

Dead endangered whale washes up on Mississippi Gulf Coast

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A dead Finback whale lies on the sand after being brought to shore at the Mississippi Gulf Coast beach in Pass Christian, Miss., Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023. Credit: Hunter Dawkins/The Gazebo Gazette via AP

Scientists are examining the corpse of an endangered whale that washed up on a Mississippi Gulf Coast beach.

The rare discovery Saturday marks the first time a fin whale stranding has been reported in Mississippi and just the fourth time since 2002 a fin whale stranding has been reported in the Gulf of Mexico, [WLOX-TV reported](#).

Scientists from the nonprofit Institute for Marine Mammal Studies and other organizations will study the remains, which washed ashore in Pass Christian.

Dr. Moby Solangi, director of the institute, [told the Gazebo Gazette](#) that the whale is 30 feet (9 meters) long and weighs between 12,000 and 15,000 pounds (6,804 kilograms). It might have been inadvertently pushed to shore by a ship.

"The mammal was probably sick and the body got caught in a ship channel," Solangi said.

Scientists will determine the cause of death based on pending lab results.

After the fin whale population declined due to hunting, the species was classified as endangered and granted protection under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

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