



New Blue Whales Found Thanks to Their Song

A team of scientists were listening to whale songs in the Indian ocean when they heard something which sounded new but familiar.

Each group of blue whales sings songs **unique** to them. So, when the team heard a new song, they could tell it was a blue whale song. However, they could also tell that it was one which no-one had heard before.

Salvatore Cerchio is a whale expert. He

What is whale song?

- **Whale song is the term used to describe the noises that some whales make.**
- **The noises can be long, complex and have repeating patterns like a song.**



Illustration: A blue whale.

Glossary

unique One of a kind.

extinction When a species no longer exists.

endangered When a species is at risk of extinction.

Reflect

Will it ever be possible to know about all the animals in the oceans?
Why do you think that?

said, "To think there was a population out there that no one knew about until 2017 — well, it kind of blows your mind."

Blue Whales

Blue whales are the largest animals to have ever lived on Earth. They can grow to around 100 ft (30 metres) long. That's about the length of three buses parked end to end.

A blue whale can weigh up to 200 tonnes - the same as around 33 elephants - and has a heart roughly the size of a car!

Blue whales were nearly hunted to **extinction** in the 20th century, so laws were made to protect them. The number of blue whales has since increased. However, because there are still so few of them, blue whales are still an **endangered** species.

Questions

1. How could the scientists tell that the song belonged to a new population of blue whales?

2. In the sentence: **A team of scientists were listening to whale songs in the Indian ocean when they heard something which sounded new but familiar**, which of the following could be used as an alternative for 'familiar'? **(tick one)**

different

friendly

original

well known

3. Tick to show whether the statement is true or false according to the article.

	True	False
A blue whale's song is beautiful.		
Blue whales are the largest animal on the planet.		
The scientists didn't know that this group of blue whales existed until they heard their song.		
Blue whales are magnificent creatures.		

4. Write an alternate headline that could be used for this story using 8 words or fewer.
