



## **MAMMALS**

### **SEI WHALE**

#### **ABOUT**

The Sei whale (pronounced “say”) can measure up to 65 ft (19.8 meters) in length and weighs about 14-17 tons, making it the third largest baleen whale (baleen meaning to have overlapping plates hanging from the upper jaw). Females are slightly larger than males. It spouts water 6-8 ft into the air from its unique inverted “V” shaped spout. Sei whales swimming at speeds of up to 34.5 miles per hour are among the fastest baleen whales. They tend to travel alone or in very small groups. Generally, they are bluish-gray with variable white underbellies and some may have light patches on the upper body. The Sei also has 32 to 60 throat grooves.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The Sei whale’s mating season occurs from December to April, during which time they eat very little and live off their fat reserves. Sei whales reach maturity in about 10 years, and may live for up to 70 years. Every 2-3 years, the female gives birth to one 14-15 ft calf after a 10-12 month gestation period. The Sei whale population crashed after 106,886 were killed between 1959 and 1971. Current population estimates are 54,000 or one-fifth of its original numbers. The Sei whale is a federally endangered species, and is protected under the international treaty CITES.

For more information visit: [www.acsonline.org](http://www.acsonline.org)

#### **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE**

What do Sei whales live off during the mating season?

- a. Plankton
- b. Sardines
- c. Fat reserves
- d. Seaweed

Answer is C.

