

MARINE MAMMALS IN JAMAICAN WATERS

While very few sightings have been accurately recorded, it is estimated that approximately 28 species of marine mammals live in Jamaican waters. Only a few of these species, like the gentle West Indian Manatee and the Pygmy Sperm Whale, have actually been seen in our waters.

Our marine mammals can be placed into two categories: the cetaceans (whales and dolphins) and the sirenians (manatee). The cetaceans can then be further classified as either mysticetes (baleen whales) or odontocetes (toothed whales).

	Common Name	Scientific Name
Mysticetes	Bryde's Whale	<i>Balaenoptera brydei</i>
	Fin Whale	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>
	Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>
	Minke Whale	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>
	Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>
Odontocetes	Atlantic Spotted Dolphin	<i>Stenella frontalis</i>
	Blainville's Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon densirostris</i>
	Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
	Clymene Dolphin	<i>Stenella clymene</i>
	Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus delphis / capensis</i>
	Cuvier's Beaked Whale	<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>
	Dwarf Sperm Whale	<i>Kogia simus</i>
	False Killer Whale	<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>
	Fraser's Dolphin	<i>Lagenodelphis hosei</i>
	Gervais' Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon europaeus</i>
	Killer Whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>
	Melon-headed whale	<i>Peponocephala electra</i>
	Pantropical Spotted Dolphin	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>
	Pygmy Killer Whale	<i>Feresa attenuata</i>
	Pygmy Sperm Whale	<i>Kogia breviceps</i>
	Risso's Dolphin	<i>Grampus griseus</i>
	Rough-toothed Dolphin	<i>Steno bredanensis</i>
	Short-finned Pilot Whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>
	Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>
	Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>
Striped Dolphin	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	
True's Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon mirus</i>	
Sirenian	West Indian Manatee	<i>Trichechus manatus</i>

Marine mammal species are threatened by a wide variety of human activities. These include whaling or hunting, capture for use in dolphin parks and entanglement in fishing gear. Due to these activities, marine mammal populations have decreased, some to the point of extinction. Only through education about these species can informed decisions be made regarding their survival.

To know more about a particular species please click on the links above. A definitions page is also provided.



Bryde's Whale
Balaenoptera brydei

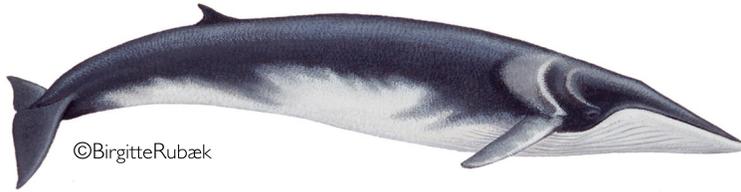
- Range:** Found worldwide in tropical to temperate waters
- Characteristics:** Bryde's Whales have dark, slender bodies that are usually dark grey above and grey or with below. They have slightly arched rostrums (upper jaw) with three prominent ridges. The flippers are slender and pointed and they have long ventral throat grooves.
- Diet:** Small schooling fish, squid and occasionally krill. They are gulp feeders that lunge rapidly into schools of prey.
- Reproduction:** Sexual maturity occurs between 9-13 years. They breed seasonally in late winter or autumn. A single calf is born every two years after a gestation period of 10-12 months.
- Status:** Status unknown
- Threats:** Whaling. In recent years Japanese whalers have taken Bryde's whales in the North Pacific.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp. 64-67.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 222-225.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 20-21.





Fin Whale
Balaenoptera physalus

- Range:** Found in all major oceans, usually in temperate to polar latitudes and less commonly in the tropics.
- Characteristics:** The Fin Whale is the second largest whale in the world. It has a large sleek body which is dark grey with a pale chevron (v-shaped light coloured marking) behind the head. The lower right jaw is white while the lower left jaw is dark.
- Diet:** Krill and small schooling fish such as herring, capelin and sandlance. They feed by lunging, with their mouths wide open, into schools of prey.
- Reproduction:** Reach sexual maturity between 6-12 years. A single calf is born every 2-3 years after a gestation period of 11-12 months.
- Status:** Uncertain. They are endangered but may be increasing in numbers.
- Threats:** Hunted in larger numbers than any other whale species in the 20th century. 725,000 were killed in the Southern Hemisphere alone.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.72-75.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 230-233.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 16-17.





