



**BELUGA WHALES**

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**MARBLEHEAD SHARK CLUB**

FUN FACTS

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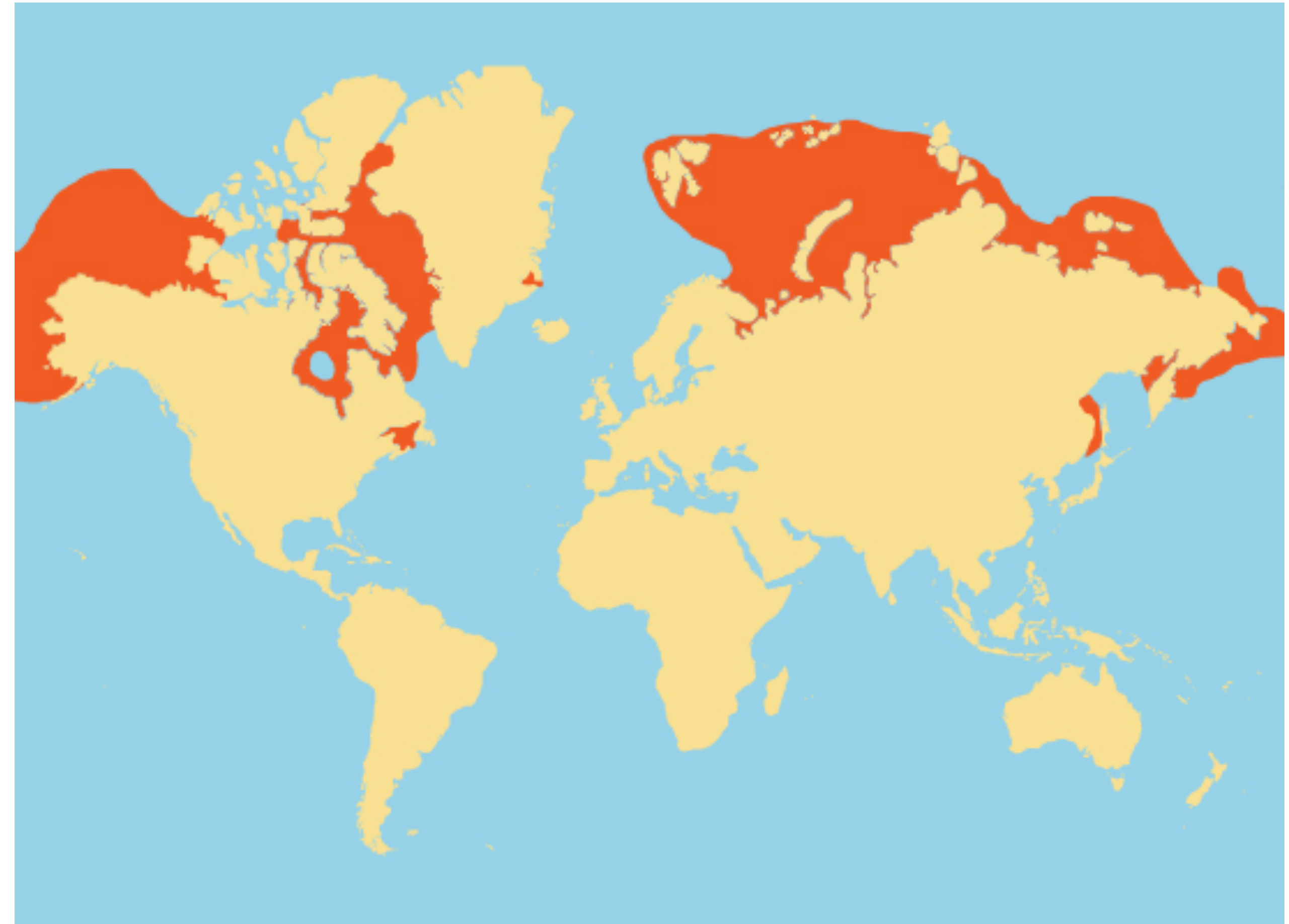
# BELUGA WHALES



### WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

Globally, belugas are found mostly in Arctic and sub arctic waters, as well as in the Cook Inlet and the St. Lawrence River.

