

So people fish and they take things out of the ocean. When people catch fish, it is called fishing. Certain commonly taken animals like crabs are caught in traps and nets and we often say "crabbing" as the method. With the getting of wild mammals the word generally used is "hunting" So whales and seals and other sea mammals are generally hunted as opposed to "fished" What caused it to become endangered? Is it just over fishing of the species or of the destruction of its food supply? No. That approach is just one way. A species can become endangered or go extinct because of damage to the ecological system in which the animal lives. Remember the problems with the destruction of the mangroves, estuaries and coral reefs.

Sometimes the killing off (or attempted killing off) of a species is deliberate. This approach was taken with the American Bison when the US Government felt that encouraging the killing of huge numbers of the animal would take away the food supply from the Indians.

Extinctions are always going on. During some periods there are mass extinctions. These mean that there are large numbers of organisms go extinct at roughly the same (geological) time. There are generally thought to be 5 of these with a possible sixth happening at the moment,

End Ordovician, 444 million years ago, 86% of species lost
Late Devonian, 375 million years ago, 75% of species lost
End Permian, 251 million years ago, 96% of species lost
End Triassic, 200 million years ago, 80% of species lost
End Cretaceous, 66 million years ago, 76% of all species lost

These seem to be the result of some sort of catastrophe (meteor/asteroid strikes, huge volcanic eruptions. etc.)

Some people feel a 6th major extinction is taking place now, which is largely caused by people, rather than extraterrestrial or other "natural" phenomenon.

There are a number of groups that have developed which are involved with various aquatic problems. Some are highly specific—looking to protect oysters, watching out for horseshoe crabs and save the whales among others. . There are 2 main divisions – environmentalists and animal rights groups. They are often both involved in similar issues, but sometimes from different perspectives. In some cases "animals rights activists" objected that animals have the right to stay alive. Environmentalists often argue that removal of a species from a system is ecologically damaging. The result is

that most the ecological groups were not particularly upset about the Makah Indians (below) deciding to take one Pacific Gray Whale a year after it was removed from the endangered species list, but many animal rights groups were.

Whales have been seen as the "totemic" animal for the animal rights movement. They are probably more discussed than any other animal which is endangered, so they need to be discussed here. While activists groups are in two main groups, the International Whaling Commission has defined three kinds of whaling – aboriginal, scientific and commercial. Aboriginal whaling deals with the taking of whales by indigenous populations. Scientific whaling deals with taking of whales for the purpose of scientific work. Commercial whaling is everything else. These categories while apparently clearly defined, clearly are not. Who, for example constitutes an aborigine? Since almost everyone is agreed that humans evolved initially in Africa, people constitute an alien or invasive species everywhere else in the world.

SCIENTIFIC WHALING The next question has to do with scientific whaling. What does the scientist do with the whales they have taken scientifically? Since the meat is edible it can in fact be sold as food. So how does anyone evaluate the importance of the scientific work? Many argue that the Japanese are pretending to do scientific whaling, they are just getting around the ban on commercial whaling. Similar comments have been made by some American politicians about the amount of money given out in grants to American researchers for "idiotic" research projects – despite the fact that in both countries there is a review process on grant applications. So Japanese scientific whaling has been attacked by "Save the whale" and other groups on the grounds that they don't think there scientific research is scientific research. Recently, Bill Gates has been giving awards and terminating them mid stream when things weren't to his liking. In post modern theory, there are "narratives". Narratives constitute what a person believes or thinks happened. That is, it is their story of an event. In post modernism there are no facts, just narratives and the important questions has to do with whose narrative is believed. The underlying idea is that people who are seen as "powerless" are not believed, whereas post modernism claims to "empower" the powerless - that is to say, everyone's narrative is equally "valid". This can lead to having to believe both "a" and not "a" at the same time. Aristotle said "Don't talk to people like that".

