

Jump in whale deaths blamed on krill, ship traffic

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(AP) -- An increase in the population of a tiny crustacean and busy shipping lanes are being blamed for a jump in the number of whale deaths in Northern California waters this year.

With at least five whales reported killed in the region since July, researchers believe an abundance of krill - part of the whales' favorite food group - might be leading the whales into the paths of ships.

A spokeswoman for the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary told the San Francisco Chronicle that an estimated 2,800 [blue whales](#), 2,600 fin whales and 1,400 humpback whales regularly ply the waters off the coasts of California, Oregon and Washington.

Mary Jane Schramm says the organization is working on measures that could reduce the number of collisions between [whales](#) and ships.

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