



Wild Blue: A Natural History of the World's Largest Animal

Dan Bortolotti

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The blue whale holds the title of largest creature that has ever lived, and it may also be the most mysterious. The biggest blue whales can outweigh every player in Major League Baseball and the National Hockey League combined. Their mouths can gulp more than thirteen thousand gallons of seawater. A newborn can be over twenty feet long and gain nearly twenty tons in seven months—about eight pounds per hour. Blue whales emit more powerful sounds than any other animal on earth, though many of their vocalizations are beyond the range of human hearing.

Yet nearly everything that we have learned about blue whales has come after humans almost wiped them out from the oceans. A century ago, some three hundred thousand roamed the seas. But in the first decades of the twentieth century, humans hunted and killed 99.9% of them. Their numbers decimated, the species seemed destined for extinction. Only in recent years has the number slowly begun to increase, along with hope for the blue whale's future.

Equal parts history and science, *Wild Blue* is the first comprehensive portrait of the blue whale. It draws upon new findings from scientists who have begun to identify individual blue whales and understand how they dive, how they feed, where they migrate, and why they emit their haunting, low-frequency calls. With deft, poignant writing, Dan Bortolotti gives us the most vibrant, breathtaking view to date of these magnificent creatures.

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