

A NORTHEAST PACIFIC OFFSHORE KILLER WHALE
(*C. c.*) FEEDING ON A PACIFIC HALIBUT
(*G. E. E.*)

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Three ecotypes of killer whale (*O. orca*) have been described in the waters of the northeast Pacific Ocean; these are referred to as “resident,” “transient,” and “offshore” whales (Bigg *et al.* 1990, Ford *et al.* 1992, Ford and Ellis 1999, Ford *et al.* 2000, Baird 2001, Hoelzel 2002). These ecotypes differ in diet, morphology, genetics, social organization, behavior, vocal habits, and geographic range (Baird and Stacey 1988, Stevens *et al.* 1989, Barrett-Lennard *et al.* 1996, Ford *et al.* 1998, Hoelzel *et al.* 1998, Ford *et al.* 2000, Baird 2001, Hoelzel 2002). The least well known of these are the offshore whales with little information available on their behavioral or ecological characteristics (Baird 2001).

While it has been shown that transient whales likely feed exclusively on marine mammals and resident whales likely feed exclusively on fish, very little is known about the diet of offshore whales (Ford *et al.* 1998, Baird 2001, Barrett-Lennard and Ellis 2001, Heise *et al.* 2001).

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- BIGG, M. A., P. F. OLESIUKE, G. M. ELLIS, J. K. B. FORD AND K. C. BALCOMB. 1990. Social organization and genealogy of resident killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) in the coastal wa-