

And God Created.....The Biggest of All Animals - The Blue Whale

by David Everson

When God came to day five of the creation of all things, He designed an animal of unbelievable proportions. The Blue Whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*) is bigger than even the biggest of dinosaurs. This is hard to believe given how big the Brachiosaur is, as big as a house, but the Blue Whale is even bigger!

Living for somewhere near one hundred and ten years or more, this mammal can weigh in at more than seventy mid-size cars at 150 tons when fully grown with the females being the largest. The heart alone will be as large as a car by itself. The tail of this behemoth can be as wide as the wing span of a small two seat airplane. Its eye will be the size of a standard basketball. This massive animal is indeed a testimony to the creative design capability of God.

They will reach these gigantic sizes feeding upon some of the smallest shrimp-like animals in the ocean environment called Krill. Krill is a very common microorganism found in all of the oceans of the world. The adult male blue whale can eat up to four tons of this crustacean which would be about forty millions krill per day. That is like eating an elephant in a single day! They feed on these tiny life forms by straining the water with comb-like structures called baleen. The baleen sieve is made of keratin which is the same material found in many other structures in nature like fingernails and hooves of animals.

During feeding, large volumes of water and food can be taken into the mouth because the pleated grooves in the throat expand. As the mouth closes water is expelled through the baleen plates, which trap the food on the inside near the tongue to be swallowed.

The blue whale is blue-gray in color, but often with lighter gray mottling on the darker background, or with darker spots on the lighter background. The underside of its flippers may be a lighter color or white, while the ventral (underside) of the fluke is a dark color. The blue whale acquires microorganisms called diatoms in the cold waters of the Antarctic and North Pacific and North Atlantic which give the underside of its body a yellowish green cast. Because of this yellow color, the early whalers gave it the name "sulphur bottom."

The blue whale is found living in all of the oceans of the world. They may spend much of the spring and summer in polar waters where the krill lives in abundance. They can be found in tropical waters during autumn and winter. It is a member of the Rorquals, the family of whales that include the humpback and fin whales among others. For a high population of an estimated 200,000 and though the exact figures are not known, an estimated five thousand survive today in three populations scattered in the North Atlantic, North Pacific, and the Southern Hemisphere.

The blue whale makes deep rumbling sounds which can be felt as much as heard. These low-frequency sounds travel long distances through water, allowing blue whales to communicate with each other over hundreds of miles of ocean.

Mothers do you think your children were big at birth? The blue whale calves are twenty-three to twenty-seven feet long at birth and weigh three tons. Calves nurse for seven to eight months and are weaned when they reach fifty-two feet in length. At that time they weigh about twenty-three tons. During the nursing period, calves consume one hundred of the fat-rich mother's milk each day, gain two hundred pounds a day, or eight pounds per hour and can grow one and a half inches in length a day.

So when we contemplate the power and majesty of God, let's not forget those animals that man still knows very little about such as the great Blue Whale.