[illegible] Report
of the
International Whaling Commission

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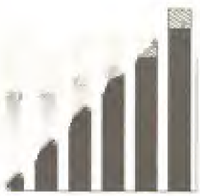

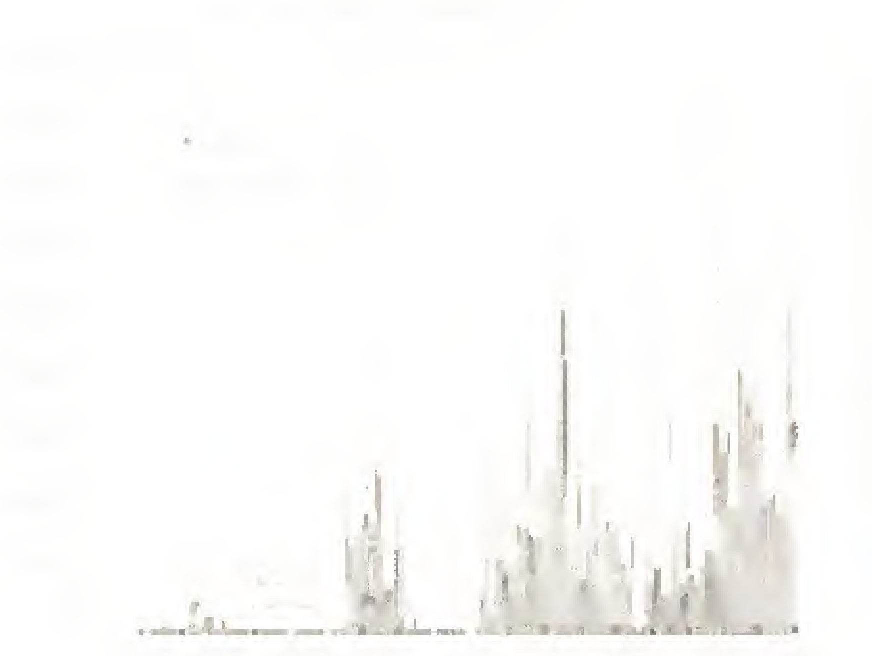

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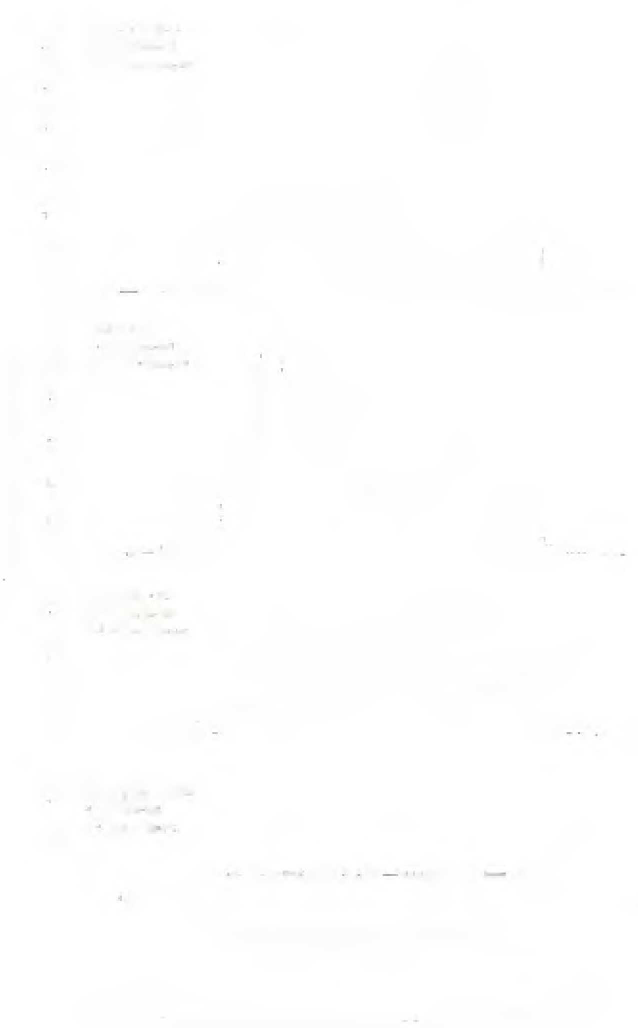
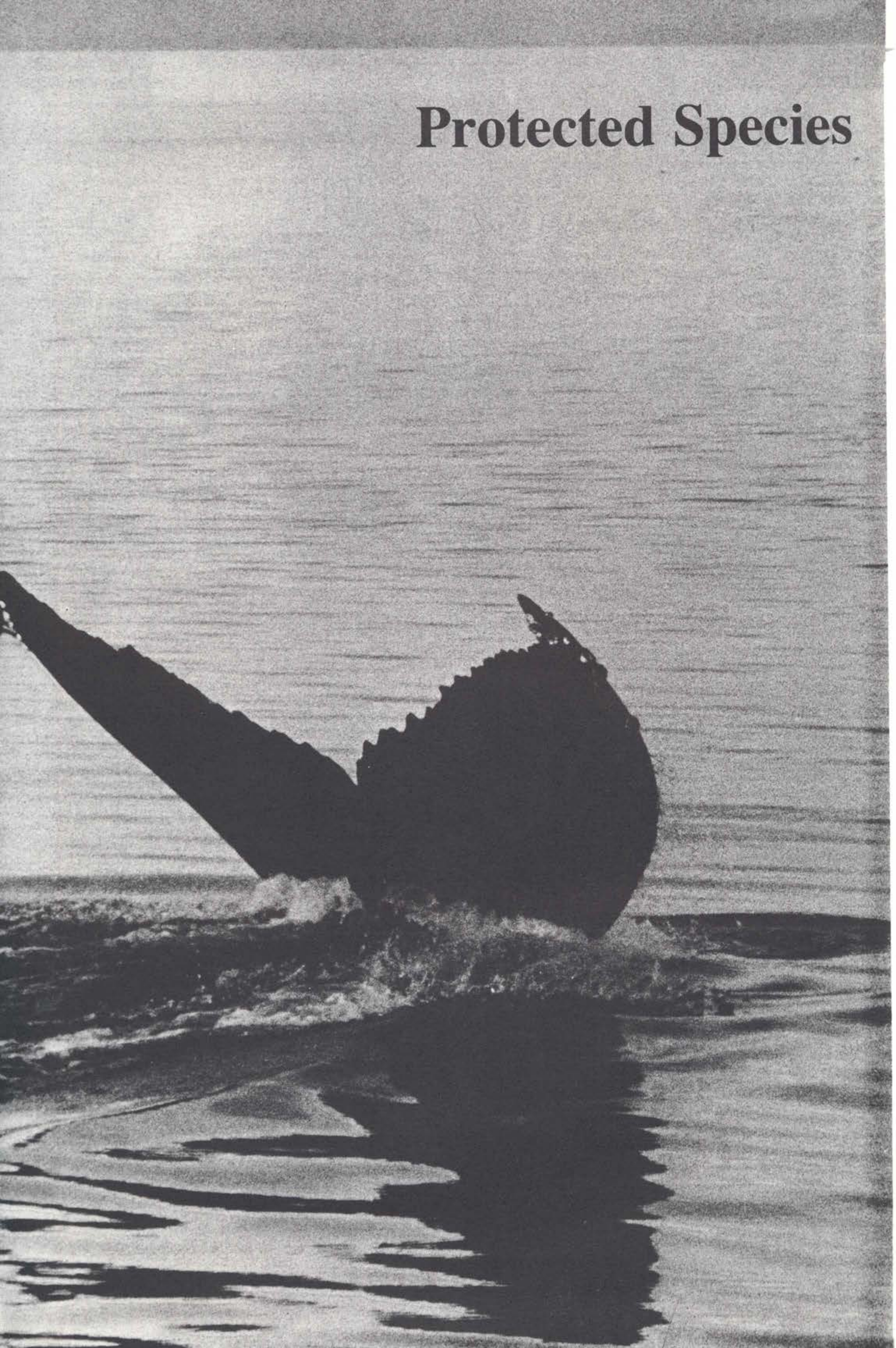
Minke Whales