Humpback Whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*

- Range:** Found worldwide in all major oceans. They occur primarily in coastal and continental shelf waters. Winter in low latitude areas with warm water such as the Caribbean and then move to high latitude cold water areas in the summer to feed.
- Characteristics:** This baleen whale has a large robust body, which is black above and black, white or mottled below. The flippers are one-third the length of the body and are usually white on the underside of the flipper. Their flukes are very noticeable and have distinctive patterns on the underside used to identify individual humpbacks.
- Diet:** Small schooling fish and krill. Lunge through and gulp concentrated prey, sometimes after generating a bubble net around the prey.
- Reproduction:** Breeding occurs in the winter in low latitude areas such as the West Indies. The males sing songs as well as compete aggressively to attract females. Calving occurs every two to three years and most births occur in the tropics. The gestation period is one year and calves stay with the mother for at least a year.
- Status:** Endangered
- Threats:** Humpbacks were hunted extensively in the 20th century and were reduced to 10% of their original population. Today they appear to be recovering but are still threatened by entanglement in fishing gear.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.76-79.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 208-211.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 24-25.



Minke Whale
Balaenoptera acutorostrata

- Range:** Minke whales have the widest distribution of all the baleen whales. They are found in both tropical and polar waters from the North Atlantic to the North Pacific though they generally inhabit warmer waters during winter and then travel to cooler regions during the summer.
- Characteristics:** The body is black or dark grey above, usually with a grey chevron crossing the back behind the head and they are white underneath. They also have a white band across the flippers.
- Diet:** They feed on a variety of schooling fish such as herring, capelin and mackerel as well as squid and zooplankton.
- Reproduction:** They reach sexual maturity between 6-8 years and calving is thought to occur in the winter after a 10-month gestation period. Calving may occur in tropical waters such as the Caribbean and Brazil.
- Status:** They are listed as common though hunting continues.
- Threats:** In the last 100 years at least 100,000 Minkes have been killed in the Southern Hemisphere while thousands more have been killed in the North Atlantic and Pacific. Hunting continues by Norway and Japan though the international trade in the species is currently banned.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.152-155.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 436-439.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 44-45.



Sei Whale
Balaenoptera borealis

- Range:** The Sei Whale is found in tropical and subtropical waters. They can be found in both shelf and oceanic waters.
- Characteristics:** This whale has a long, sleek body that is dark grey dorsally and white or cream-coloured on the underside. The baleen plates are dark grey or black, with a fine white inner fringe. It has a single ridge along the top of its head that extends from the blowhole to the snout.
- Diet:** They feed on both small fish, squid, krill and smaller zooplankton. It is the only baleen whale that feeds by both gulping (taking one mouthful of water and prey at a time) and skimming (swimming with their mouth open and filtering food). Gulping is used when feeding on fish or krill but skims while feeding on copepods which are small shrimp-like crustaceans.
- Reproduction:** They have a single calf every two to three years after a gestation period of 10-12 months. The calves are born in the winter, in tropical waters.
- Status:** Endangered. They are believed to be reasonably abundant in the North Atlantic and the North Pacific while populations in the Southern Ocean are greatly depleted.
- Threats:** During the 20th Century 200,000 Sei Whales were killed due to whaling, in Antarctica alone. This severely reduced the number of individuals within the population.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.60-61.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 226-229.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 18-19.





Atlantic Spotted Dolphin
Stenella frontalis

Range: The Atlantic Spotted Dolphin can be found in the tropical and warm temperate zones of the Atlantic Ocean.

Characteristics: They are easily recognizable by the dark spots on their bellies and light spots on their sides and back. Calves are born unspotted but as they grow older their spots begin to show.

Diet: Feed primarily of squid and a wide variety of fish.

Reproduction: These animals reach sexual maturity between 8-15 years of age. Females nurse their calves for at least three years and sometimes for as long as five years. The gestation period lasts for 12 months.

Status: It is estimated that there are at least 3,200 in the Gulf of Mexico.

Threats: Fishing. This species has been accidentally caught by long-lines, pelagic driftnets and purse seines nets used for tuna.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp. 186-189.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 370-373.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 74-75.





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Blainville's Beaked Whale
Mesoplodon densirostris

Range: Blainville's Beaked Whale can be found throughout the tropical and temperate waters of all oceans. They are regularly sighted in waters between 1,600 to 3,300 feet deep.

Characteristics: These whales have a deep, robust body with a small, triangular dorsal fin. The beak is moderate with a small, flat melon. The crown of a large tooth erupts from each side of the lower jaw in adult males once they reach maturity. The head can be brownish moving to light grey on the edges of the upper lip and on the lower jaw. The dorsal and lateral surfaces are dark bluish grey changing quickly to light grey ventrally.

Diet: Fish and squid

Reproduction: Little is known about reproduction

Status: Abundance and status is uncertain since it is difficult to distinguish between species of beaked whale.

