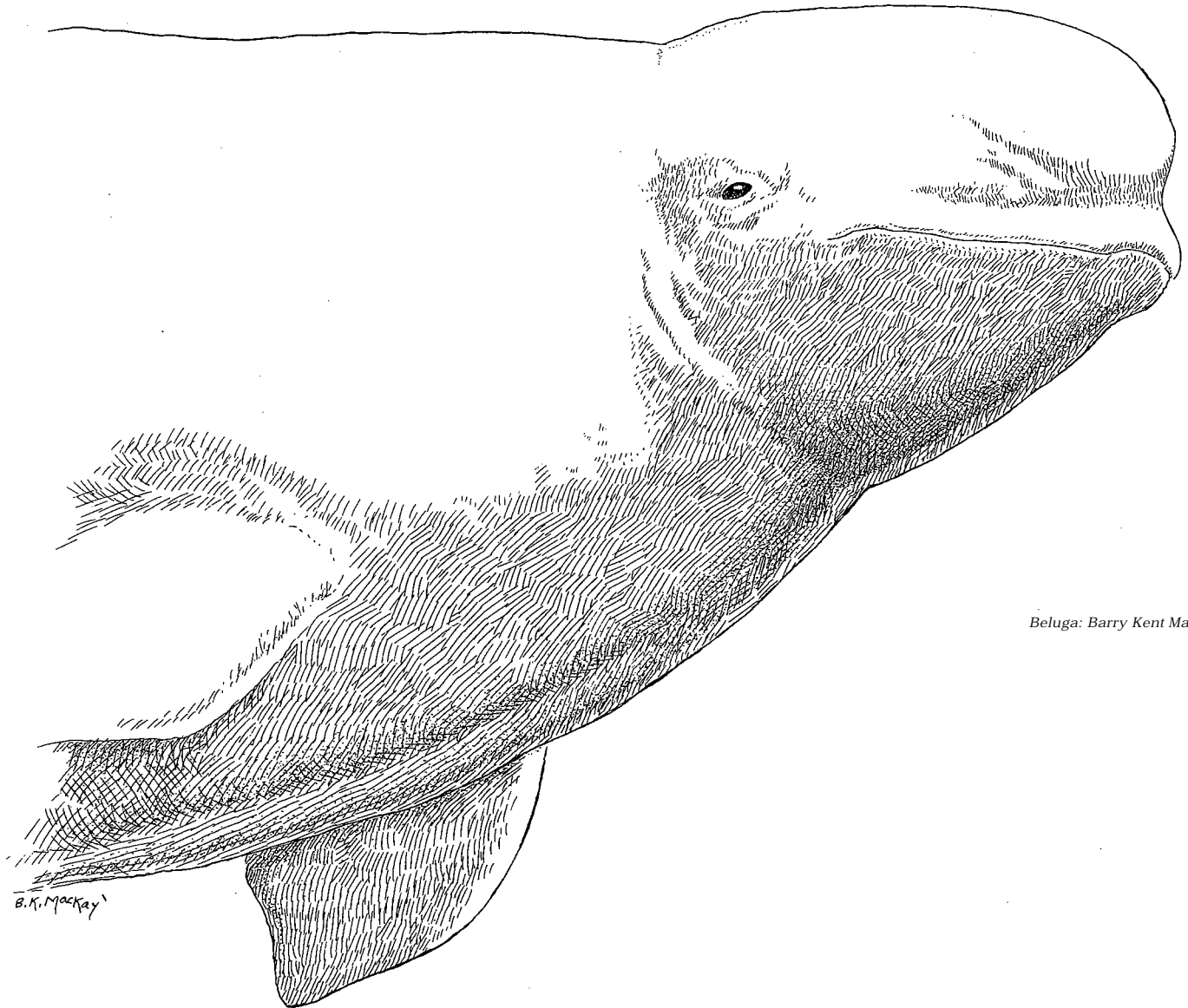


Whales

Cetacea



Beluga: Barry Kent MacKay

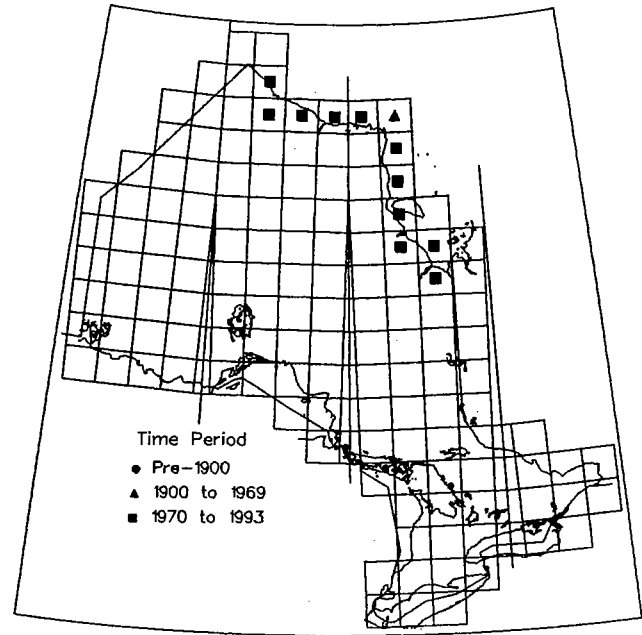
Beluga

Delphinapterus leucas

The Beluga or White Whale has a holarctic distribution, occupying arctic and subarctic waters in North America, with populations as far south as Cook Inlet in the west and the St. Lawrence River in the east. Belugas frequent the Ontario shores of Hudson and James bays in summer months, almost as soon as open water leads are available to permit access from the wintering areas.

Greater numbers of Belugas are present along the Hudson Bay coast, with large aggregations often present at the estuaries of major rivers. The river estuaries are important calving and feeding areas for the Beluga. Recent surveys of the Ontario Hudson Bay population indicate that approximately 2500 Belugas are present from June to late fall (at which point ice has formed sufficiently to encourage migration to wintering areas).

.. Nancy Wilson

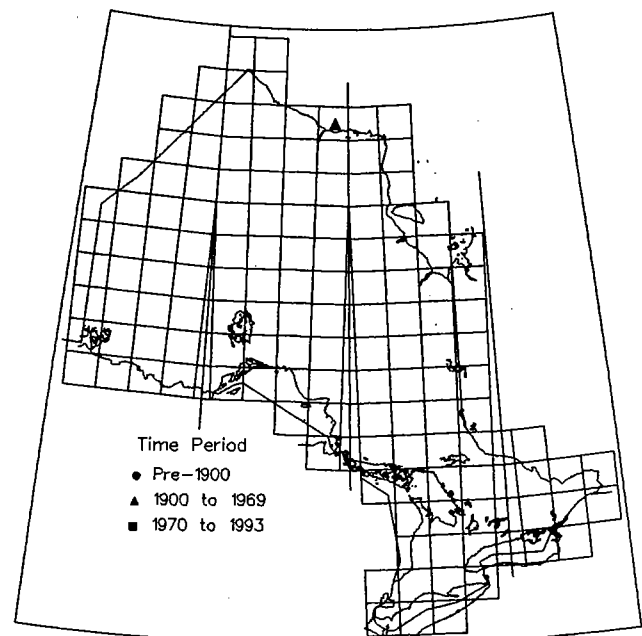


Narwhal

Monodon monoceros

The only record of Narwhal in Ontario is of a specimen found dead on the Hudson Bay shore. The regular range of the Narwhal is restricted to the Atlantic sector of the Arctic Ocean (Banfield 1974) and includes the western Hudson Strait and northern Hudson Bay (Chapman and Feldhamer 1982). It can be expected that individuals may wander out of normal range, but it is not known whether the Ontario record is such an occurrence. In summer, Narwhals prefer deep basins and fjords (Chapman and Feldhamer 1982) which are not found along Ontario's maritime coastline.

.. Nancy Wilson



Minke Whale

Balaenoptera acutorostrata

The single record for Minke Whale in Ontario is of a specimen found dead on the northwest shore of James Bay (Abraham and Lim 1990). The record is beyond normal Minke Whale range, which includes the Hudson Strait and Ungava Bay (Chapman and Feldhamer 1982). It is not known whether the Ontario record of this arctic and temperate sea whale represents a live animal that died in James Bay or whether water currents delivered the dead specimen from a great distance. The remains of this whale were placed in the mammalogy collection at the Royal Ontario Museum.

.. Nancy Wilson

