (and more) in Kaikōura

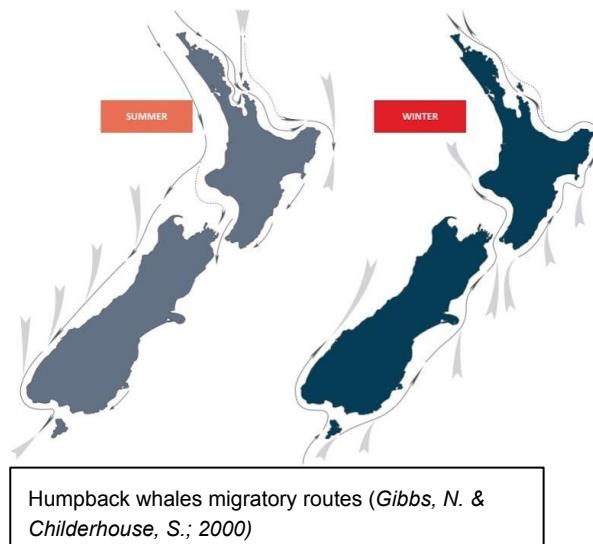
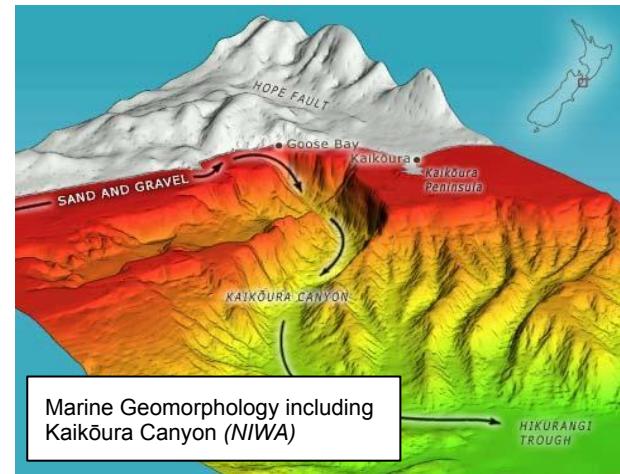
- Humpback whale: long distance migrations between summer feeding grounds (cold) in Antarctica and winter calving and breeding grounds in tropical (warm) waters
- Sperm whale: present year around, but currently in small population decrease
- Southern right whale: occasionally seen near the shore in winter, let see if we spot one this year!
- Last but not least: Blue whale, Orcas, Dolphins (Dusky, Hector's, Common)



Source: North Atlantic Society,
"How to Identify Whales"

Kaikōura Peninsula - Why?

- Specific geomorphology with submarine Kaikōura canyon and specific currents give a rich marine ecosystem and a deep playgrounds for marine species
- Most Humpbacks travel along the East Coast of the South Island and through Cook Strait during winter, putting Kaikōura peninsula in a right spot to see and measure this migration



Objectives of the South Pacific Helicopters GKWC 2025!

- To unite the Kaikōura Community in a positive, engaging connection to our local wildlife
- To provides training for volunteers on how to collect valuable information on whale movements and behaviours following Citizen Science protocol
- Through counting efforts at the Whale Spotting Station on the Kaikōura Peninsula, to estimate the number of humpback whales passing on their northward migration throughout June
- Through boat/helicopter based efforts, allows photo-identification of which whales pass through Kaikōura
- To continue the conservation effort via scientific data collection and analysis
- To draw attention to Kaikōura's whales, and the incredible wildlife along our coast, from the local community, the rest of New Zealand and the world

Location

- Spotting location: Kaikōura Peninsula
- Meeting point: South Bay Recreation Reserve (Kaikōura Peninsula Walkway, South Bay, Canterbury 7300)
- Meet/Leave South Bay Reserve meeting point 1h before your shift starts
- Steep hike up (around 30 minutes)



Health and Safety

- Cold and Windy: always good to bring extra layers
- Sunscreen (for the sunny days!)
- Food, Water & Hot drinks
- Good shoes (walking shoes or boots)
- Bring your binoculars with you!
- No toilets (closer one at the meeting point)
- Sign in and Health&Safety waiver (do not come if you feel unwell)
- In case of bad weather, we will keep you updated before the shift start



How is a shift working?

- 3 shifts per day (10am-12pm, 12-2pm and 2-4pm)
- Meet 1h prior to your shift at South Bay Reserve (meeting point)
- Health&Safety and sign-in
- Setup station or hand over from previous team
- Familiarise yourself with the zones
- Start spotting whales!
- We will be there to guide you!

Note:

You can register to the shifts here: [Roster_Volunteer](#)

If you can't access it, do not hesitate to contact us and we will do so for you.

You are also free to join us on the day without registering. We can help sign you up for a shift when you arrive, as flexible participation is always welcome!