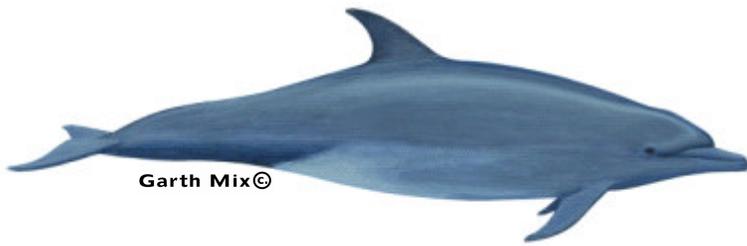
Threats: Few have been caught in occasional hunts but the most serious threat is acoustic trauma possibly caused by naval sonar. Several individuals stranded in March, 2000 in the Bahamas after naval military exercises had taken place.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp. 120-121.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 294-295.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 42-43.





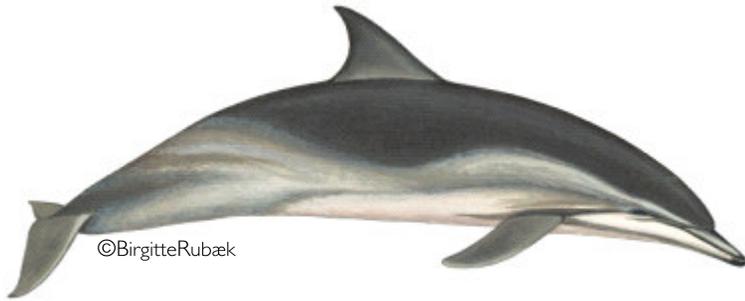
Bottlenose Dolphin
Tursiops truncatus

- Range:** Found in all oceans and peripheral seas at tropical and temperate latitudes.
- Characteristics:** Bottlenose dolphins have wide heads and bodies, short stubby beaks, long flippers and a tall triangular dorsal fin. There are two types of bottlenose dolphins, the offshore and inshore types. The offshore types are larger and darker in colour with smaller flippers. Both types are uniformly grey. The inshore dolphins are found along the coast of continents and most oceanic islands and atolls. They may also be found in bays and estuaries. Offshore types are found far offshore in the open sea.
- Diet:** Inshore animals feed on a variety of fish and invertebrates while the offshore types feed on squid and small fish.
- Reproduction:** Sexual maturity is reached between 5-10 years for females and 8-12 years for males. Gestation lasts for a year and lactation lasts for at least a year. Calves are fully weaned between 18-20 months and the average calving interval is 3 years.
- Status:** Generally common but some coastal stocks depleted. Estimated minimum of 19,070 in offshore stocks and 102,760 coastal stocks worldwide.
- Threats:** Populations may be threatened by habitat degradation, fishery conflicts, pollution and overkilling. Capture for the aquarium trade is also a threat.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp. 192-193.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 358-361.

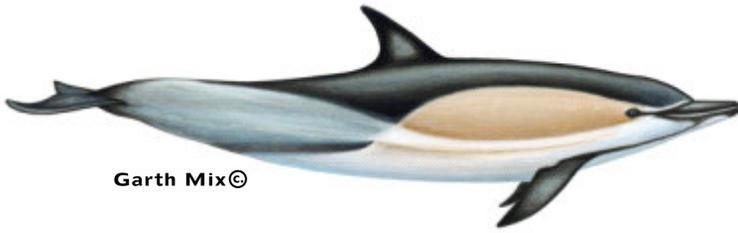
Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 54-55.



Clymene Dolphin
Stenella clymene

- Range:** Occurs in deep tropical and subtropical Atlantic waters, including the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean.
- Characteristics:** The Clymene dolphin is gregarious and can be found in groups of up to 50 individuals. They have dark grey dorsal capes, light grey sides and a white belly. There is an eye to flipper stripe and the lips and the tip of the beak are black.
- Diet:** Squid and deepwater fish
- Reproduction:** Unknown
- Status:** In the Gulf of Mexico it is estimated that there are approximately 5,500 individuals.
- Threats:** These dolphins are occasionally harpooned in St. Vincent and may be caught accidentally in gillnets and then eaten or used as bait. They may also be accidentally caught in tuna purse seine nets.
- Sources:** National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 378-379.
- Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 78-79.





