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SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

VIDEO: Seal hitches a ride on the back of a humpback whale

by Christopher Pilny

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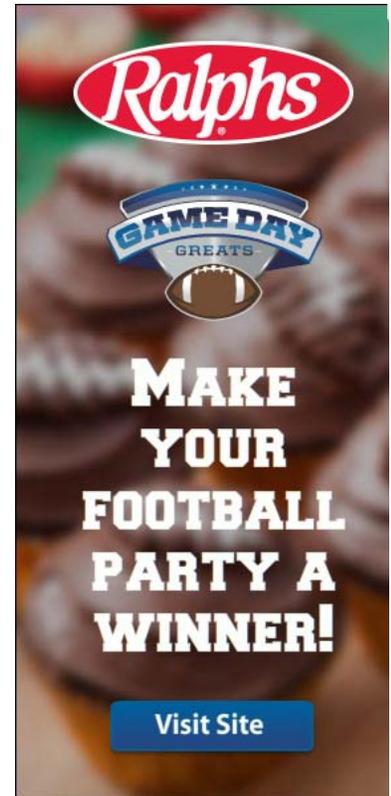
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Well, yesterday we watched a [whale breach onto kayakers in California](http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1113408882/video-humpback-whale-breaches-on-kayakers-091615/) (http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1113408882/video-humpback-whale-breaches-on-kayakers-091615/), and that was pretty wild. In March, we had photographic evidence of a [weasel riding a woodpecker](http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1113346194/weasel-takes-ride-on-woodpecker-030415/) (http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1113346194/weasel-takes-ride-on-woodpecker-030415/). Then, in June, a family in Florida witnessed a raccoon riding an alligator.

But now...now we've got a fur seal in Australia [hitching a ride on the back of a humpback whale](https://au.tv.yahoo.com/sunrise/a/29551848/seal-hitches-ride-on-the-back-of-a-whale/) (https://au.tv.yahoo.com/sunrise/a/29551848/seal-hitches-ride-on-the-back-of-a-whale/). Please, if there are any more animals that want to hop on other animals for a cruise, get it out of your systems now. There's not much more of this we can handle.

The rare image was captured by photographer Robyn Malcolm while she was observing a pod of whales feed on baitfish off the coast of Sydney, [according to the BBC](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-34276032) (http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-34276032). She claims that it was absolutely real and not doctored because she doesn't "know how to use Photoshop." The photos, she continued, are also still on her camera, offering further evidence that they haven't been tampered with.

What does a whale expert think of this?



According to Dr. Maddalena Bearzi, cetologist and president of the [Ocean Conservation Society](http://www.oceanconservation.org/education/be-whale-aware/index.html) (http://www.oceanconservation.org/education/be-whale-aware/index.html), this is certainly a rare occurrence, but not something she's surprised to hear about, mentioning that she recently saw a [picture of a dolphin riding on the back of a whale](http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/stories/why-do-dolphins-hitch-rides-whales) (http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/animals/stories/why-do-dolphins-hitch-rides-whales) off the coast of California. (Editor's note: This photo was from 2012.)

"I think a lot of things like this have happened before, we just didn't have the technology to catch it unfolding live. Now, between video cameras on cell phones, personal drones, data collection, and just the increased amount of people studying these animals, a lot more things come out."

 Feature Image: Thinkstock

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