



# SURVEY PROGRAM MONTHLY REPORT

## JANUARY 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 January 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). Two North Atlantic right whales were sighted during aerial surveys this month (**Table 3**).

**Table 1.**

***Aerial and Vessel Surveys Dates and Effort Totals (km)***

***January 2026***

| <b>Date</b>                | <b>Survey Type</b>   | <b>Effort Distance</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 01/08/2026                 | Aerial Survey        | 718.32                 |
| 01/10/2026                 | Aerial Survey        | 385.91                 |
| <b>Total Aerial Effort</b> |                      | <b>1104.23</b>         |
| 01/05/2026                 | Vessel Survey        | 88.37                  |
| 01/06/2026                 | Vessel Survey        | 116.75                 |
| 01/10/2026*                | Opportunistic Survey |                        |
| 01/29/2026*                | Opportunistic Survey |                        |
| <b>Total Vessel Effort</b> |                      | <b>205.12</b>          |



## AERIAL SURVEYS

Aerial surveys conducted in January 2026 and total survey effort (km) are listed in **Table 1**. Surveys were primarily flown in a [Beaufort sea state](#) 1 & 2, with visibility ranging from 15 to 20 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 - January 2026***

| <b>Species</b>                         | <b>Sightings</b> | <b>Total Animals</b> |
|--|------------------|----------------------|
| Fin whale                              | 3                | 3                    |
| Humpback whale                         | 6                | 23                   |
| Minke whale                            | 1                | 1                    |
| North Atlantic right whale             | 1                | 2                    |
| Unidentified large whale               | 1                | 1                    |
| Atlantic white-sided dolphin           | 1                | 35                   |
| Harbor porpoise                        | 3                | 19                   |
| Common or Atlantic white-sided dolphin | 5                | 110                  |
| Unidentified dolphin or porpoise       | 5                | 42                   |
| Harbor seal                            | 1                | 1                    |
| <b>Monthly Total</b>                   | <b>27</b>        | <b>237</b>           |