Other Baleen Whales

Protected Species

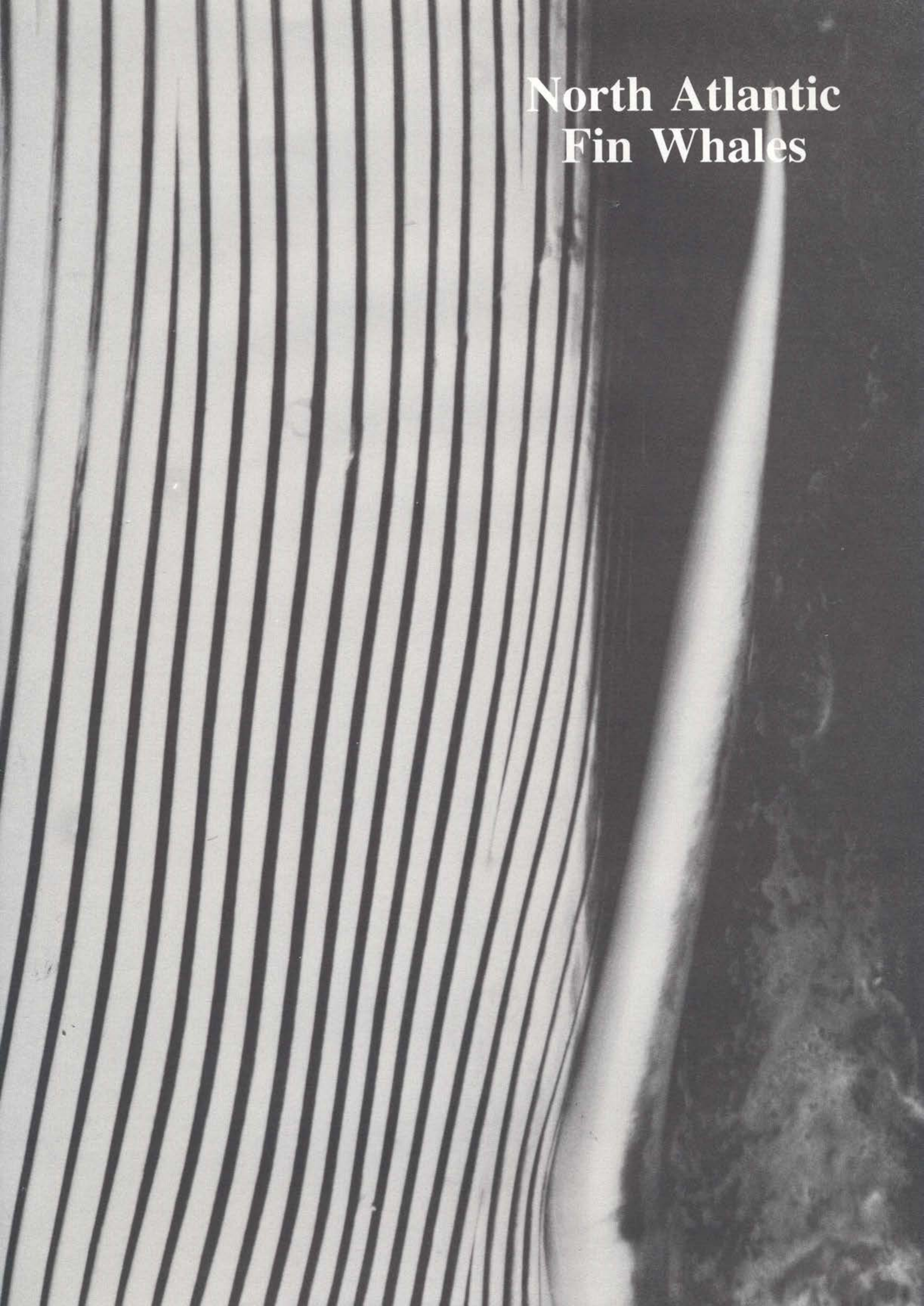


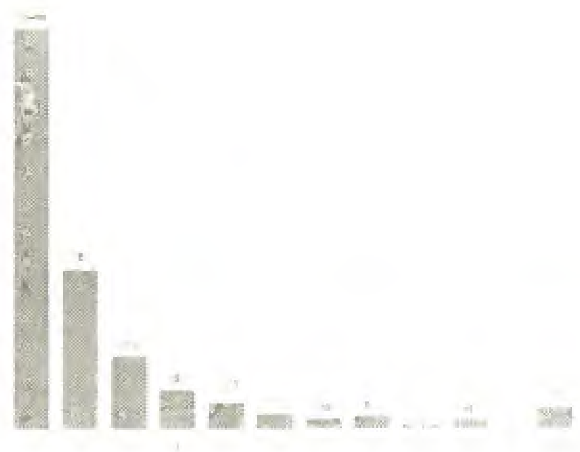
Small Cetaceans

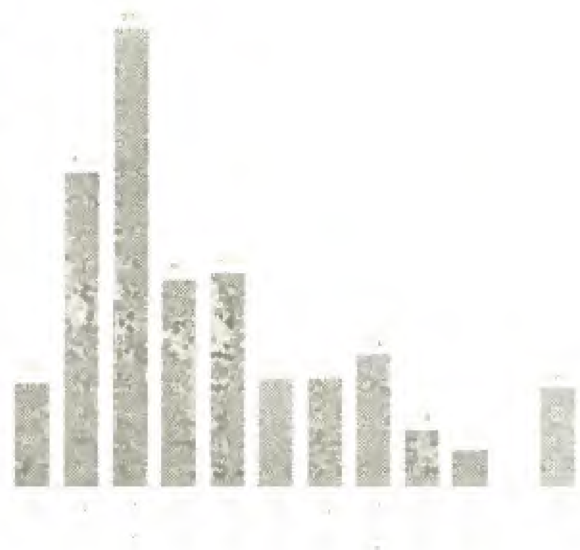
Sperm Whales

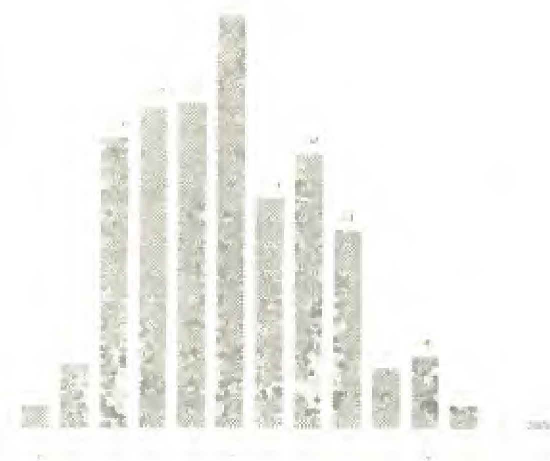
Other

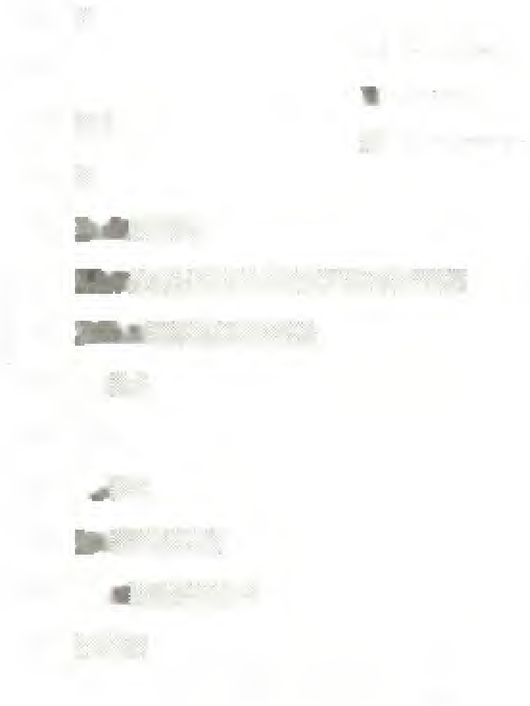
North Atlantic Fin Whales











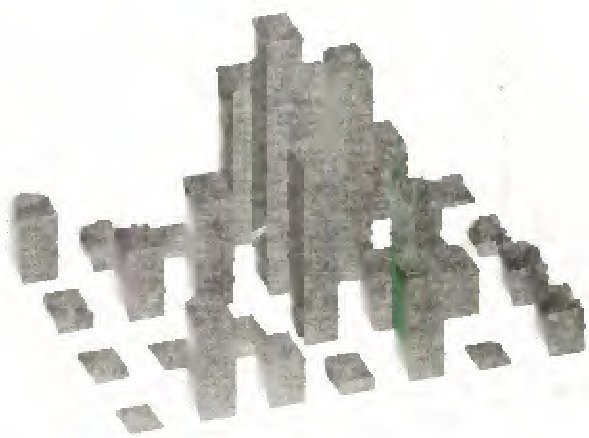


Fig. 3. Examples of the asymmetrical pigmentation patterns (chevron/blaze; Figs. 3a and 3b) and scars (Fig. 3c) found on fin whales. Dark lines in Figs. 3a and 3c indicate important scars used for individual identification.

