

Pollution poses new threat to great whales

As whales struggle to recover from years of overhunting that drove many species to the brink of extinction, they face new and often invisible dangers. Latest research shows that filter feeding – *baleen* – whales are increasingly affected by toxic industrial and agricultural chemicals in their ocean habitat

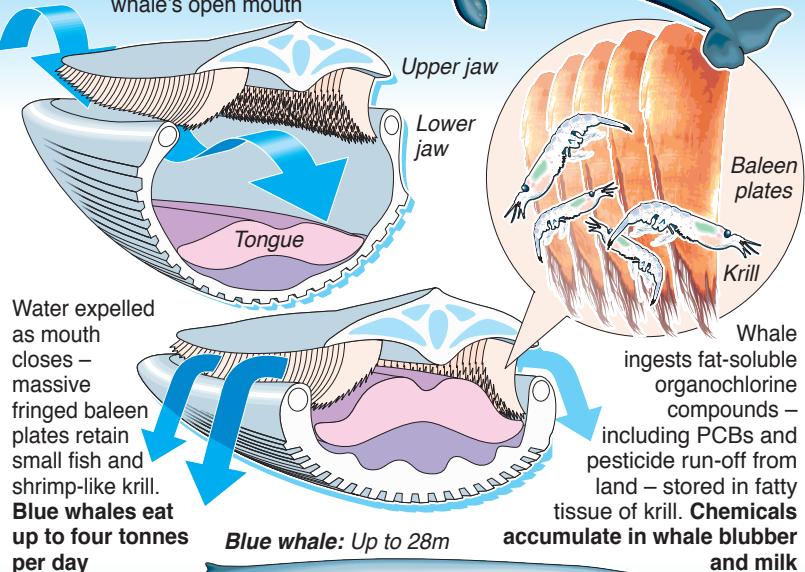
Fin whale:

Length up to 23m

Right whale:

Up to 15m

Up to 60 tonnes of water enter whale's open mouth



Fast growing offspring receive pollutants through high-fat milk when nursing

Baleen whales feed for only four or five summer months, then live off blubber stores – worsening toxic effects

Effects:
Suppression of immune system, reproductive disorders, cancer