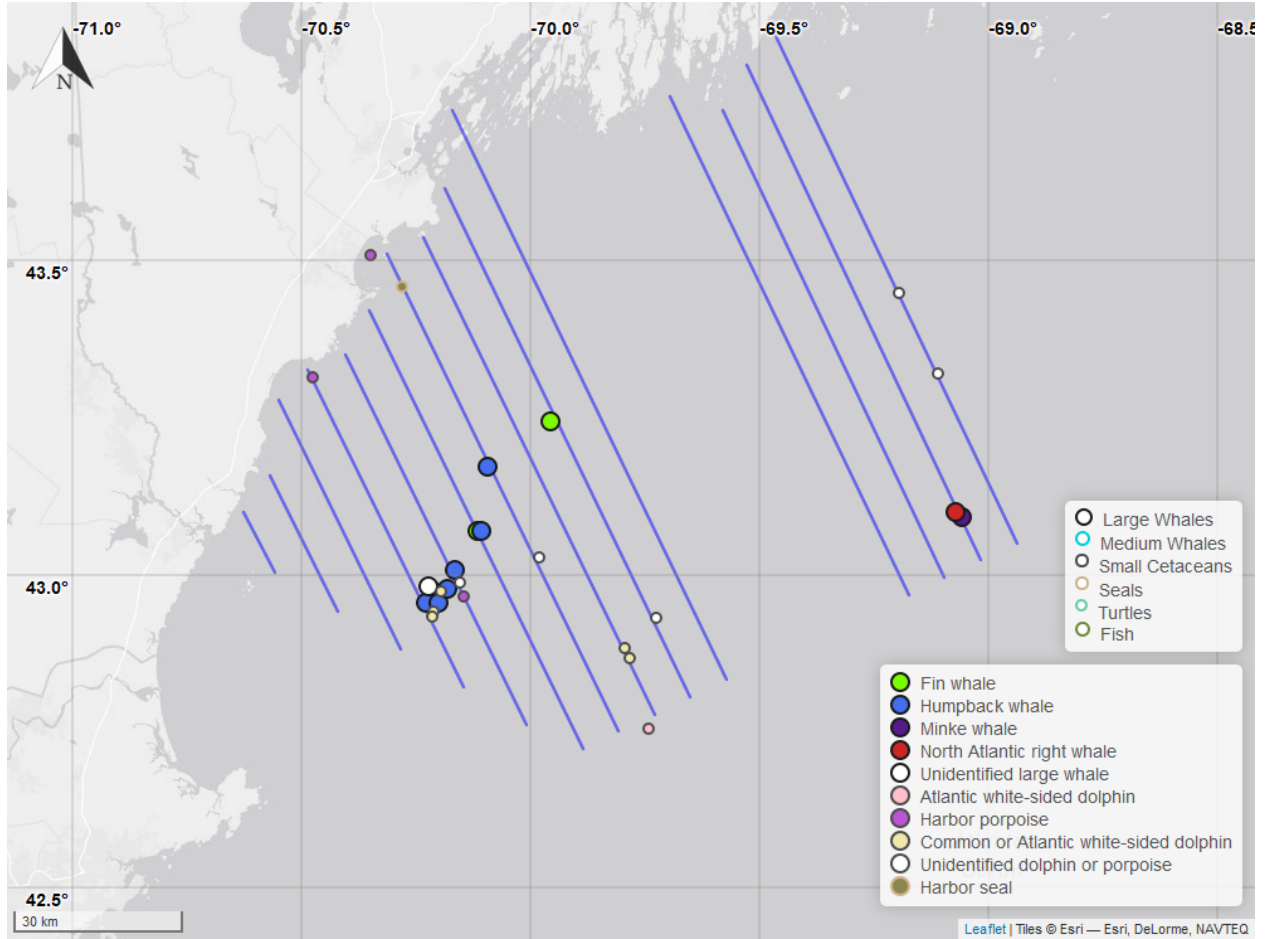
**Table 3.**

***North Atlantic right whale Sighting(s) Details and preliminary identifications***

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Latitude</b> | <b>Longitude</b> | <b>EGNO</b> | <b>Name</b> | <b>Sex</b> | <b>Birth Year</b> | <b>Behavior</b> |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 01/10/2026  | 2             | 43.10077        | -69.07097        | 2791        | Fenway      | F          |                   |                 |
|             |               |                 |                  | 1706        | Pencil      | F          | 1987              |                 |



**Figure 1.**  
**Aerial Survey Transects and Sightings**  
**January 2026**





## VESSEL SURVEYS

Vessel surveys conducted in January 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 5 to 6 nautical miles. Species sighted are listed in **Table 3**, and survey track lines and sightings are depicted in **Figure 2**.