The fin whale has an asymmetrical body pigmentation and the shape of this varies among individual whales (Fig. 3). Agler *et al.* (1990) defined seven categories of dorsal fin shapes (Fig. 4). These are being used and refined and a key has been developed describing how to assign these categories. Acquired scars are also useful for differentiating between individuals (Fig. 3).

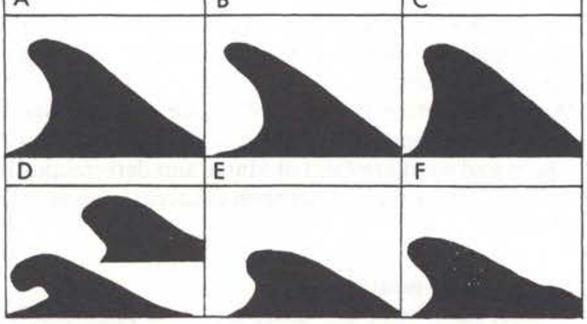


Fig. 4. Representation of six of the dorsal fin types. The seventh, Type O, are fins that do not fit into any of the other categories.

Table 1

Research groups contributing to the North Atlantic Fin Whale Catalogue from 1974-88, including primary study area, number of individuals photographed and span of each collection.

Contributor	Study Area[a]	Years	Non-calves	Calves	Total
Atlantic Cetaceans Research Center (ACRC)	South	1990-88	180	8	188
Brier Island Ocean Study (BIOS)[b]	North	1988	1	0	1
Center for Coastal Studies (CCS)	South	1979-88	250	21	271
College of the Atlantic (COA)[c]	North	1974-88	118	8	126
Maine Whalewatch (MWW)[c]	North	1978-88	131	8	139
New England Aquarium (NEA)[b]	North	1982-88	12	0	12
New Hampshire Seacoast Cruises (NHSC)[b]	South	1988	9	1	10
Personal (PERS)[b,d]	Both	1978-88	44	3	47
University of Rhode Island (URI)[b]	South	1988	2	0	2
Total	Both	1974-88	747	49	796
NAFWC[e]	Both	1974-88	497	40	537
NAFWC	North	1974-88	170	10	180
NAFWC	South	1978-88	355	30	385

[a] A research group's primary study area within the Gulf of Maine. Some groups may also collect incidental photographs from other areas. Southern Gulf of Maine includes Great South Channel, Stellwagen Bank and Jeffreys Ledge. Northern Gulf of Maine includes Seal Island, Mt. Desert Rock and Bay of Fundy.

[b] BIOS, NEA, NHSC, PERS and URI collections were pooled as miscellaneous observations - MISC.

[c] COA and MWW were combined for analyses because they cover the same geographic area at the same time.

[d] Personal observations were those contributed by individuals with an interest in whale research.

[e] North Atlantic Fin Whale Catalogue. The actual number of whales is less than the total of all collections because some whales were photographed by more than one research group.

As the markings are found along the sides of the body, a series of photographs (of both sides of a whale whenever possible) are taken. To prevent differences in dorsal fin shape due to camera angle, dorsal fins are photographed from the side, keeping the fin perpendicular to the plane of the camera. Fin whales arch their backs when diving and this raises a greater proportion of the body out of the water, providing the best view of their natural markings.

Whales were photographed from a variety of vessels, including 4–6m long inflatable boats with outboard engines and diesel-powered commercial whale watch boats 15–50m long. Photographers used 35mm cameras equipped with telephoto lenses (80–400mm) and automatic winders.

Eight organizations contributed photographs (Table 1). COA, ACRC and CCS all curate small photographic collections of individual fin whales from their local study areas and contributed most of the photographs. Numerous other observers, including naturalists from whale watch vessels, researchers who study other cetacean species and sailors on pleasure excursions, contributed photographs

Résumé Section

This section includes Résumés of those papers presented to the Scientific Committee but not published in this volume. They are provided for information only and do not constitute publication; and as such should not be cited in papers without consultation with authors. Copies of the full papers are available at cost price from the IWC Secretariat.

Common dolphin off the coast of Spain, September 1981.
Photograph by G. Donovan.