

Marine Activities in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park Regulations

Table 2

DID YOU KNOW?

a quality marine mammal watching activity begins with a respectful approach to the animals.



Parks Canada / J.-H. Provancher

A permit for marine activities

Under the regulations, a permit is required to practice certain activities in the Marine Park, such as offering whale-watching excursions, guided sea kayaking excursions and conducting scientific research.

Well-trained captains and tour guides

The captains and sea kayaking guides of companies holding a licence must successfully complete training on the regulations in order to obtain their mandatory certifications. Offered by Parks Canada, this training focuses on the behaviour to be adopted to avoid disturbing the whales and to react properly when a whale surfaces unexpectedly near the vessel.

Table 1

General elements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a limited number of permits delivered to whale-watching excursion companies. Permit holders are identified by the presence of a flag.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regulations forbid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> behaving in a manner which is disturbing to a marine mammal navigating in the Marine Park at a speed that exceeds 25 knots (46 km/h) flying over the Marine Park at an altitude of less than 2000 feet (609.6 metres)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any case of collision with a marine mammal must be reported to a park warden at 1-866-508-9888.

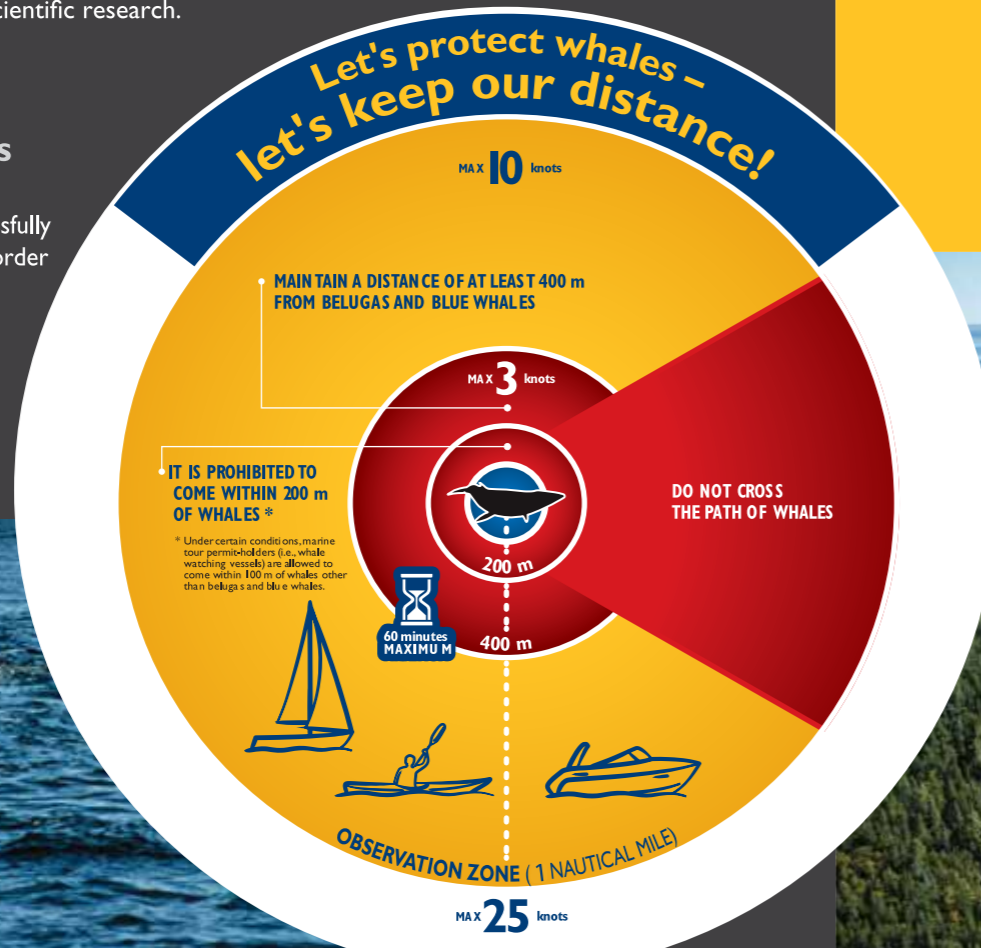


Behaviour to adopt¹ in the presence of marine mammals

At all times, operators must maintain control of their craft, keeping in mind wind conditions, waves and currents.