**Table 4.**

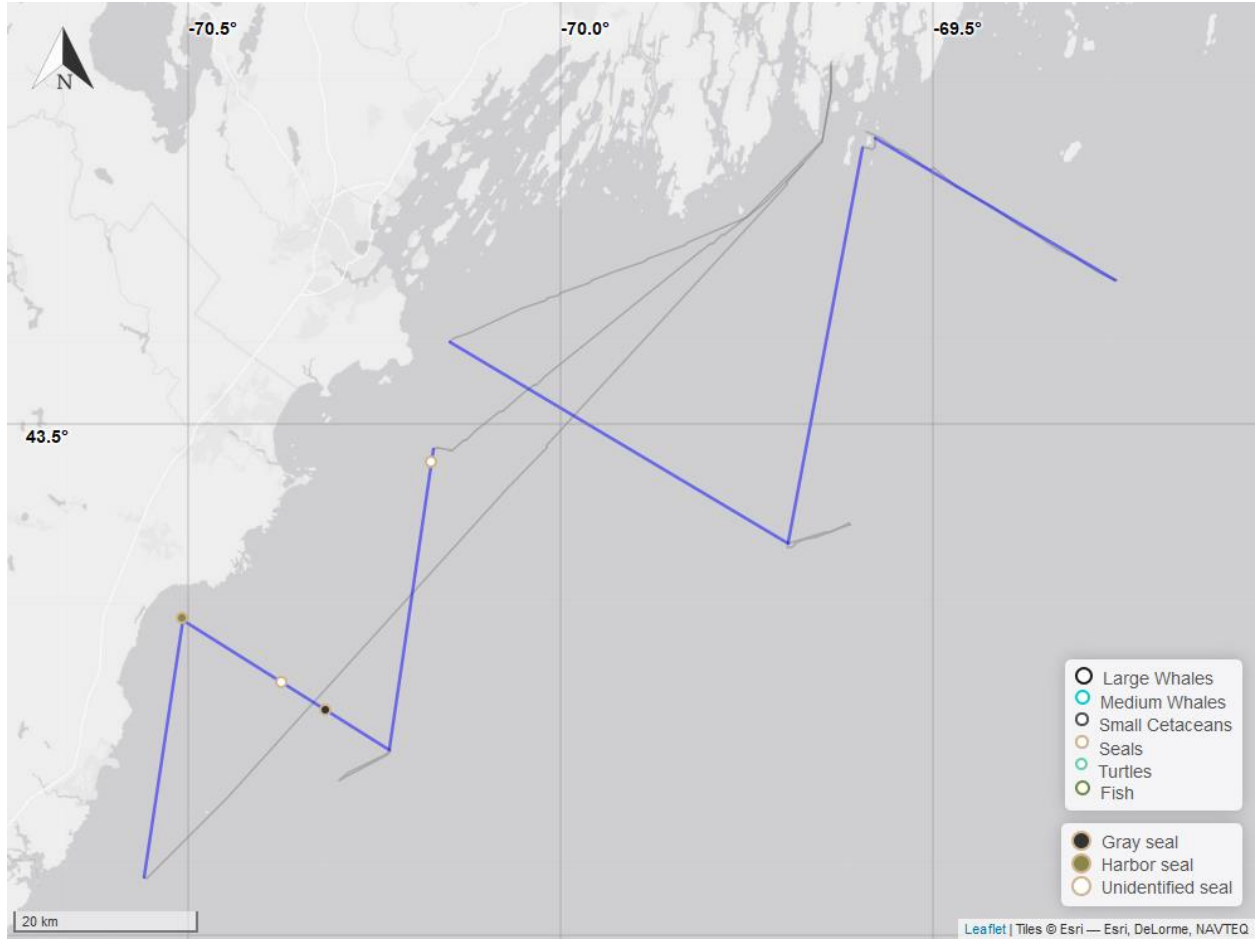
***Species Sighted and Total Number of Animals***

***Vessel Surveys - January 2026***

| <b>Species</b>              | <b>Sightings</b> | <b>Total Animals</b> |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Gray seal                   | 1                | 1                    |
| Harbor seal                 | 1                | 2                    |
| Unidentified seal           | 2                | 2                    |
| <b><i>Monthly Total</i></b> | <b>4</b>         | <b>5</b>             |



**Figure 2.**  
**Vessel Survey Transects and Sightings**  
**January 2026**





## OPPORTUNISTIC SURVEYS

Several surveys were conducted in January 2026 in conjunction with Plankton sampling. 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***

***Opportunistic Vessel Surveys - January 2026***

| <b>Species</b>  | <b>Sightings</b> | <b>Total Animals</b> |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Fin whale       | 1                | 2                    |
| Minke whale     | 1                | 1                    |
| Harbor porpoise | 2                | 3                    |
| Gray seal       | 1                | 1                    |
| Harbor seal     | 1                | 1                    |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>6</b>         | <b>8</b>             |



**Figure 3.**

**Vessel Survey Transects and Sightings**

**Opportunistic Vessel Surveys - January 2026**

