

Sounds of the Arctic

Learning about the ocean by *listening* to it

The Arctic is home to many different animals including whales, seals and walrus. Because the Arctic is dark and ice-covered during much of the year, it can be hard to study these animals. One way scientists do this is by using *hydrophones*. A hydrophone is an underwater microphone that records sounds in the ocean.



Float

A mooring being retrieved after spending a year under water

Microcat (this measures temperature and salinity)

Hydrophone package

Bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*)



Bowhead whales sing complex songs in the winter and spring. During migration they may use sounds to help avoid big icebergs. Compare these different sounds.

moans



song



Sea Ice



Sea ice makes sounds as floes grind past or are driven up on top of each other by wind and currents. What do these sounds remind you of?



Bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*)



Bearded seals make more noise in the Arctic than any other animal. Males make long trills as a reproductive advertisement.



Beluga whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*)



Beluga whales are called "canaries of the sea" because they make so many amazing sounds. Narwhals make lots of different sounds, too. Do they sound different to you?

Narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*)



Walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus*)



Walrus make *knocks* and *gongs* and *whistles*. No one knows how they do this!

Ribbon seal (*Phoca fasciata*)



Very little is known about ribbon seal sounds. We think only males make the loud downward whistle sounds. How do these compare with bearded seals?

The Arctic can be a VERY noisy place but all the animals in it sound different!