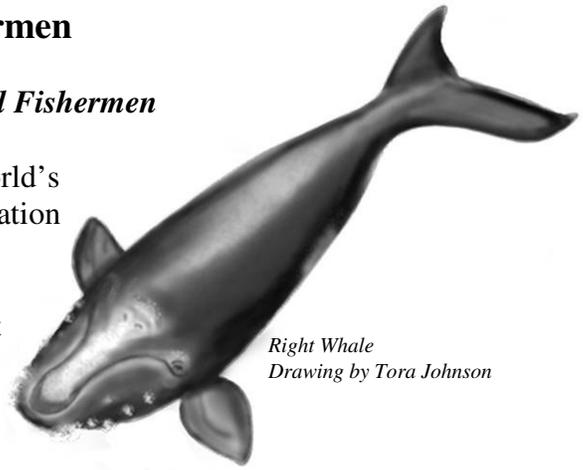


Facts about Entanglement, Whales & Fishermen

From Tora Johnson, author of

Entanglements: The Intertwined Fates of Whales and Fishermen

- The North Atlantic right whale is one of the world's most critically endangered whales with a population of just 300 to 400 remaining.
- More than two-thirds of all North Atlantic right whales have scars from entanglements in fishing gear.
- A recent study found that nearly ninety percent of all humpback whales in the North Atlantic have scars from entanglements with fishing gear.
- Many whales that collide with fishing gear swim off with rope wrapped around their flukes, flippers, or mouth. They may carry the rope with them for months or years and often sustain injuries from such entangling gear.
- Since November 2004, five reproductive adult right whales have been found dead, two of them pregnant females. At least two of these whales were killed by human activities: one by collision with a ship and one by entangling rope. A comparable death rate in a human population would be 140 deaths in a town of 10,000 in just six months.
- The lobster fishery and related industries employ more than half the population in many coastal Maine towns.
- Experts estimate that there are more than 10 million lobster and crab traps in the Gulf of Maine.
- In spite of the crash of the groundfish stocks in the early 1990s, the value of New England's commercial fisheries has doubled since 1992, largely due to growth in the lobster fishery.
- New sweeping regulations recently proposed by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service would cost New England's lobstermen millions of dollars. Some individual fishermen would pay thousands to comply.
- Since the mid-1990s, Massachusetts fishermen have been at the forefront of whale conservation, voluntarily adopting changes to their fishing gear to protect whales, helping with research on whale-friendly gear, and working with animal advocates to clean up lost fishing gear from the whales' habitat.



*Right Whale
Drawing by Tora Johnson*

For more information visit <http://www.entanglements.net>.