

## Δεμον Φρομ Ηελλ!

“Demon from Hell!” That’s what “Orca” means in Greek. Fortunately for the Killer Whales, our perception of these creatures has radically changed from ancient times. Today, they’re seen as one of the most noble and intelligent animals of the seas. *[although...in the Matt Reilly novel, Ice Station, I’m currently reading, they’re vicious killers!]* But, if you collect animals, I propose a special section of your collection devoted to these magnificent mammals.

Their scientific name is *Orcinus Orca*, and they’re actually the largest members of the dolphin family. They are warm-blooded, air-breathing, and bear their young live (tail first). They’re found in all oceans of the world, but, surprisingly, there is only one species. Interestingly, though, geographic isolation may have created unique races and populations. Near the Washington, British Columbian and Alaskan coasts, at least two distinct races exist. Even though these two groups (the “Transients” and the “Residents”) share the same waters, they differ in their social habits, range, diet, and even their physical appearance.

Orcas travel in groups, called “pods,” of 50 or more individuals. Despite their name, there has never been a verified case of Orcas killing people, although Man is the Orca’s only predator. They definitely rule their territory, though. In 1997, in fact, for the first time, a female Orca was actually filmed killing a great white shark off the coast of San Francisco. Most of us, however, know the Orca as the ever-popular attraction at the local Sea World, Marine World, etc., where they awe us daily with their performances and intelligence. Orcas are protected under the Endangered Species Act, but only in specific waters.

The cover shown here is the few I’ve seen featuring an Orca, but Chester and Cheryl Crill, CA, report they have 14 (9 20s, 4 30s, and 1 box), most from restaurants).

