



SURVEY PROGRAM MONTHLY REPORT

DECEMBER 2025

Department of Marine Resources - Division of Marine Mammal Research

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Division of Marine Mammal Research Survey Program conducts monthly aerial and vessel surveys for North Atlantic right whales. More information on survey background, implementation and methodology can be found on the [DMR website](#) and in the [2024 DMR Survey Program Annual Report](#). The data presented herein are preliminary and property of the State of Maine and not to be used or distributed without the express consent of the Division of Marine Mammal Research.

This monthly report contains sighting and effort data from aerial and vessel surveys as well as any opportunistic survey efforts conducted during the month of December in 2025 (**Table 1**). Opportunistic surveys include observations collected during other vessel-based DMR activities or any survey efforts that do not follow the standardized line-transect methodology, which entails surveying along pre-determined track lines at 10 knots (vessel) or 100 knots / 1000 feet (aircraft).

Table 1.

Aerial and Vessel Surveys Dates and Effort Totals (km)

December 2025

| Date | Survey Type | Effort Distance |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 12/03/2025 | Aerial Survey | 316.41 |
| 12/16/2025 | Aerial Survey | 401.54 |
| 12/18/2025 | Aerial Survey | 613.00 |
| Total Aerial Effort | | 1,330.95 |
| 12/09/2025 | Vessel Survey | 98.29 |
| 12/16/2025 | Vessel Survey | 83.70 |
| 12/18/2025 | Vessel Survey | 66.46 |
| Total Vessel Effort | | 248.45 |



AERIAL SURVEYS

Aerial surveys conducted in December 2025 and total survey effort (km) are listed in **Table 1**. Surveys were primarily flown in a [Beaufort sea state](#) 3 & 4, with visibility ranging from 15 to 25 nautical miles. Species sighted are listed in **Table 2**, and survey track lines and sightings are depicted in **Figure 1**.

Table 2.

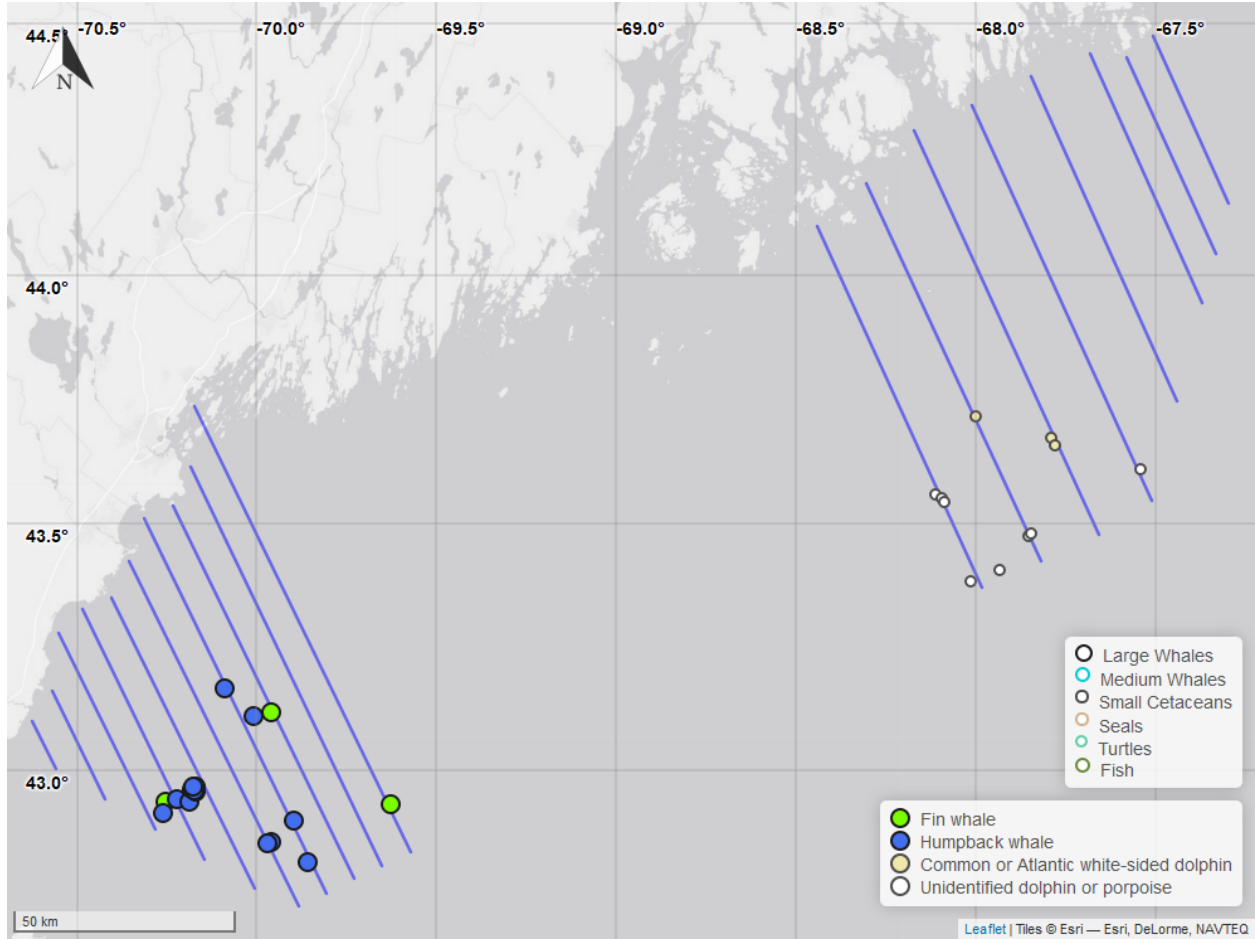
Species Sighted and Total Number of Animals

Aerial Surveys - December 2025

| Species | Sightings | Total Animals |
|--|------------------|----------------------|
| Fin whale | 4 | 5 |
| Humpback whale | 14 | 25 |
| Common or Atlantic white-sided dolphin | 3 | 33 |
| Unidentified dolphin or porpoise | 8 | 60 |
| Monthly Total | 29 | 123 |



Figure 1.
Aerial Survey Transects and Sightings
December 2025





VESSEL SURVEYS

Vessel surveys conducted in December 2025 and total survey effort (km) are listed in **Table 1**. Surveys were primarily conducted in a [Beaufort sea state](#) 3 & 4, with visibility ranging from 6 to 7 nautical miles. Species sighted are listed in **Table 3**, and survey track lines and sightings are depicted in **Figure 2**.

Table 3.

Species Sighted and Total Number of Animals

Vessel Surveys - December 2025

| Species | Sightings | Total Animals |
|--|------------------|----------------------|
| Humpback whale | 2 | 2 |
| Fin or Sei whale | 1 | 4 |
| Common dolphin | 1 | 4 |
| Harbor porpoise | 3 | 4 |
| Common or Atlantic white-sided dolphin | 1 | 5 |
| Unidentified dolphin or porpoise | 1 | 1 |
| Harbor seal | 1 | 1 |
| Unidentified seal | 1 | 1 |
| <i>Monthly Total</i> | <i>11</i> | <i>22</i> |