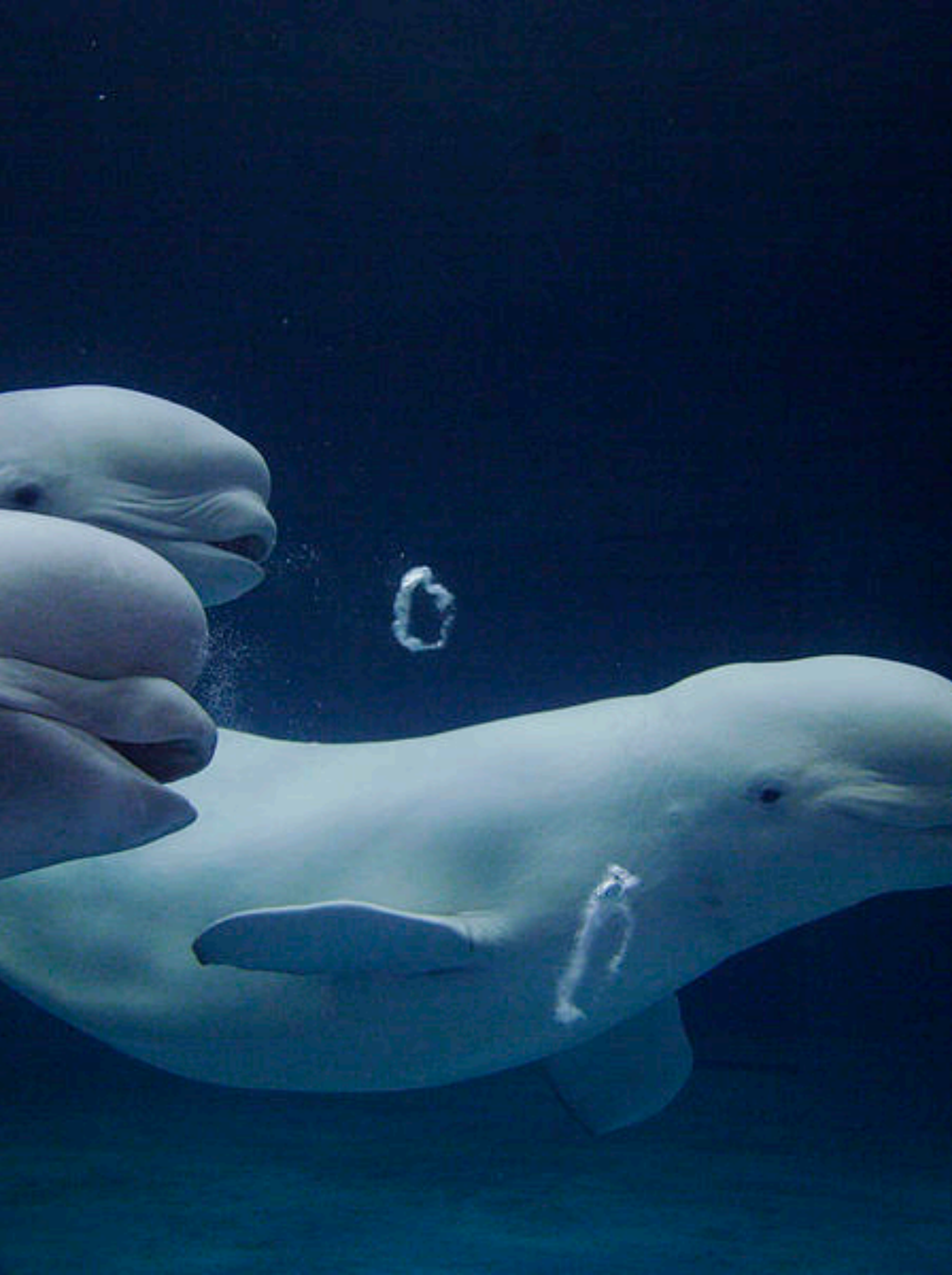
- ▶ **Northern Hemisphere**
- ▶ **Labrador Sea & Canadian Maritimes**
- ▶ **Gulf of Maine**
- ▶ **North of Russia and Europe**
- ▶ **Japan**



### FUN FACTS

- ▶ **Melonheads** - The nick name comes from their head shape.
- ▶ **They are very vocal** - Another, much nicer-sounding nickname belugas have earned for themselves is "sea canary."
- ▶ **Mimic Human Speech** - A whale named NOC, who lived at the National Marine Mammal Foundation in San Diego for 30 years, was one of the first belugas observed to exhibit this type of behavior.
- ▶ **Bubble to communicate**, Belugas are also experts when it comes to bubble-blowing
- ▶ **No Dorsal Fins** - The reduction of surface area helps prevent heat loss in the frigid Arctic Ocean.





# BEAUTIFUL BIG HEADS

Unlike other cetaceans, belugas can move their head up, down, and side-to-side because their cervical vertebrae are not fused. This adaptation is believed to help them maneuver and catch prey in silt-laden or ice-covered areas.





# REPRODUCTION

Young belugas are usually dark grey in color. The grey steadily lightens as they grow up – reaching their permanent color by the age of seven for females and nine for males. Calves nurse for about two years.

