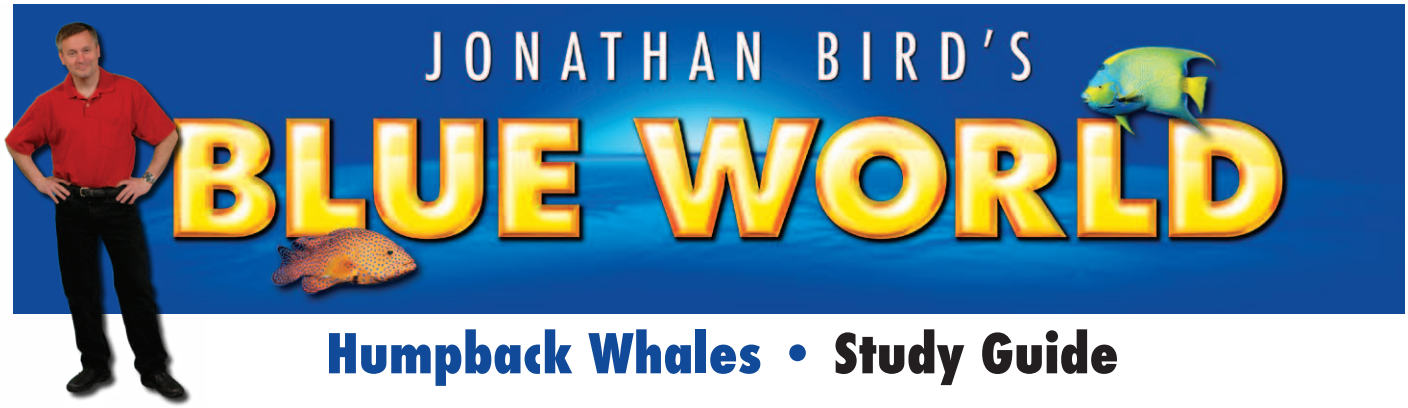

Humpback Whales • Study Guide

Every year, Humpback whales in the North Atlantic make a long migration down to the Caribbean to have their calves in warm, calm water. Many of these whales go to one particular area called the Silver Banks near the Dominican Republic. Jonathan spends a week in the Silver Banks filming whales underwater, and you won't believe how close he gets to the whales, and the exceptional behaviors he observes!

Objectives

1. Introduces viewers to Humpback whales and their life cycle.
2. Explores animal migrations.

Questions for before watching the program

1. Is a whale a fish? A mammal? What is a mammal and what are some characteristics of mammals?
2. Why do some animals make migrations?
3. Why do some whales migrate to warmer water in the winter? (Hint: it's not really for the warmer water!)
4. What do Humpback whales eat? Do they have teeth? How do they eat?

Discussion for after watching the program

1. What does the Silver Banks offer Humpback whales as a winter calving area?
2. What do the whales eat while they are at the Silver Banks?
3. Why do the Humpbacks go back to the North Atlantic in the spring?
4. What is a "Valentine Dance?"
5. Why do the Humpbacks sometimes have little fish hanging around them?
6. Internet research: How large is a baby Humpback whale and how much milk does it drink in a day? Where does all that milk come from if the mother is not eating?