

MINKE WHALE PROJECT

WHALE SIGHTING SHEET 2008



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

We are interested in all of your whale sightings, but are particularly keen on hearing about minkes (dwarf minke whale pictured above left). Please fill out this sheet as best you can to help our sightings records.

Part A: Fill in immediately when whales are seen:

1. **Time** of initial sighting: 2. **Date:** _____ / _____ / **2008**
3. **Location:** Coordinates at start: **Lat:** (S) **Long:** (E)
4. Approx. **distance from vessel** when first sighted: 5. Time of first approach (to within 30m)

Part B: Fill in immediately after end of encounter:

6. **Time** of last sighting: 7. **Vessel:** 8. Your name:
9. Coordinates at end (if drifting/steaming): **Lat:** (S) **Long:** (E)
10. How did the encounter end? (please tick one) ... Whale(s) left the boat Boat left the whale(s)

Part C. Fill in at end of encounter:

11. Type of whale: (please circle one) Minke / Humpback / Other:
12. **Number of whales:** Approx / Certain
13. Estimated size(s): (No. of whales): more than 6m: # _____; 4m-6m: # _____; less than 4m: # _____
14. Any calves? (2008 calf will be < 1/2 size of mother, in close proximity to her & breathing more often): # _____
 • If a cow & calf were seen; how long did they stay in the area? (give times) **From:** _____ **To:** _____
15. Vessel status when whale(s) first sighted: (please circle one) Anchored / Moored / Steaming / Drifting
16. Did the vessel status change during the encounter? (Please explain and give times; e.g. "dropped mooring to drift at 15:35")

17. Distance drifted during encounter: naut. miles 18. Average wind speed: knots
19. Average wave height: metres 20. Underwater visibility metres
21. Name of nearest reef or dive site: 22. Distance to that reef/site: _____
23. Closest approach distance by whale(s) (metres from boat): 24. Rope used?: Y / N (please circle one)
25. Maximum number of divers in at one time: Using snorkel: Using SCUBA:
26. Brief description of encounter (e.g. movement of whales, swimmers, etc; use back of page if necessary):
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27. Were any of the following behaviours observed? (Tick where appropriate and **write number of times observed**)
 (For descriptions of behaviours see the CRC Reef brochure, the Interaction Behaviour Diary or the Minke Whale Project interpretive DVD 2007)
- Breaching? # times: _____ Headrise/Spyhop? # _____ Bubble blast? # _____ Gulping? #: _____
- Sudden speed up? # _____ Sharp veer away? # _____ Sudden deep dive? #: _____
- Jaw clap? # _____ Belly presentation? # _____ Close approach (<3m)? #: _____
- Motorboating? #: _____ Pirouetting? #: _____ Very close approach (<1m)? # _____
- Vocalisation(s)? (please describe): Physical contact (please describe):
- Other (please specify):
28. Description of any significant markings/ scars on the whales (use back of page if necessary):
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29. Photos and/or video available : Y / N 30. Name of photo/videographer :
- 31. Your contact details / vessel stamp:**
 Address & Telephone:
- Email:

Please return completed forms and copies of any photos/video to the Minke Whale Project:

c/- Dr Alastair Birtles (Minke Whale Project Leader), Tourism, School of Business, James Cook University, Townsville QLD 4811.

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The Minke Whale Project will forward copies of all completed Whale Sighting Sheets to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Minke Whale Project is partially funded by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority: "Dwarf Minke Whale Tourism Research and Monitoring Programme." Summaries of the season's data will be provided to operators.

Thank you for your help with this research.