



SURVEY PROGRAM MONTHLY REPORT

FEBRUARY 2026

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 February in 2026 (**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)

February 2026

Date	Survey Type	Effort Distance
02/03/2026	Aerial Survey	504.87
02/05/2026	Aerial Survey	604.05
02/19/2026	Aerial Survey	382.95
02/20/2026	Aerial Survey	629.47
02/27/2026	Aerial Survey	545.95
Total Aerial Effort		2,667.29
02/03/2026	Vessel Survey	132.42
02/05/2026^	Offshore Survey	20.26
02/06/2026	Vessel Survey	61.05
02/19/2026	Vessel Survey	75.22
02/20/2026^	Offshore Survey	40.36
Total Vessel Effort		329.31



AERIAL SURVEYS

Aerial surveys conducted in February 2026 and total survey effort (km) are listed in **Table 1**. Surveys were primarily flown in a [Beaufort sea state](#) 2 & 3, with visibility ranging from 25 to 30 nautical miles. Species sighted are listed in **Table 2**, and survey track lines and sightings are depicted in **Figure 1**.

Table 2.

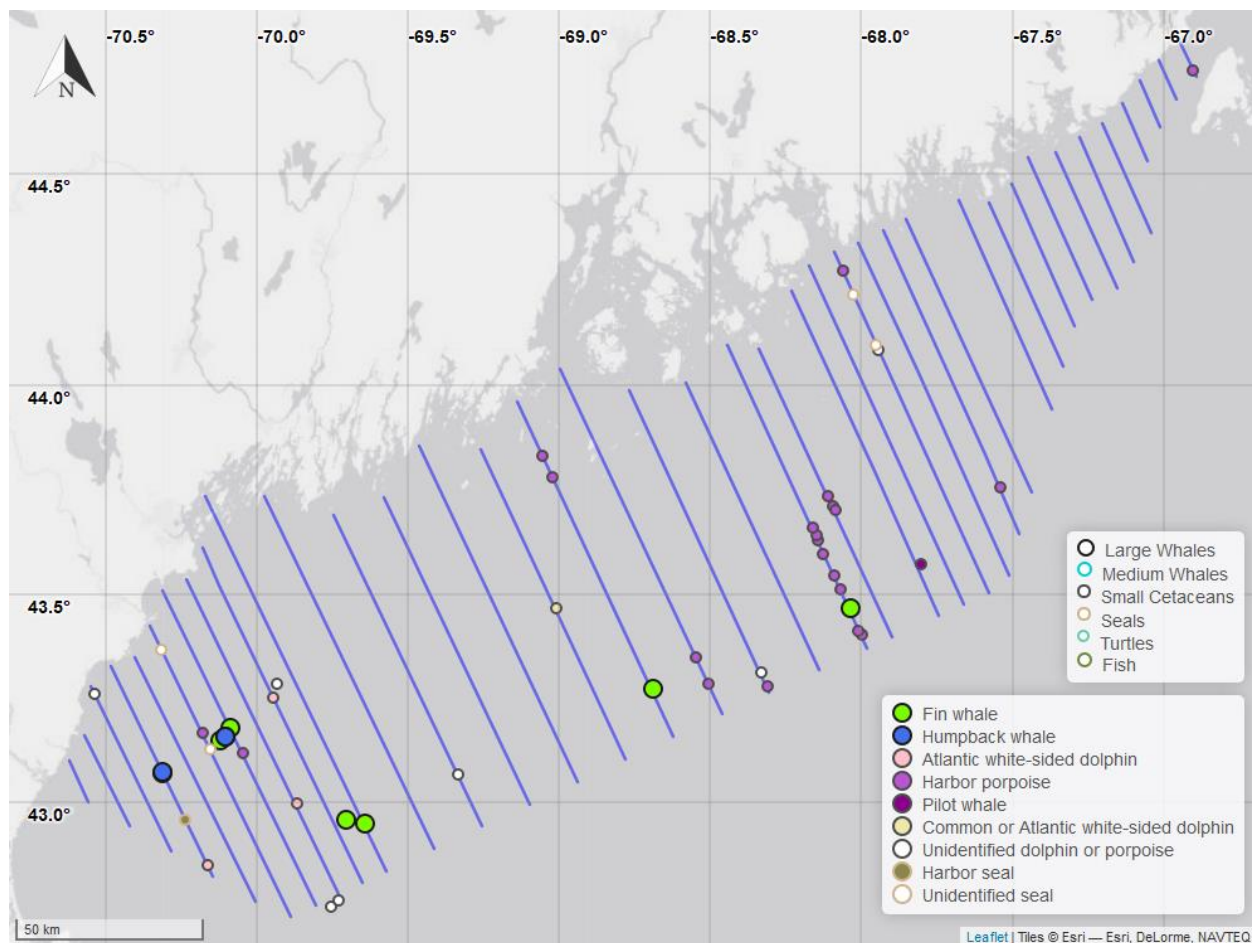
Species Sighted and Total Number of Animals

Aerial Surveys - February 2026

Species	Sightings	Total Animals
Fin whale	8	19
Humpback whale	2	12
Atlantic white-sided dolphin	3	25
Harbor porpoise	21	106
Pilot whale	1	6
Common or Atlantic white-sided dolphin	1	7
Unidentified dolphin or porpoise	7	63
Harbor seal	1	1
Unidentified seal	4	5
Monthly Total	48	244



Figure 1.
Aerial Survey Transects and Sightings
February 2026





VESSEL SURVEYS

Vessel surveys conducted in February 2026 and total survey effort (km) are listed in **Table 1**. Surveys were primarily conducted in a [Beaufort sea state](#) 2 & 3, 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.

