

A gutful of plastic



Dying whales may move into shallow water to avoid drowning.

In August 2000, an 8 metre Bryde's (pronounced broodas) whale stranded close to central Cairns in north Queensland. It died soon after.

An autopsy found that the whale's stomach was tightly packed with plastic - almost 6 square metres of it! The whale had swallowed supermarket bags, food packaging, three large sheets of plastic 2 metres long and fragments of garbage bags.

Floating rubbish, such as plastic, can be easily swallowed, and since it cannot be digested or passed, it stays in the whale. Plastic in the gut can prevent the animal from digesting its food and may lead to death.



Bryde's whales feed by swallowing large amounts of water. They use baleen, the fringe along the tops of their mouths, to sieve out small fish and other food.



Please be careful with your rubbish.

A plastic bag dropped in the street washes into stormwater drains which empty into the ocean. If you see plastic in the street, don't let it become whale food - pick it up!

Let's keep plastic off the street and out of the ocean!