

# Two stranded humpback whales rescued in Argentina

October 6 2021

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In this handout photo released by Mundo Marino Foundation, rescuers help a stranded humpback whale at a beach in Argentina, south of Buenos Aires, October 3, 2021.

Rescue teams saved two stranded whales along the Atlantic coast of

Argentina Tuesday, the World Marine Foundation said.

The animals were stranded on the beach of the seaside resort town of La Lucila del Mar, 220 miles (360 kilometers) south of Buenos Aires, just as [spring](#) arrives to the [southern hemisphere](#).

"The first, which was stranded on Sunday, was a juvenile female humpback whale, 32 feet (9.8 meters) long and approximately eight tons in weight," the conservation group said in a statement.

The second individual, which "is a male of the same species, 28 feet long, and approximately seven tons, appeared Monday night," the foundation added.

Some 30 people participated in the [rescue operation](#), including [local residents](#), marine conservationists, Civil Defense members, coast guard officers, firefighters, volunteers and beach lifeguards.

Their collective efforts allowed the animals to return to the sea, the statement said.

"Upon arriving to survey the first animal's situation, primary support efforts were immediately carried out, including assuring the individual's position allowed it to breathe, keeping its [pectoral fins](#) underwater in order to stabilize its body temperature as much as possible," the organization said.



In this handout photo released by Mundo Marino Foundation, rescuers help a stranded humpback whale on a beach in Argentina, south of Buenos Aires, October 3, 2021.

The whole procedure was "difficult," the group said. At one point, the force of the waves knocked the whale over so that the mammal's blowhole was underwater and it was unable to breathe.

"Thanks to a quick action, they were able to turn it over," said Sergio Rodriguez Heredia, a biologist at the World Marine Foundation's Rescue Center.

Rescuers tucked cables underneath the whale's body—connected to a huge backhoe tractor crane—hoping to free it from the sandy sea floor.

The workers noticed the second whale overnight, seeing it was in a "good state of health," said Augusto Giachetti, director of the Civil Defense's coastal division.

They waited until dawn to begin the second whale's rescue.

"It was necessary to realign the animal, using the assistance of a backhoe and special cables to move it a big enough distance that it was able to float," he Giachetti said.

Once the whale realized it was able to float, it swam out to sea.

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