Common Dolphin
Delphinus delphis / capensis

- Range:** There are two forms of this dolphin; the short-beaked (*D. delphis*) and the long-beaked (*D. capensis*). They are found worldwide in sub-tropical to temperate waters. The short-beaked dolphin can be found along the continental shelves and pelagic waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans while the long-beaked dolphin occurs in nearshore tropical and warm temperate waters.
- Characteristics:** Common dolphins can be identified by the hourglass pattern of white, grey, yellow and black that can be found on their sides. They have a black beak, eye ring and line from jaw to flipper. They are very gregarious and can be found in groups of between 10 to 1,000s and often associate with other dolphins.
- Diet:** Fish and squid
- Reproduction:** Reach sexual maturity between 3-5 years and breed in the spring and fall. They have a single calf every year after a gestation period of 10-11 months.
- Status:** Common
- Threats:** They may be accidentally killed in trawl and gill nets. They may also be affected by habitat degradation.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.164-167.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 388-394.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 68-69.





Cuvier's Beaked Whale
Ziphius cavirostris

Range: Found in deep offshore waters in tropical and cool temperate areas.

Characteristics: They have a cigar-shaped body with a small head. They have a sloping forehead and short beak with short tapered flippers. The body is generally dark grey to reddish brown with some countershading. Adult male shave a white head which can continue to the neck. In females the head colouration is less pronounced.

Diet: Feed mainly on squid but also eat fish and may eat some crustaceans.

Reproduction: Sexual maturity reached between 7-11 years. They breed and calve in spring with a single calf born every 2-3 years after a 12 month gestation period.

Status: Difficult to detect and identify so there are few abundance estimates. Their status is therefore unknown.

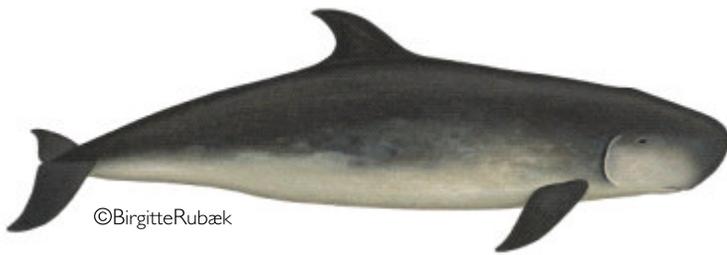
Threats: They have been hunted in Japan, the Lesser Antilles, Indonesia and possibly Taiwan. They can also become entangled in drift gillnets and appear to be very susceptible to particular types of sound. Mass strandings in the Mediterranean Sea and the Bahamas have been linked to military exercises involving sound transmissions.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.142-143.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 254-257.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 34-35.





Dwarf Sperm Whale
Kogia simus

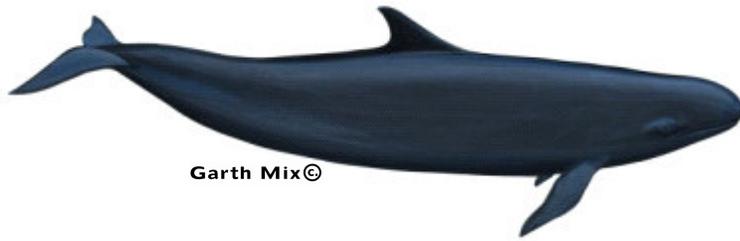
- Range:** Occur in tropical and temperate latitudes worldwide.
- Characteristics:** Small, robust body that tapers rapidly from the dorsal fin to the flukes. With age, the head shape changes becoming blunter and more squarish. The dorsal fin is triangular, small. They are bluish-steel grey in colour with a dull white or pinkish belly. They have a light, bracket shaped marking which looks like a false gill.
- Diet:** Squid, fish and crustaceans (shrimp and crabs)
- Reproduction:** They become sexually mature when they are between 2.1-2.2 m long. A single calf is born every year between fall and spring after a 9.5 month gestation period.
- Status:** Unknown since this species is difficult to distinguish from the Pygmy Sperm Whale.
- Threats:** Shore based whalers have been known to hunt them in Indonesia, the Lesser Antilles and Japan. They may also become entangled in fishing gear. A number of stranded whales have been found to have gut blockages caused by the ingestion of plastic bags.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.84-85.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 244-247.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 30-31.