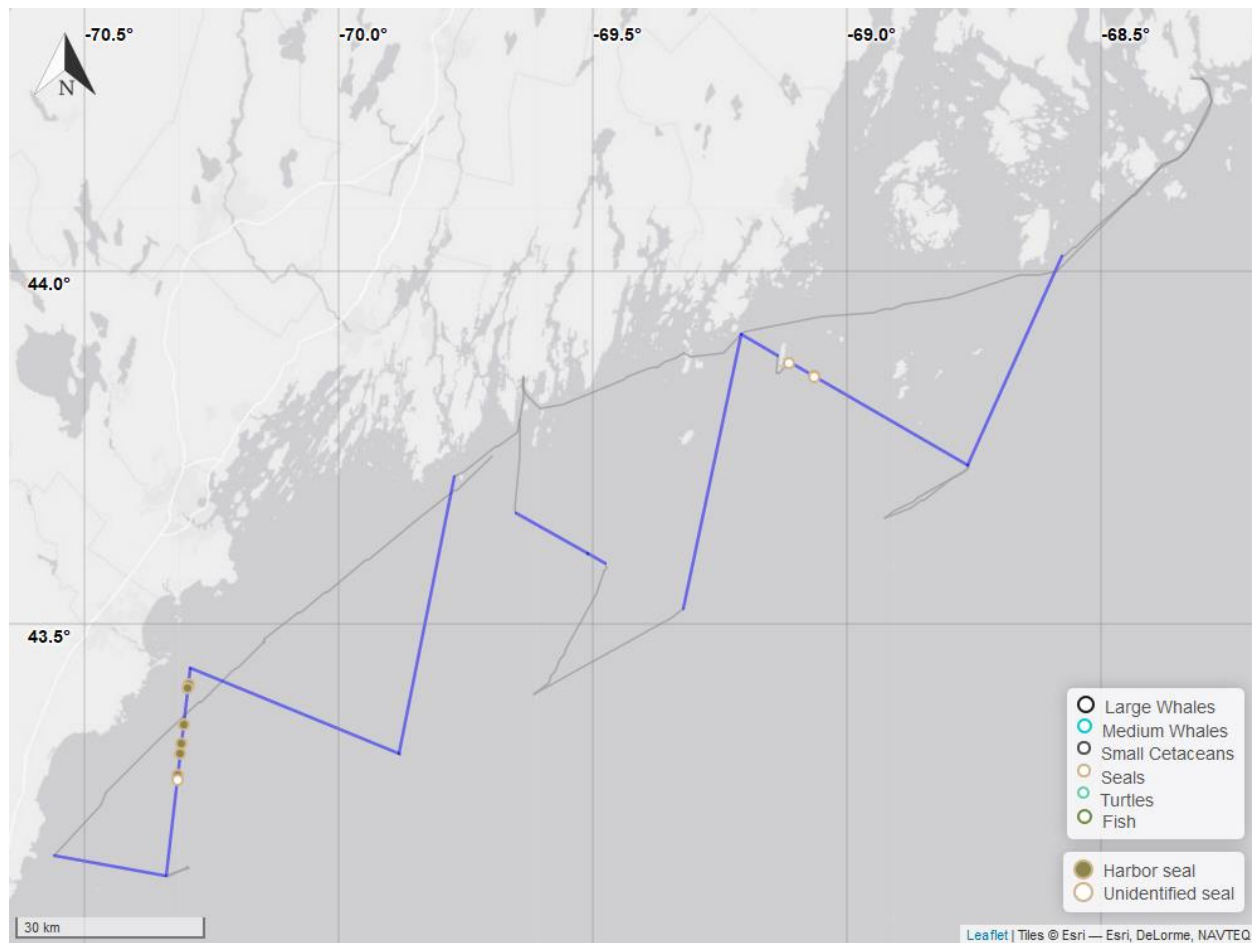
Species Sighted and Total Number of Animals

Vessel Surveys - February 2026

Species	Sightings	Total Animals
Harbor seal	6	6
Unidentified seal	4	5
Monthly Total	10	11



Figure 2.
Vessel Survey Transects and Sightings
February 2026





OFFSHORE SURVEYS

Plankton-focused vessel surveys were conducted in February 2026 in Wilkinson Basin and Jordan Basin. Survey dates can be seen in **Table 1**. Species sighted are listed in **Table 4**, and survey transects and sightings are depicted in **Figure 3**.

Table 4.

Species Sighted and Total Number of Animals

Offshore Vessel Surveys - February 2026

Species	Sightings	Total Animals
Fin or Sei whale	1	1
Unidentified large whale	1	1
Unidentified dolphin or porpoise	1	2
Gray seal	10	10
Harbor seal	3	3
Unidentified seal	3	3
Total	19	20



Figure 3.
Vessel Survey Transects and Sightings
Offshore Vessel Surveys - February 2026

