

Police respond to surfers near rare whales

by UPI

COCOA BEACH, Fla. -- Police in Cocoa Beach, Fla., had to be called in to shoo away surfers who paddled too close to two endangered North Atlantic right whales this week. The mother whale and her calf, which are among the world's most endangered species of sea mammals with only 300 or 400 still alive, are protected by the Endangered Species Act, WKMG-TV in Orlando, Fla., reported Wednesday. The act states that anyone who comes within 500 yards of the whales could face civil fines of \$27,000 and criminal penalties of more than \$50,000 or a year behind bars. If one of the sea mammals comes toward a person, the individual is advised by wildlife experts to back away slowly. p>

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