

Third blue whale found dead in California

September 23 2007

Sharks gnawed at its carcass Saturday as the third blue whale to die off California in two weeks was towed to a beach for examination.

Two 30-foot tow boats, looking like dinghies next to the whale, wrapped a sling around its tail Friday to haul it to a beach at Point Magu. The dead whale was found hours earlier floating in the Santa Barbara Channel, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Scientists said they hoped a necropsy would shed light on why three of the endangered blue whales have been found dead in the Channel when there used to be reports of maybe one a year, the Times reported.

A blue whale that washed ashore in Ventura County last week and one found dead in Long Beach Harbor two weeks ago showed signs of having been hit by ships, but it isn't known if the whales were ill or disoriented when the collisions occurred.

The blue whale is the largest animal on earth.

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