

# Whale Watching Etiquette



To ensure that Humpback Whales return the following year, here are some points to consider to keep both you happy and the whales safe on their journey:



- ✓ During this sensitive period, vessels should approach slowly, carefully, and quietly (keeping engine noise to a minimum). Maintaining a respectful distance ensures that they will not be stressed or feel threatened.
- ✓ Avoid “fencing in” the whales. This includes blocking them between boats, too close to shore/shallow water, cutting off their direction of travel, chasing after them, or getting between mother and calf.
- ✓ If whales change their direction 3-5 times, it means they are feeling hassled or stressed. Simply maintain your distance and allow them their space. Disturbed whales will swim away and your viewing could be unfortunately cut short.
- ✓ When operating a vessel, move parallel to the whales to avoid approaching them head-on, as this may give the whales the impression that they are being chased. **Surprised whales may show aggression and become very dangerous given their size.**
- ✓ Mothers and calves are tired and are more likely to be “spooked.” They will need extra consideration of the above.
- ✓ If another vessel is with a whale or a group of whales, have some courtesy: Radio or call that vessel to **a)** find out if it is safe to approach and **b)** ask if you may join the experience. Proper communication will allow everyone to enjoy the experience.
- ✓ **Remember:** whales are much bigger than people and most whale watching vessels. Safety is always a priority, for both the whales and the viewers. Approaching with caution ensures the whales stay happy and you will get the most out of your experience!
- ✓ For more information, please contact **DEMA** at [environment@gov.tc](mailto:environment@gov.tc)