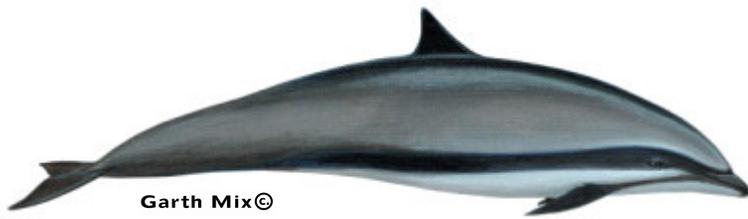
False Killer Whale
Pseudorca crassidens

- Range:** They occur in all tropical and warm temperate waters including the Mediterranean and Red Seas, the Gulf of Mexico and the Sea of Japan.
- Characteristics:** False Killer Whales have slender bodies with small, rounded or conical heads with a long straight mouthline. The melon overhangs the tip of the lower jaw, particularly in adult males. The body is almost entirely dark except for light areas on the throat, chest and along the ventral midline. A large anchor shaped blaze is found across the rear of the throat and chest varies between grey and almost white.
- Diet:** Squid and fish. They have also been known to attack other dolphins.
- Reproduction:** Sexual maturity occurs between 8-14 years and mating and calving may occur year-round. A single calf is born every 3-4 years after a 16 month gestation period.
- Status:** Rare. There are an estimated 16,500 individuals in the western Pacific, 40,000 in the eastern tropical Pacific, at least 500 off Hawaii and a few hundred in the northern Gulf of Mexico.
- Threats:** Hunted opportunistically in Indonesia and the West Indies. They are also killed incidentally in fisheries. In Japan some are killed by driving and harpooning with some of them being sold to oceanariums. Between 1965 and 1980 more than 900 False Killer Whales were killed on Iki Island in Japan because it was believed that they were interfering with the yellowtail fishery.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.158-159.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 433-435.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 50-51.



Fraser's Dolphin
Lagenodelphis hosei

- Range:** Found in water deeper than 1,000m in the tropics, worldwide.
- Characteristics:** These dolphins have a robust body with a short beak and small flippers and flukes. They have a dark, greyish-blue cape (dark region on the back of a toothed whale), the sides are lighter grey and the belly and throat are whitish. There is a broad dark stripe from the face to the anus. A dark flipper stripe begins at the lower jaw and merges with the side stripe.
- Diet:** Squid, deepwater fish and squid
- Reproduction:** Very little is known about their reproduction.
- Status:** Uncommon. It is estimated that there are at least 127 in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Threats:** There are killed in many kinds of fishing nets including purse seines, drift nets and anti-shark barrier nets. There are also harpooned by artisanal whalers in the Lesser Antilles, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.208-209.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 384-387.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 66-67.





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Gervais' Beaked Whale
Mesoplodon europaeus

- Range:** They appear to be found only in the tropical and warm temperate Atlantic Ocean.
- Characteristics:** This whale has a slender, elongated body. The head is small and tapered with a narrow beak and straight mouthline. The body is generally dark grey dorsally and medium grey ventrally. Females may also have light smudges extending up onto the sides of the head from the throat with the area around the eye remaining dark.
- Diet:** Squid and deepwater fish
- Reproduction:** Fairly unknown. Females are thought to reach sexual maturity when reaching 4.5 m in length.
- Status:** Unknown. It is thought that they are fairly rare.
- Threats:** It is occasionally caught in fishing gear.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.122-123.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 278-279.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 36-37.





Killer Whale
Orcinus orca

- Range:** Killer whales live in a wide range of habitats and can be found all over the globe. They are most abundant, however at higher latitudes. They are also not limited by water temperature or depth and can be found in and between coastal and oceanic waters.
- Characteristics:** These are the largest member of the dolphin family and are easily recognisable. They are jet black with white and grey markings and large dorsal fin. They generally travel together in pods which stay together for life. Groups of closely related pods also develop their own dialects.
- Diet:** One of the most diverse cetacean diets. Their diet includes fish, birds, squid, turtles and other marine mammals. Pods often cooperate while hunting to bring down large prey.
- Reproduction:** Killer whales reach sexual maturity between 10-15 years and mating may occur year-round. A single calf is born every 3-8 years and the gestation period is 17 months.
- Status:** They are not endangered and an estimated 277 may be found in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Threats:** Whaling and live capture for captive programmes have depleted some populations. Whaling continues in Japan, Indonesia, Greenland and the West Indies.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.152-155.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 436-439.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 44-45.



Melon-headed Whale
Peponocephala electra

- Range:** This whale is generally found worldwide in tropical and subtropical waters. They are relatively common in the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands and the north-western Gulf of Mexico among other places. One individual stranded in Jamaica in 2005.
- Characteristics:** As one of the whale species known as “blackfish” the Melon-headed whale has a fairly robust body that tapers noticeably at both ends. The body looks almost completely black and there is a cape that dips below the dorsal fin. There are also dark, mask-like areas on the sides of the face.
- Diet:** They feed on squid and small fish and occasionally crustaceans.
- Reproduction:** Very little is know about reproduction is this species. It is thought that gestation lasts for approximately 12 months and that they may breed between spring and summer
- Status:** Their status is unknown but it is estimated that there are approximately 4,000 individuals in the Gulf of Mexico and 45,000 in the eastern tropical Pacific.
- Threats:** Small numbers are taken by gillnets and harpooning in the tropics.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.156-157.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 426-429.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 62-63.





