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Rare whale found beached, injured at Port Canaveral's Jetty Park

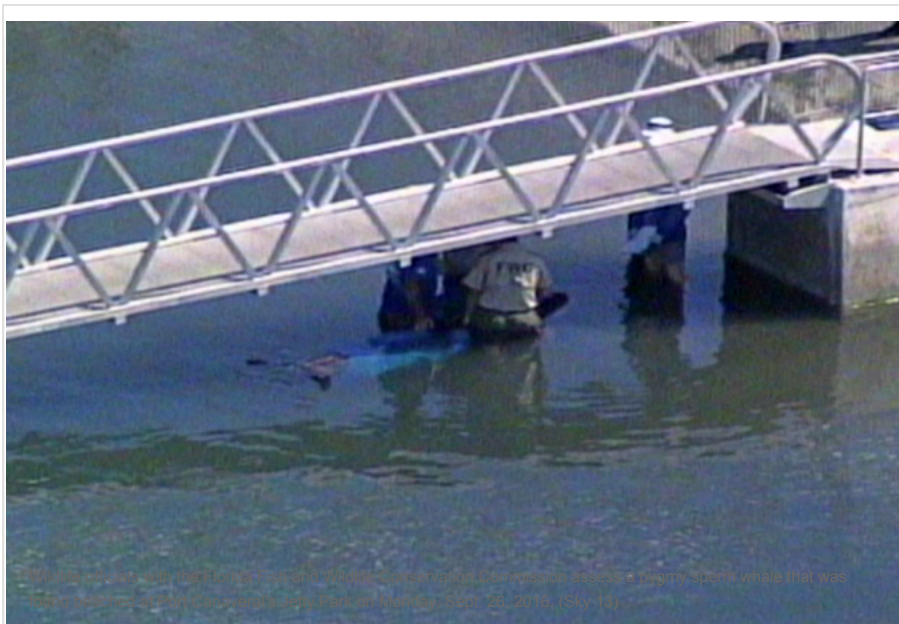


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES. A pygmy sperm whale that was found beached and injured at Jetty Park in Port Canaveral on Monday, Sept. 26, 2016. (Sky 13)



By [Caitlin Wilson](#), Reporter

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A rare whale was found beached and injured near Jetty Park in Port Canaveral on Monday morning.

- **Rare pygmy sperm whale found beached at Port Canaveral**
- **Species of whale rarely seen in shallow waters**
- **Biologists decided to euthanize it due to its injuries, age**

The pygmy sperm whale was about 10 years old, which is toward the end of the animals' lifespan, according to biologists from the Hubbs SeaWorld Research Institute.

The whale was reported to wildlife officials after boaters found it had gotten itself stuck in rocks off the shore, leaving deep gashes all over its body.

Because of the severity of its injuries, the whale's old age, and that biologists say this species of whale does not do well in captivity, they decided it would be most humane to euthanize it.

Bruce Beitman was one of dozens of onlookers who watched the events unfold over several hours.

"I feel it's best that they do it in a humane manner, rather than him get eaten by sharks or something. We've seen animals washed up on shore, but we've never seen a pygmy sperm whale, ever," Beitman said.

The whale was first sedated, then euthanized with an injection, according to research institute biologists.

The pygmy sperm whale's body will be taken back to a research lab for further study to determine why it was so close to shore. Biologists said it was unusual, because this species typically stays far off the coast.