**Mating Season:** Late winter – early spring

**Gestation:** 15 months | **Number of offspring:** 1 calf





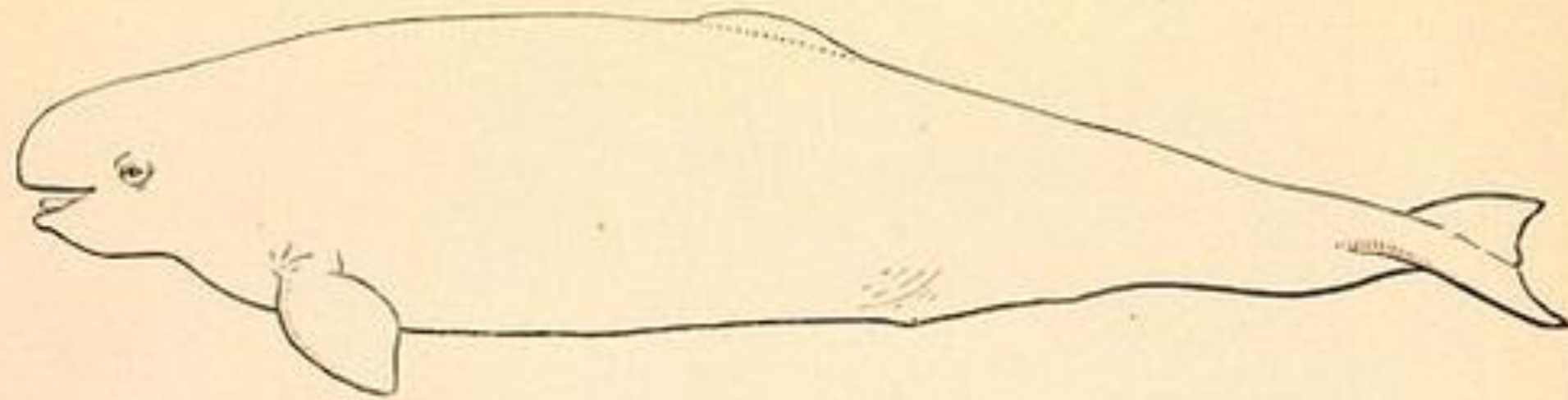
# DIET

Beluga whales are opportunistic feeders. They feed on salmon, eulachon, tomcod, smelt, char, rainbow sole, whitefish, saffron and arctic cod, herring, shrimp, mussels, octopus, crabs, clams, mussels, snails and sandworms.



# CLOSE COUSINS

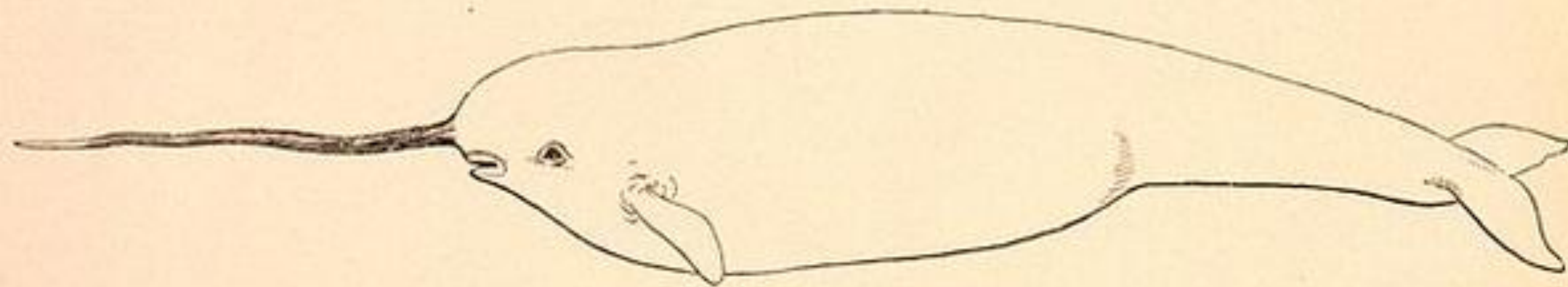
The beluga is closely related to another unusual species of arctic-dwelling whale—the narwhal. The two medium toothed whales are the sole members of the Monodontidae family.



**THE WHITE WHALE, OR BELUGA.**

*Delphinapterus caudon* (L.) Gill. (p. 18.)

Outline by Henry W. Elliott, from cast No. 12490, U. S. National Museum, obtained near Quebec, 1875



**THE NARWHAL.**

*Monodon monoceros*, L. (p. 19.)

Sketch by Henry W. Elliott, adapted from Vogt and Specht's "Faunghiere," p. 236.

PLATE 6.



## BELUGA SOUNDS



Belugas are often called the "canaries of the sea" but while both animals are quite vocal, this video will illustrate the sounds of a beluga differ greatly from that of almost any bird.

To hear a recording of the Beluga, click the above image.

## JONATHAN BIRD – BLUE WORLD



HIT PLAY TO WATCH VIDEO

BELUGAS AT MYSTIC AQUARIUM

Up close and personal with Beluga whales as he learns what its like to train and take care of these thousand pound marine mammals.



Arctic Habitat

