

ORCA Marine Mammal Surveyor Course Agenda

09:30 Introduction to ORCA & marine mammals – why what we do is important!

Please ensure you are logged into the Zoom meeting on time, so that we can start promptly. During this session, we will introduce the course trainers and outline the course content for the day. We will also introduce ORCA's charitable aims, objectives and work areas.

10:00 How to search for & identify marine mammals at sea

In this lecture, we will outline how to identify the species of marine mammals we most often encounter on our surveys in UK and Europe. We will go through key identification tips and then focus on porpoises, dolphins, beaked whales and baleen whales. *We will take a short comfort break before the beaked whale section.*

12:30 Lunch break

13:00 ORCA survey protocol, data recording & equipment

In this lecture, we will talk through the different roles and responsibilities of each survey team member to ensure the survey data is collected thoroughly and accurately to best inform cetacean conservation. We will go through each survey form step-by-step so that you will be able to collect both effort data and sightings data on a survey. We will also look at the equipment used on an ORCA Marine Mammal Survey.

14:30 Getting to grips with line-transect & distance sampling surveys

Now it's time for the science! In this short lecture, we will, very simply, look at why we collect data in a certain way, to a certain protocol, and we will discuss why it's so important to collect accurate data so that we can use our survey data to protect these amazing animals for the future.

14:45 Short break

15:00 Cetacean Identification workshop

What can you remember from this morning's identification lecture? Let's test our identification skills and refresh our memory of how to identify marine mammals.

15:30 Virtual Survey workshop

Unfortunately, we can't take you out to sea today but during this workshop we will practice surveying skills and how to record sightings.

15:45 A survey experience – Insight into an ORCA surveyor's first survey

A short recollection of a survey from Oban to Barra, to let you know what it's like going on an ORCA MMS survey.

15:50 Have you got what it takes?

In this session, we will go through the key skills you need as a team to take part in a survey successfully. Do you have what it takes to become a Marine Mammal Surveyor?

16:20 Question & answer session

We have scheduled in a 15-minute question and answer session at the end of the day to address any questions that you might have about becoming an ORCA Marine Mammal Surveyor.

16:30 Summary & end of course

