

Create Your Own Marine Wonderland



This workshop is an opportunity for students to create their own marine environment in the school yard. The first part of this lesson takes place in the classroom where students discuss some of their favourite marine animals and the second part takes place in the school yard.

Curriculum Links

SPHE, Art,
Geography,
Sciences, Maths

Learning Objective

To think about the marine environment using creative and spatial thinking

Materials

Measuring tape, pictures of marine animals, length of animals, chalk

Learning Methodology

Art, discussions, idea-storming, spatial thinking

Target Age

Jnrs – 6th class

Time

1 hour

Preparation

Discussion of marine animals and their lengths

Introduction

As we know students love the ocean, but it is more than likely they have never encountered many marine animals in real life before, and even more possible, they have not seen these animals in the wild. It is quite difficult to see marine animals in person unless you are a scuba diver, therefore, to fully comprehend the size of marine animals it can be hard to grasp their scale. This workshop will show students the size of animals by creating a beautiful chalk marine wonderland in their school yard.

Junior Primary

In your classroom begin a discussion about marine animals, for younger classes focus on smaller marine animals e.g., penguin, turtle, seahorse, puffin etc. These animals will be easier for them to measure and draw. Green-Schools have [videos](#) which will help students learn about these animals.

After exploring and learning about a marine animal, begin a conversation that slowly explores the students' interaction with marine animals. For example;

“What is your favourite marine animal? Does this animal live in Ireland's marine environment, or does it visit us occasionally?” Have you seen this animal in real life before? If so, was it big or small? Was it bigger than you? etc.”

As you discuss the size of marine animals, get the students measuring items of the classroom e.g., their desk. Ask questions about the size of items in relation to themselves, are they bigger or smaller than them etc., now discuss the size of the marine animal you have chosen to learn and draw.

For example; a green turtle on average measures 1 – 1.2 metres. How does this compare to size of their own desk, is their desk bigger or smaller than a green turtle? Are they themselves bigger or smaller than a green turtle?

Create Your Own Marine Wonderland

As students now begin to understand the size of the animal, it is time for some fun as they draw their animal. If you want to practise drawing your animal on a smaller scale, there are great videos on the Green-Schools [channel](#) to help.

Pick a part of your school yard and get your students to measure out their animal and then draw it with chalk. It may be useful to bring a picture of the animal into the yard as the children can use it as a reference. Students can work in groups or as a class to measure and draw their animal in whatever beautiful colours they like.

Senior Primary

Follow steps outlined previously but focus on larger marine animals, expand spatial thinking by discussing students' heights and comparing those to animals. Ask the senior classes to help map out space for the creation of the marine wonderland by measuring the school yard. If the larger animals such as the blue whale are too long for your yard, perhaps include half of the whale, this will help students grasp the scale of these magnificent creatures. Further discussion could centre around the native habitats of the animals, do they live in the deep or a coral reef? Perhaps the students could add these details to their drawings.

Once all the classrooms have drawn their animals outside, explore the other animals with your class in your own marine wonderland.

Don't forget to take photos and show us your own marine wonderland at your school

@GreenSchoolsIre #marineweek23



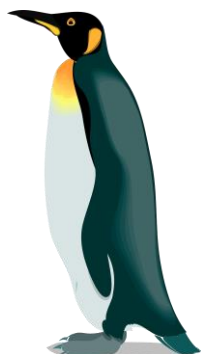
Add on activity

Ask students from other classes to guess the size of the animal your class created. Students can try to guess the size of your animal by using their own height, footsteps or by simply using measuring tape.

Indoor option

If your school is unable to do this activity outside, focus on the smaller marine animals and use your own classroom or hall to create your marine wonderland. Instead of using chalk, create the outline of the animals' using items destined for the recycling bin such as bits of paper, newspaper, cardboard etc. This also allows you to create a discussion on litter and its impacts on marine environment.

Information on Marine Animals



Emperor penguin

Height of an emperor penguin ranges from 1.1metres(m) -1.3m

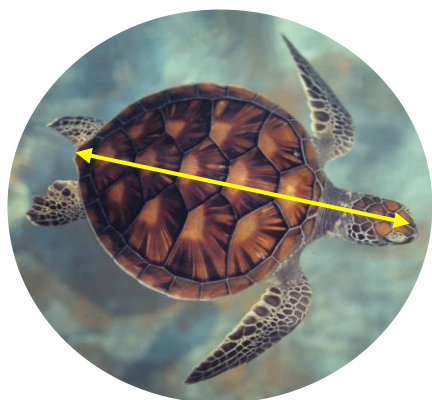
For further information on penguins see our video [here](#)



Puffin

Average height of 18 cm

For further information on puffins see our video [here](#)



Turtle

To measure a turtle's length, you measure from the tip of their beak to their tail.

A green turtle (see image) on average measure between 1 – 1.2 m in length.

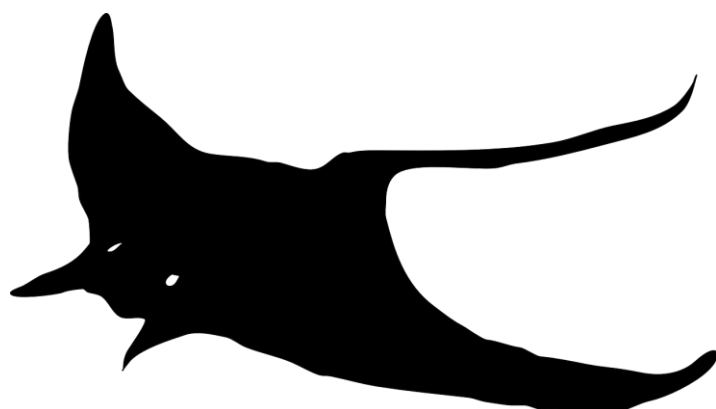
Leatherback turtles on average measure between 1.2 – 2.4 metres in length.

