



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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INTERIOR REPORTS 237 WHALES TAKEN IN 1957 SEASON

America's only active whaling fleet--the Dennis Gayle, the Allen Cody and the Donna Mae--brought in 237 whales during the 1957 season, the Department of the Interior reports. Most of the whales were taken in the vicinity of the Farallon Islands which are about 30 miles west of the Golden Gate.

Whale oil is no longer essential for lamps, nor is whalebone so important to a lady's wardrobe, but the mink farms, the cosmetic industry, the soap and washing powder business, the pet food plants, the paint factories, and dozens of other modern industries offer a market for whale products and their derivatives.

The 1957 harvest consisted primarily of humpback whales, with 199 of these being taken. There were 22 finbacks, 14 sperm whales, one sei, and one bottle-nose. The season on humpbacks and finbacks was from May 1 to October 31, but the sperm whales were taken from April 1 to November 30. Processing these whales resulted in 3,277,350 pounds of whale oil, 2,494,000 pounds of whale meal and 1,797,000 pounds of whale meat.

The largest whale taken was a 68-foot finback, but two other finbacks measured 67 feet each, and others were in excess of 60 feet. The finback produces between 12 and 15 tons of meat. The humpback whale averages between 40 and 43 feet in length and yields between six and eight tons of meat and 1,800 gallons of oil.

There were 145 whales taken in 1956 when the United States industry was reactivated after a five year lapse. Whalers first operated off the California coast in the early 1800's. The first shore installation was in 1841 and the whaling industry on the Pacific Coast has continued intermittently ever since. American whaling activities in the Atlantic were once an important marine operation, but no whales have been taken off the East coast for many years.

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for the issuance of licenses and for the collection of statistical and biological data on whales. Reports are made through the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service on all operations, number of men employed, size and species of whales as required by the whaling treaty. These data are transmitted to International Bureau for Whaling Statistics, Sandefjord, Norway, for compilation and publication.

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