

Southern resident orca pod falls to lowest number in 46 years

September 30 2022, by Isabella Breda



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Only 73 southern resident orcas that live along the coast of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia remain as of July 1, according to the latest census from the Center for Whale Research.

In the last year, three whales died—K21, K44 and L89. Meanwhile, two calves were born in February and April.

The census found the L pod, currently sitting at 32 orcas, at its lowest point since the study began in 1976. The K pod and J pod sit at 16 and 25, respectively.

According to the center, K21 was last seen "severely emaciated" in the Strait of Juan de Fuca in July 2021. He was declared dead after he failed to appear alongside others he was social with.

K44 was alive as of this spring, but was not seen in subsequent encounters with his family. According to the center, the body of a juvenile killer whale with consistent markings was found entangled off the Oregon coast in late June. He has not been formally identified, the center reported.

L89 was not seen in 2022.

©2022 The Seattle Times.

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: Southern resident orca pod falls to lowest number in 46 years (2022, September 30) retrieved 18 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2022-09-southern-resident-orca-pod-falls.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.