For further information on turtles see our [video](#).

Short-snouted seahorse

Average length 12 cm

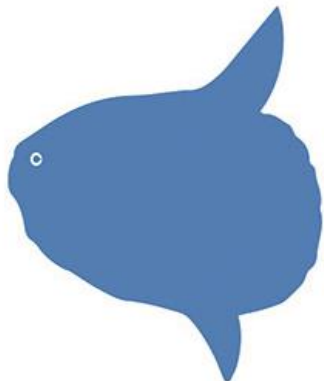
For further information on seahorses see our video [here](#)



Giant Manta Ray

Average length of a giant oceanic manta ray is 4.5 m

For further information on the rays see our video [here](#)



Sunfish

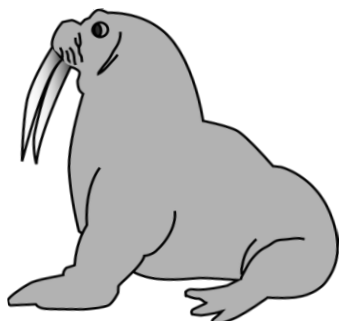
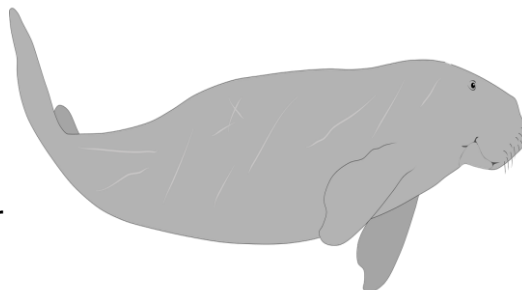
Average length 1.8 m horizontally and 2.5 m vertically

For further information on sunfish see our video [here](#)

Manatee

Length of a manatee 2.5m – 3.9m metres from tail to nose

For further information on manatees see our video [here](#)



Walrus

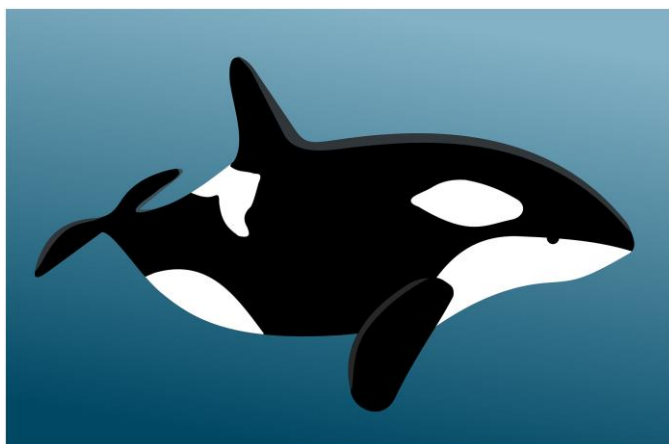
Length of a walrus ranges from 2.2 m - 3.6m

For further information on the walrus see our video [here](#)

Orca

Length of an orca ranges from 7 - 9.7 m

For further information on orcas see our video [here](#)



Guide to Ireland's Ocean Giants

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group

Irish Whale
and Dolphin Group



Guide to Ireland's Ocean Giants



Human at same scale as illustrations.



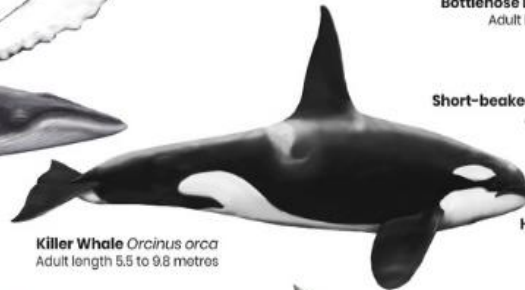
Fin Whale *Balaenoptera physalus*
Adult length 18 to 22 metres



Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*
Adult length 11.5 to 15 metres



Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*
Adult length 7 to 10 metres



Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*
Adult length 5.5 to 9.8 metres



Risso's Dolphin *Grampus griseus*
Adult length 2.6 to 3.8 metres



Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*
Adult length 1.9 to 3.9 metres



Short-beaked Common Dolphin *Delphinus delphis*
Adult length 1.7 to 2.4 metres



Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*
Adult length 1.4 to 1.9 metres

How to record and identify the species you've encountered

To date, 25 cetacean species (whales, dolphins and porpoise) have been recorded in Irish waters; however, you are unlikely to observe many of these, as some are rare vagrants or only occur seasonally, while others prefer deeper waters off the continental shelf edge. This identification guide illustrates the 8 cetacean species and the basking shark, which make up the majority of sighting records reported to the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. Profiles of all species are available on www.iwdg.ie.

The best way to confirm species identification is to report your sighting online on www.iwdg.ie, attaching any photographs or relevant video links. Your sightings are important and help us work towards the conservation of cetaceans in Irish waters.



Basking Shark *Cetorhinus maximus*
Adult length 7 to 10 metres

This great resource gives you the lengths of Ireland's Ocean Giants and also gives you scale compared to humans. See the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group [website](http://www.iwdg.ie) for further information.