



Goosebeak whale beaches at Bunbury

WHEN beach walker Laurie Hunt found a dead goosebeak whale on a Bunbury beach recently, CALM wildlife officer Sean Hazelden was soon on the scene where he is pictured above examining the 2.8 metre juvenile male.

The first record of the Cuviers beaked (or goosebeak) whale (*Ziphius cavirostris*) within the last 12 years (since CALM has been keeping records) was on 31 January 1988 at Warren Beach which is west of Northcliffe in the State's south west.

by Doug Coughran

This species distribution is world wide in tropical and temperate waters.

It is not known to mass-strand and most single strandings are reported from New Zealand.

Their average length is 6.4 metres for males and 7 to 8.5 metres for females, with calves about 2.1 metres at birth.

Adult whales weigh on average 3 tonnes, with a maximum of 4.5 tonnes recorded.

This species is by no means as rare on our coast as the lack of records suggest but data retrieved from such strandings provide valuable scientific information for the WA Museum due to the oceanic habit of the species.

Tests were carried out to establish whether or not the presence of heavy metal, organochlorine and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) had contributed to its death.

While the exact cause of death is unknown it is suspected to be due to natural causes.



A.
B. 'Cuviers Beaked Whale' ~ Length 2.81m.

