

EXTREMELY **weird** ANIMALS

NARWHAL





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take flight with **Pilot books**.
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high-energy adventures as you
learn about all that is wild, weird,
fascinating, and fun!

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A POD OF NARWHALS

It is a bright summer day off the northern coast of Canada. Despite the season, the air is cold. Far out in the sea, there are still chunks of ice floating in the water. Among the open spaces, dark gray shapes dip above and below the surface. spurts of water shoot into the air. A **pod** of narwhals is in its summer home.

As they swim closer to shore, one narwhal pops its head out of the water. Its long, spiraled tusk pierces the air. Another narwhal appears and taps the tusk of the first with his own. The two engage for a moment in a brief **tusking** display. Then, both narwhals sink back under the water. Their smooth bodies soon disappear beneath the ice.

Corpse Whale

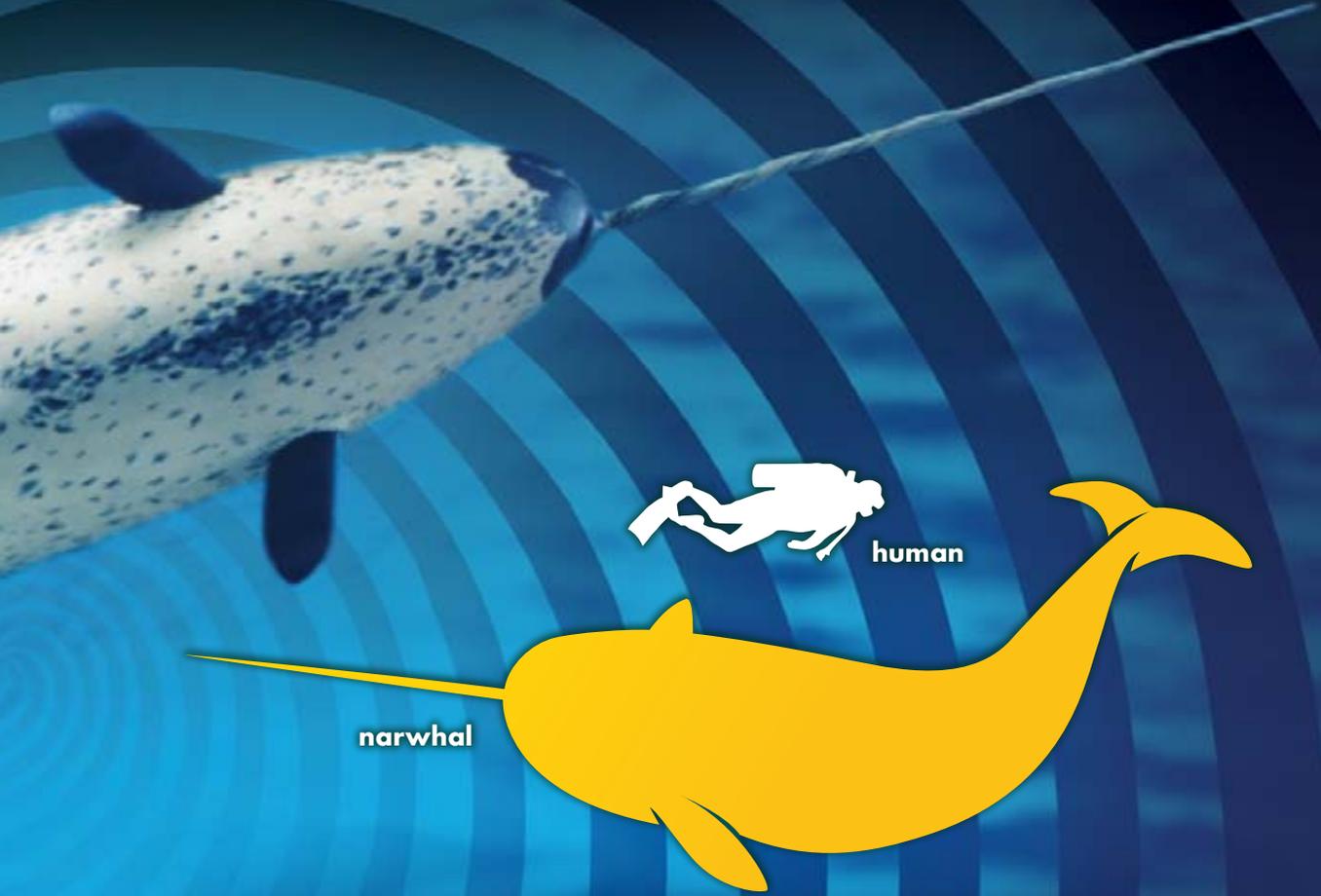
In the Old Norse language, narwhal means "corpse whale." Sailors thought the animal's skin looked like a dead body!



MARINE MAMMAL



The narwhal is a large **marine mammal** that swims in icy waters. This dark gray and white-spotted whale is closely related to the beluga. It is also a cousin of dolphins and porpoises. The narwhal is not as large as a blue or humpback whale, but it is still a big animal. It grows to be between 13 and 20 feet (4 and 6 meters) long. It can also weigh up to 3,500 pounds (1,587 kilograms).



narwhal

human

Like other whales, the narwhal has a blowhole on its body for breathing. It must come to the surface to inhale air through this hole. Like the beluga, the narwhal's body is missing the **dorsal fin** and large flippers found on most other whales. Instead, it has only a small ridge on its back and two small fins on its sides. This is so it can swim just below ice chunks when searching for a breathing hole.

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