

Razorback carries scars of human contact



Encounter with a ship's propeller: Razorback the humpback whale was spotted in Broken Bay between Barrenjoey and Lion Island yesterday

Picture: Jonas Liebschner



Scarred: Razorback's distinctive injuries

Malcolm Holland
Environment Reporter

A WHALE with a sorry tale has appeared off Sydney and understandably it's boat shy.

The humpback with bad scars on its back and tail fluke from being hit by a boat was spotted about 3pm on Monday close to North Head.

It was among a large pod of cetaceans happy to breach for a large group of commercial whale watching vessels and boats. But the whale dubbed Razorback by photographer Jonas Liebschner didn't enjoy the attention.

"There were a lot of boats around the big

group but this one was pretty boat shy and moved further east, away from the other whales and the boats," Will Ford from Whale Watching Sydney said yesterday.

"Understandable when you see the deep scars from a ship's propeller on its back and tail."

Mr Ford said his company's boats saw only two or three whales each year with obvious injuries from "boat strike".

"We think we've seen this one before but we aren't sure. The injuries have healed so it probably was hit at least a year ago," he said.

A major American study of boat strikes on large whales found humpbacks were the second

most likely — behind finbacks — to be hit by boats. The US National Marine Fisheries Service investigation found that, of all types of whales hit by boats, 32 per cent were injured and 34 per cent died.

Warships were responsible for most strikes at 17 per cent, while container vessels, tankers or freighters made up 14.9 per cent of strikes.

A tanker was blamed for inflicting the distinctive rows of scars on Bladerunner, a humpback which attracted attention when it took refuge in Sydney Harbour for two days in June 2001. Bladerunner has not been seen for seven years.

From socialite to supergrass

Model's evidence against lover

Byron Kaye

GAUNT, tearful and trembling, Swedish-born socialite Charlotte Lindstrom wept yesterday as she testified against her boyfriend in his murder conspiracy trial.

The model struggled to speak as she told a Supreme Court jury her former fiance Steven Spaliviero got her to help plan the killing of two Crown witnesses in his drugs trial.

After admitting to testifying for a 60 per cent discount to her own sentence, the stick-thin former cocktail waitress said she smuggled notes from Spaliviero in jail to Melbourne builder Denis Basic in relation to the witnesses.

She said she gave the notes to Basic, now on trial with Spaliviero, along with a total \$100,000 from February to May 2007.

She then reported back to Spaliviero, the man she met within days of moving to Australia in 2003, at Silverwater jail. At first he told her the money, which she took from "behind my fridge", was to "rough up" the witnesses.



Testimony: Charlotte Lindstrom

She questioned Spaliviero, telling the court: "I was asking why [Basic] needed so much money."

Crown prosecutor Craig Everson asked: "What was the answer?"

Lindstrom: "That he was going to kill the person."

Everson: "What did you say?"

Lindstrom: "That it wasn't a particularly good idea."

She then told how Spaliviero first planned to have one witness killed and the other believe it was a "robbery gone wrong". But he then decided to have the other

killed too because "it wasn't good to keep one alive".

Spaliviero, who appeared in the dock alongside Basic and another Melbourne man allegedly involved in the plot, Michael Selim, did not make eye contact with Lindstrom throughout her evidence.

Lindstrom, who is reportedly severely anorexic, appeared in a black cardigan and dress, her light blonde hair darkened by the years in prison and her shoulder and cheek bones jutting sharply.

Intercepted phone calls between her and Spaliviero, recorded before she was arrested and played for the court yesterday, revealed her giggling and cheerful. Her voice yesterday was expressionless.

While Lindstrom ultimately pleaded guilty in her trial, Spaliviero, Basic and Selim have pleaded not guilty, claiming they were only trying to compile evidence against the witnesses.

Lindstrom is expected to continue giving evidence today.

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