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Pantropical Spotted Dolphin
Stenella attenuata

- Range:** These dolphins are found in all tropical to warm temperate oceanic waters
- Characteristics:** They have a slender body with a long, narrow white-tipped beak. Their flippers are small, curved and pointed. These dolphins have dark backs with light grey sides and belly. There is a distinct cape, which is narrow at the face, dips deeply forward at the dorsal fin and then narrows again. Small spots develop with age and may cover adults.
- Diet:** Squid and a variety of schooling fish
- Reproduction:** Calves are born year-round after a gestational period of 11 months. Lactation lasts for at least one year but can occur for longer than two years although calves begin eating solid food between three to sixth months old. The average calving interval is between 2 ½ to nearly 4 years.
- Status:** These dolphins are common and may be the most common dolphin in the Gulf of Mexico with an estimated population of 31,320.
- Threats:** The tuna fishery during the 1960s and 1970s in the eastern tropical Pacific reduced the population to approximately 25% of its earlier abundance. They have also been killed in large numbers by drive fisheries in Japan and the Solomon Islands. They may also be killed for bait and human consumption in Sri Lanka, the Lesser Antilles, Indonesia and the Phillipines.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.184-185.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 3666-369.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 72-73.



Pygmy Killer Whale
Feresa attenuata

- Range:** They are found worldwide in tropical and subtropical waters.
- Characteristics:** This animal has a slender body, a long, rounded head with a slight melon and no beak. Its flippers are long with rounded tips. The body is mainly dark, except for the lips and belly, which are white. Lighter grey zones extend from the eyes to the flukes.
- Diet:** They feed on fish and squid but have also been known to attack other dolphins.
- Reproduction:** Most calves are thought to be born in the summer but very little is known about this species.
- Status:** Its status is unknown. The only area where there is an abundance estimate is in the eastern Pacific where it is thought that there are approximately 40,000 individuals.
- Threats:** Small numbers are taken in hunts and gillnet fisheries around the world. Fishermen in the Cape Verde Islands, Lesser Antilles, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and possibly elsewhere may harpoon them opportunistically.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.146-147.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 430-432.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 60-61.





Pygmy Sperm Whale
Kogia breviceps

- Range:** These whales are found in tropical and temperate waters worldwide.
- Characteristics:** The Pygmy Sperm Whale has a short, robust body with a squared or conical shark-like head with a tiny underslung lower jaw. They have a dark grey back with a lighter belly. They have a pale crescent-shaped “false gill” on each side between the eye and the flipper.
- Diet:** Squid, fish and crustaceans
- Reproduction:** The mating and calving season lasts for seven month, from autumn to spring. There is an eleven-month gestation period and lactation lasts approximately twelve months.
- Status:** Status is unknown.
- Threats:** They can become entangled in fishing gear and some have been found with gut blockages due to the ingestion of plastic bags.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.82-83.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 244-247.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 28-29.





Risso's Dolphin
Grampus griseus

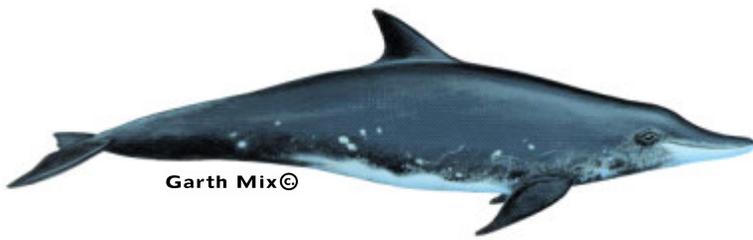
- Range:** Found worldwide in tropical and warm temperate waters of all oceans and large seas including the Mediterranean and Red Seas, but not the Black Sea.
- Characteristics:** Risso's Dolphins have a distinctive beakless head and a body that is more robust in the front than in the back. The melon is broad, squarish in profile and creased in front with a longitudinal furrow. The colouration varies in a single school from pale buff to dark brown and grey. Calves are born light grey but darken to brown as subadults, then pale with age. Extensive scarring is common making adults appear completely white. Most of these scars are thought to be made by the teeth of other Risso's Dolphins or by squid.
- Diet:** They feed primarily on squid but may also feed on cuttlefish and octopus.
- Reproduction:** Unknown.
- Status:** They appear to be abundant and widely distributed. There are an estimated 2,750 in the Gulf of Mexico and 175,000 in the eastern tropical Pacific, among other areas.
- Threats:** They have been caught as bycatch in different types of fishing gear including drift gillnets, longlines and trawls. They may also be killed in drive hunts in Japan and the Solomon Islands as well as harpooning in Indonesia, the Lesser Antilles and Japan.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.206-207.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 422-425.