ABORIGINAL WHALING One of the first things to be aware of is that the image of aboriginal whaling is that

aborigines do not hunt the same way they used to. The romanticized image of the Inuit going out in kayaks using hand held harpoons. Even in the famous film *Nanook of the North* (1922), where Robert Flaherty tried to show "aboriginal seal hunting" as done by the Inuit in "traditional" style. Aboriginal whaling is involved with "natives" who took whales as part of their survival in harsh climates like the Arctic where Inuit whales. But even in some of the shots *Nanook* (not his real name) is shown with a harpoon but on the ground his rifle is evident. This is involved in a kind of "romanticism" of native peoples. Inuits have been inv The Makah, a Wakashan speaking group of Indians who live in Washington State were allowed by a treaty in 1855 to be allowed to hunt animals they regularly hunted. This included whales which were taken in the Pacific. At one point, when the California Gray Whale had dropped to unprecedented low numbers, the Makah voluntarily gave up whaling. By 1999 the whales had made a remarkable come back and were removed from the endangered species list, the Makah decided to take one whale a year. This was vehemently objected to by animal rights groups (but not in environmental groups. There are restraints on the hunt. The International Whaling Commission permits four cartridges in whaling: .458 Winchester Magnum, .460 Weatherby Magnum, .50 BMG, and the .577 Tyrannosaur, which the Makah fired in the 1999 hunt. Like the Inuit case, this is not a matter of needing the whale for food, but for something more complex in terms of cultural maintenance. People (especially aboriginals) maintain this desire to control their cultures is an example of "cultural imperialism" The Makah reservation had a number of problems from animal rights groups which included warnings made by firing shotguns at the signs indicating the reservation boundaries. This was unnerving since Sea Shepherd had been involved with terrorist acts in various parts of the world already. In addition, there was some difficulty over the appearance of a Canadian ship arriving in the area where the Makah were going to take the whale and there was no response from the American government toward the "invasion" In Sept. of 2007: Five members of the Makah Tribe went and hunted and killed a gray whale in the Strait of Juan de Fuca in a hunt that was not authorized by the tribe nor NOAA. There are a number of provisions and restrictions defined in the tribe's application which were violated and hence the hunt was unauthorized. Both the tribe and NOAA made statements condemning the unlawful hunt. BEQUIA - St. Vincent and the Grenadines This is one of the few places that allows whaling. Whaling was an industry in Bequia for more than 140 years Now they are

allowed four whales during the four-month season from February to May. Whales are scarce and they are not always able to take even four. The whales are used for food (which tastes like very lean beef) and for some homemade remedies (homeopathic). Humpback whales were taken here.

JAPAN Japan also poses a problem for "aboriginal" whaling. While there are Ainu and Ryukyuan peoples who seem to be in Japan longer than the "Japanese" some date the arrival of the Japanese themselves as far back as 30,000 years ago – making them in Japan longer than the Inuit have been in the arctic or the Makah have been in Washington State. So are the Japanese entitled to aboriginal status as well? Traditional whaling in Japan was developed by a samurai and the entire hunt was organized like a military venture. There were interesting rules some of which were ecological – Japanese were not allowed to hunt female whales with calves which would result in the death of the calf as well and thereby potentially damage the stock. Basically it was done in a few villages Wada Ura in Chiba and Taiji in Wakayama prefecture. Later Ayukawa in the north was involved. The Japanese said a whale can feed seven villages and whales that were killed had memorial plaques made for them and were mentioned in Buddhist funeral ceremonies for the dead. The traditional whale hunt involved having a look out who sighted the whale and then relayed the sighting to the town. Everyone involved with the whale hunt got a percentage of the meet so some of the boats involved contained elderly and very young people. The Japanese came finally to have basically 2 kinds of whaling – that which took place in coastal waters and that which took place in the Antarctic. The Japanese had stopped whaling during WWII when whaling vessels were converted into war ships. After the war there were serious food problems in Japan which resulted in the US advocating that the Japanese return to whaling as a source of food. Dieticians have argued the meat is healthier than other meats in that it is very low in cholesterol. Once the whaling bans were being discussed, the Japanese argued (among other things) there were going to be major layoffs and the US suggested that the Japanese use the whale ships to deal with red meat from the US. Recall that there are also Eta or untouchables in Japan whose status had been legally removed. As compensation the Eta have been given the jobs that deal with meat which others cannot do. There are not enough "ETA" to handle that much work so that failed as well. While the anti-whaling crew insists that the Japanese Scientific whaling is a front to get whale meat for the rich, although there is no real evidence for that at all.

WHALING IN ICELAND Iceland had also taken

whales. In their last whale hunt, one Icelander had all the meat frozen and it is sold to one restaurant in Iceland (Thrir Frakker) so the Icelanders would always be able to eat whale meat.