THE BLUE WHALE

THE LARGEST ANIMAL TO HAVE EVER EXISTED ON EARTH!

FACT FILE!

Did you know that a blue whale's blood vessels are so wide, that you could swim through them?

It's tongue can weigh as much as an elephant!

It's heart can weigh the same as a car!

It's size is about the same length as 3 buses!

Despite how huge these sea creatures are, they eat tiny crustaceans called 'krill'. Whilst they may look like a little seafood snack, the blue whale isn't eating one at a time. They can actually eat up to 4 million of these, per day!

The blue whale can be found in all of our oceans, except the Arctic.

The blue whale isn't eating with big teeth, either. They are a species of 'baleen whale'. Baleen is a fibrous material which acts as a sieve, filtering the water out and keeping the food in. Yum! The whales gulp huge amounts of water, expanding the 'pleated' skin on their throats. The whale then uses its tongue to force out the water through the baleen plates, keeping the krill to eat!

These magnificent creatures swim the ocean at around 5mph, but when agitated, they can accelerate to up to 20 mph.

Blue whales are usually found alone or in pairs. Groups of whales are usually seen where there is a vast food source for them to enjoy!

They are some of the loudest animals on the planet! They can hear one another up to 1,000 miles away, emitting pulses and call in the form of moans and groans. It is also thought that in the deepest and darkest parts of the ocean, where there is no light, the whales use sound to navigate!

COOL FACTS!

A blue whale's tail fin (also know as a 'fluke') is unique like a human finger print!

When a blue whale's calf is born, it is already among one of the world's largest creatures. Humans carry their babies for 9 months, whereas whales carry their babies for almost a year! When a baby blue whale is born, it can weigh around 3 tonnes and is around 25 feet in length. The calf will drink its mother's milk and will gain about 200 lbs in weight every single day, for the first year of its life.

Whales mate in warmer tropical waters where they also give birth. They tend to migrate to these warmer waters from colder polar waters, where they will have filled up on plenty of krill for their journey.

Blue whales, as well as being the largest, also have one of the longest lifespans of earth's animals. It is believed that blue whales can live for up to 90 years of age. Around 110 years ago, scientists found that they could determine a deceased whale's age by counting the layers in the whale's ear plugs, much like the wax we have in our ears.