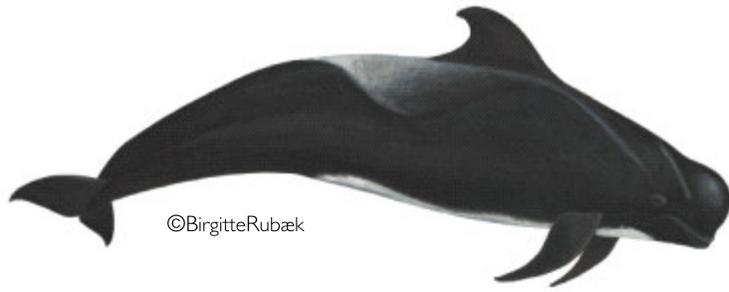
Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 52-53.





Rough-toothed Dolphin
Steno bredanensis

- Range:** These dolphins are found in the open ocean in tropical waters. They rarely occur close to land except around islands with steep drop offs near shore.
- Characteristics:** They are easily distinguished from other dolphins by the shape of their heads since they do not have a crease along their melons. The “forehead” slopes smoothly from the blowhole to the long narrow beak so that it looks slightly reptilian. They have a dark purplish – grey back which forms a narrow cape along the back to the tail, with lighter sides and a white belly. Their lips, tip of the snout and throat are all white and they have white-yellow blotches on their sides and belly.
- Diet:** They feed on deepwater octopus, squid, and fish.
- Reproduction:** Very little is known about the life history of this animal
- Status:** This species is widespread and common in some tropical areas. While there may be 150,000 individuals in the eastern tropical Pacific there are only an estimated 850 individuals in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Threats:** A small amount of these dolphins may be taken by hunters in Japan, the Solomon Islands, western Africa and the Lesser Antilles.
- Sources:** Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.190-191.
- National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 346-349.
- Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 64-65.



Short-finned Pilot Whale
Globicephala macrorhynchus

- Range:** The Short-finned Pilot Whale is found throughout the world's tropical and warm temperate waters.
- Characteristics:** These whales have long, robust bodies with deep tail stock. They have a bulbous head with a prominent melon and slight beak. They are brownish black or dark grey except for light markings on the throat and the belly. They may also have a faint saddle behind the dorsal fin.
- Diet:** They mainly feed on squid but also eat fish.
- Reproduction:** Gestation lasts for approximately 15 months and lactation lasts for at least 2 years. The time between calves is between five to eight years with older females giving birth less frequently than younger ones.
- Status:** The species is relatively abundant although some populations off Japan and in the eastern Caribbean may be depleted because of intensive exploitation.
- Threats:** While they are relatively abundant they are hunted in Japan and in the Eastern Caribbean, particularly in St. Vincent and St. Lucia. Approximately 2,300 were killed between 1985 to 1989 by driving and harpooning in Japan. Within the Eastern Caribbean hundreds were killed annually until the mid 1970s and it is unsure how many are still being caught.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.148-149.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 444-447.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 48-49.





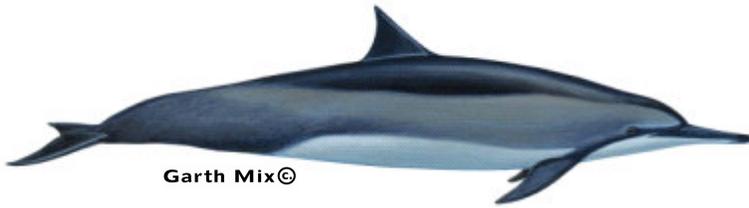
Sperm Whale
Physeter macrocephalus

- Range:** Sperm whales are found in ice free marine waters worldwide. Their densities appear to be higher in canyon waters, near the edges of banks and over continental slopes.
- Characteristics:** These whales have an extremely large head that dominates their body and the skin behind the head is often wrinkled. The lower jaw is narrow with an underslung mouth that is barely visible when viewed from the side. They are usually dark grey-brown in colour with some lighter blotches on the belly and scarring around the head.
- Diet:** They primarily eat squid but also feed on fish. They may eat 1 tonne of squid each day.
- Reproduction:** The breeding grounds are located in tropical and subtropical waters. The gestation period may last for as long as 18 months and females nurse their calves for at least 2 years. Because of this females give birth every 4 to six years.
- Status:** Sperm whales are listed as vulnerable. Their populations are taking a long time to recover from being hunted in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Threats:** Sperm whales were hunted in the 18th and 19th centuries for their body oil, which was used as a lubricant, and for spermaceti, which is a waxy semi-liquid oil that was used to make candles. By products also included ambergris, which may be found in the lower intestines and was used as a perfume fixative, as well as teeth for carvings. Today, their main threat is entanglement in fishing gear and ship collisions.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.86-87.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 240-243.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 26-27.



