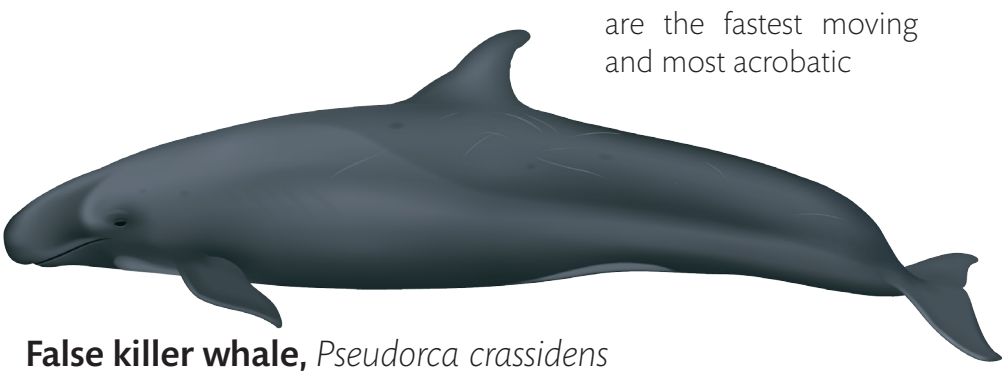
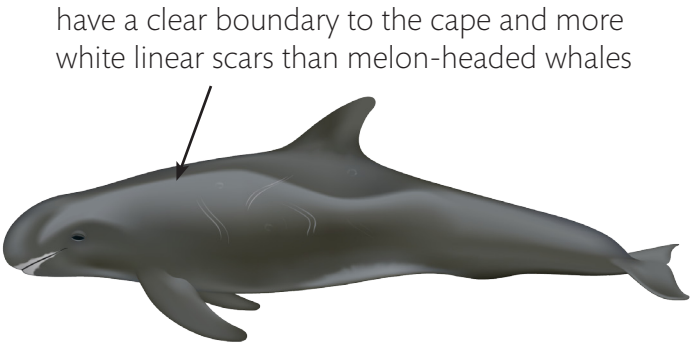


HOW TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE: FALSE KILLER WHALES, PYGMY KILLER WHALES, SHORT-FINNED PILOT WHALES, AND MELON-HEADED WHALES IN HAWAI'I

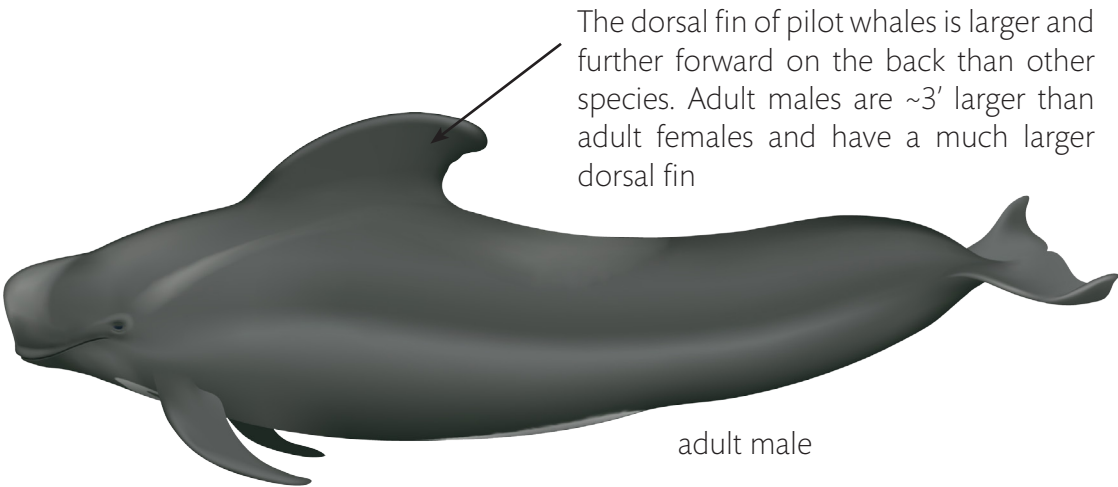
There are four species of small black whales resident in Hawaiian waters, two relatively large (short-finned pilot whales, false killer whales) and two relatively small (melon-headed whales, pygmy killer whales). The four species look fairly similar but can be discriminated based on relative dorsal fin size and position as well as other characteristics (summarized in table at the bottom).



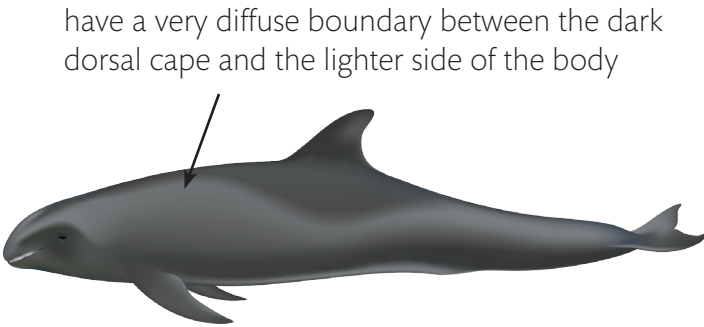
False killer whale, *Pseudorca crassidens*



Pygmy killer whale, *Feresa attenuata*



Short-finned pilot whale, *Globicephala macrorhynchus*



Melon-headed whale, *Peponocephala electra*

Species	Group Size typical & range	Behavior towards boats	Behavior during day	Body size range	Typical depths fathoms	Frequency seen?	Group spread
Pilot whale	18 (1-195)	Usually indifferent	Usually resting at surface or travel	4'7" – 18'	270-1640	Common	Typically one or two subgroups
False killer whale	18 (1-41)	Often bowrides	Actively foraging leaping regularly	5' – 17'	25-2700	Rare	Often over many miles
Pygmy killer whale	11 (1-33)	Usually avoids	Usually resting at surface	2'7" – 8'6"	270-1640	Rare	Typically one group
Melon-headed whale	245 (1-800)	Often bowrides	Usually resting at surface or travel	3'4" – 9'	110-2700	Uncommon but very large groups	Usually very clustered