SPECIES	DISTANCE	BEHAVIOUR
Beluga, blue whale and other threatened or endangered species²	Maintain a 400 metre distance at all times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaching the animal is forbidden. In the event of an unexpected encounter, move away at the minimum speed required to manoeuvre until you are at a distance of at least 400 metres.
Whale species that are not threatened or endangered²	At less than one nautical mile from any boat in observation (observation zone)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum speed of 10 knots. The time limit in an observation zone is 60 minutes. Upon leaving, you will have to wait 60 minutes prior to re-entry.
	From 400 metres when you are the sole observation boat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An observation zone of one nautical mile is created around your boat. The time limit in an observation zone is 60 minutes. Upon leaving, you will have to wait 60 minutes prior to re-entry.
	From 400 metres to 200 metres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum speed to manoeuvre (usually below 3 knots). Repeated changes in speed and direction are prohibited. It is forbidden to place your craft in the path of a whale with the intention of causing the animal to come closer than 200 metres.
	At 200 metres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No approach permitted within 200 metres. Under certain conditions, certified permit holders for whale-watching excursions are allowed a 100 metre approach.
	If a whale comes closer than 200 metres, or less than 100 metres in the case of excursion permit holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep boat stationary until the animal is at least 200 metres away (100 metres for certified permit holders), or has dived towards the bottom.

¹ Applicable to all motorized and non-motorized craft, as well as to swimmers and divers.
² Threatened or endangered species are listed in Appendix I of the **Species at Risk Act**.



SPEED equivalencies

5 kts	=	9.26 km/h	=	5.75 mph
10 kts	=	18.52 km/h	=	11.50 mph
25 kts	=	46.30 km/h	=	28.70 mph

DISTANCE equivalencies

1 852 metres	=	1.00 nautical mile	=	6075 ft
400 metres	=	1/4 nautical mile	=	1312 ft
200 metres	=	0.11 nautical mile	=	656 ft
100 metres	=	0.05 nautical mile	=	328 ft

In the event of any disparity, the text of the **Marine Activities in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park Regulations** shall take precedence over the information presented in this guide.

MARINE ACTIVITIES in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park REGULATIONS



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The Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park: a marine protected area


Created in 1998 with the support of the population, the mission of the Marine Park is to preserve marine life while promoting educational, recreational and scientific research activities. With an area of 1,245 km², it includes the part of the shore that is submerged at high tide, the water and the seabed as well as everything that lives there.


Regulations to protect the whales


Developed in collaboration with users, the regulations cover the activities practiced in the Marine Park in order to reduce the impact of the presence of boats on the whales.

The regulations indicate the maximum navigation speed permitted throughout the park, in addition to the distances and speeds to be respected when marine mammals are present, as well as the time a boat can spend in an observation zone. Anyone navigating in the Marine Park is required to comply with the regulations.

LEGEND

 Comprehensive preservation zones: for the protection of habitats and sensitive species (Please avoid navigating in these zones).

 Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park: the regulations on marine activities apply to this entire protected area.

 Zone outside of the Marine Park: the Fisheries and Oceans Canada Regulations Respecting the Protection of Marine Mammals apply.

This map should not be used for navigation. Consult the nautical charts and sailing directions for the dangers of the area where you are navigating



There are species at risk, let's protect them!

The whale species whose status is threatened or endangered, such as the beluga whale and the blue whale, benefit from increased protection through the regulations on marine activities in the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park. A distance of at least 400 metres from these whales must be maintained in order to reduce the risk of collision and disturbance. These animals need tranquility to feed, to raise their young and to rest.



DID YOU KNOW?

The beluga and the harbour seal are year-long residents in the region of the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park. Along with the captains of whale-watching excursion boats and kayakers, boaters must respect the speed limits and maintain a distance from whales.

By respecting the regulations on marine activities when you navigate in the Marine Park, you are helping to protect these species. Every effort is important!



One of the world's best whale-watching destinations

From a boat or the shore, it is possible to see large mammals near the coast in a spectacular natural setting. In the summer, a number of whale species visit the Marine Park, including the minke whale, the beluga, the fin whale, the humpback whale and the harbor porpoise.

Contact Us

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For more information

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