Data recording

15mins Scans

- Lead spotter scanning through the zones
- Volunteer recording
- All vessels per zone
- All marine mammals per zone
- Mid-day (once per day): Cray pot floats per zone

Continuous Spotting

- Everyone continuously scan
- Lead spotter recording
- Any marine mammals
- Vessels within 100m



Zones

- The area is divided in 8 zones
- Photo of zones at site
- Ask if unsure
- Try to spread between the 8 zones (if the number of volunteer allow us)





Zone 2

Zone 1

The Gap



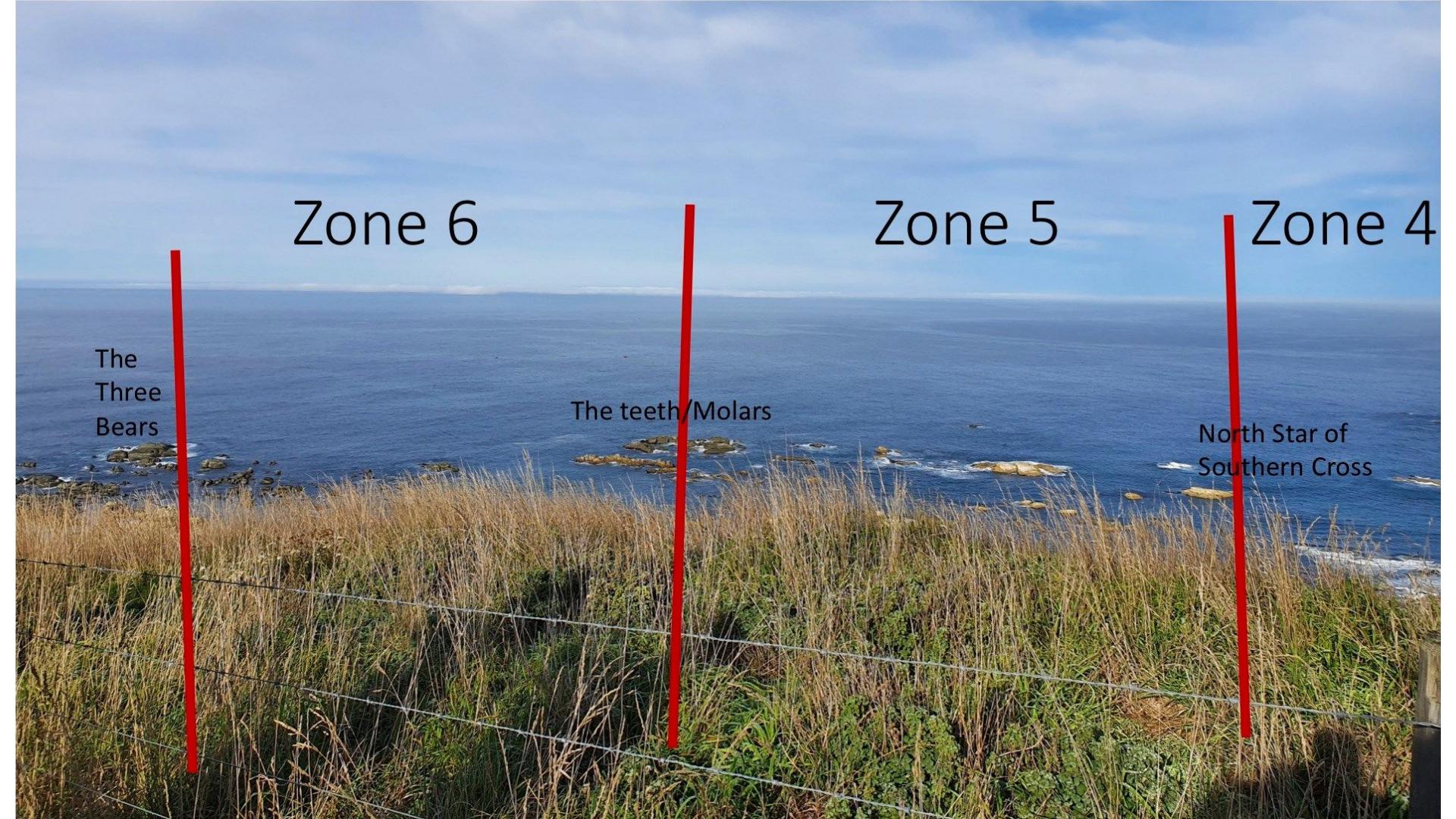
Zone 4

Zone 3

Zone 2

North Star of
Southern Cross

Pinnacle



Zone 6

The
Three
Bears

Zone 5

The teeth/Molars

Zone 4

North Star of
Southern Cross



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Thank you for volunteering! Do not forget to put your availability and name on the roster!

If you have any questions or informations to share:

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You can also have updates on:

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