

# OCEAN MIND



## Imagine you are a whale...

Picture yourself slipping into the water, naked. Hold your breath. Sink down. Imagine your body expanding, lengthening. Feel each vertebrae click as your spine draws up and back, a little shiver as you shimmy out of your pelvic girdle, legs and hips set adrift. In their place you sprout a broad triangular fluke, which you force down in a long, muscular undulation that drives you deep under the water, the light from the surface fading. But new lights gutter in your head; **soon the hunt will start, and the lights will turn to sound, and the sound will light the dark.**



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“The way to enter the mind of a whale is to enter the water.”

- Joanna McIntyre, author *The Mind in the Waters*

Whales and humans share a common ancestor. We stayed on land; they returned to the sea, where life began. How has ocean shaped the bodies, societies, sensory worlds and minds of whales? Three million years ago they were the most intelligent and culturally sophisticated animals on the planet.

Until very recently, the scientific study of animal consciousness was taboo. Animals were seen as automatons – programmed by their genes to respond in predictable ways to the world. But this is changing. Not only has the study of animal consciousness become a legitimate scientific discipline, but also for the first time a handful of passionate researchers have begun to look *inside* – to ask what it might be like to be a bat, a chimp ... a whale.

Science is now revealing that in some fascinating areas, the whale brain may be more complex than the human one: the emotional centers are larger and more elaborated, as are their visual and auditory cortices. Sound is the whale's primary sense, so powerful that some species may communicate across an entire ocean, share three-dimensional sound maps of the ocean basin, and use ultra sound like pulses to see the interior state of other animals, deciphering whether fellow sea creatures are pregnant, sick, or hungry. By elaborating out from the whale's complex behaviors and social organization, and modeling their sensory dynamics, investigators are beginning to map out the distant contours of a very different interior world.

Science can tell some of this story. But to really enter into the ocean mind we need to use imagination as well, we need to stretch our land minds out to meet the sea. ***Ocean Mind*** is the first documentary to explore the texture of this other consciousness. State of the art CGI and stunning underwater cinematography will dramatize the whale experience and gently push the audience towards a non-human perspective, taking them on a voyage deep inside the whale mind.



***Ocean Mind*** is the brainchild of brilliant young science writer and consciousness adventurer Jeff Warren, who has spent the last three years writing a book and producing two CBC radio documentaries about whale consciousness. This poetic and thought-provoking film will follow Jeff around North America and the Caribbean with the most passionate and eccentric whale researchers working today as they capture footage of whale behavior that will forever change the perception of these mysterious and magnificent animals.

This film is about the limits of human knowledge. It's about imagination, empathy and science. Above all it's a fantastic journey into the alien mind of the great whales.