Spinner Dolphin
Stenella longirostris

Range: Spinner Dolphins are found throughout the tropics and subtropics in a number of discrete geographical populations. It is rarely found in latitudes higher than between 30° N and 30° S.

Characteristics: They have a tri-colour pattern with a slender grey cape that dips below the dorsal fin; light tan-grey sides and a white belly. There is a dark stripe from the eye to the flipper with black lips and beak tip.

Diet: Deepwater fish, squid and shrimp.

Reproduction: They can give birth at any time during the year but they exhibit seasonal peaks. The gestation period is approximately 10 ½ months and lactation lasts one to two years. The average calving interval is approximately 3 years.

Status: They are abundant and widespread.

Threats: They are caught in gillnets and may be used for bait or human consumption.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.60-61.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 226-229.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 18-19.





Striped Dolphin
Stenella coeruleoalba

- Range:** Striped Dolphins occur in tropical and warm temperate waters.
- Characteristics:** These dolphins have a slender body with a narrow pale tail stock. They have a moderately long dark beak and dark, slender pointed flippers. They have a dark grey to brown cape with bluish grey sides and a white to pink belly. Most of them have a bold light blaze from the shoulder towards the dorsal fin and a black stripe from the eye to the anus. There are one or more dark bands between the eye and the flipper.
- Diet:** Deepwater fish, squid and shrimp
- Reproduction:** Calves are thought to be born primarily in the late summer and fall after a one-year gestation period. The interval between calves is thought to be 4 years.
- Status:** Abundant globally. However, there is concern for the stocks in the Mediterranean as well as in Japan.
- Threats:** In the Mediterranean large numbers are killed incidentally in the drift net fishery for tuna and swordfish. Food shortages and high contaminant burdens have also made these dolphins susceptible to diseases. In Japan they are subjected to intensive drive fisheries and one or more coastal populations have decreased drastically and in some instances have been extirpated.

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.178-179.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 380-383.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 70-71.





True's Beaked Whale
Mesoplodon mirus

Range: The range of this whale is sparse and very disjointed. They can be found in the warm temperate waters of the North Atlantic. All other recordings appear to be from stranding reports. These animals have stranded in Nova Scotia, Ireland, Florida, the Bahamas and the Canary Islands.

Characteristics: They have robust spindle-shaped bodies which narrow towards the tail. They have small heads with a dolphin-like beak and a prominent melon. From the few seen alive they have grey to brown backs with paler sides and belly. There is a dark blaze along the back from the melon to the dorsal fin. There is a contrasting black dorsal fin, oval eye patch and lips. There is one visible pair of teeth found in adult males. Small, conical teeth are located at the tip of a straight lower jaw.

Diet: Squid and deepwater fish

Reproduction: Unknown

Status: Unknown. They have rarely been observed at sea and this may indicate that they are naturally rare or because they are difficult to observe.

Threats: Unknown

Sources: Carwardine, M. 2000. Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises. Dorling Kindersley. Pp.132-133.

National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 276-277.

Wynne, K & M. Schwartz. 1999. Marine Mammals and Turtles of the U.S. Atlantic & Gulf of Mexico. Pp. 38-39.



West Indian Manatee
Trichechus manatus

Range: They occur in Florida, the Greater Antilles, Trinidad and along the Atlantic Coast and up rivers of Central and South America, south to Alagoas, Brazil. They prefer calm waters with abundant vegetation and access to fresh water. Their common nearshore habitats include bays, lagoons and estuaries.

Characteristics: West Indian Manatees have broad backs, no dorsal fin and a small head. They are grey in colour although they may appear brown, reddish, whitish or black due to algae and barnacles on the skin. The skin is rough, thick and toughened with sparse, evenly distributed hairs.

Diet: They are completely herbivorous and only eat aquatic and semi-aquatic vegetation. In Jamaica, manatees have been reported to take fish from nets on rare occasions.

Reproduction: Females in heat attract a herd of males. These herds stay together for several weeks and can have as many as 22 males vying for 1 female.

Status: They are protected in Jamaica under the Wildlife Protection Act. It is reported that there are as few as 100 left in Jamaica.

Threats: Habitat degradation, coastal development, entanglement in fishing gear and collisions with motorboats all contribute to declining stocks.

Sources: National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press. Pp. 483-485.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions adapted from National Audubon Society. 2002. Guide to Marine Mammals of the World. Chanticleer Press.

Baleen: A horny, keratinous (nail-like) substance that occurs as a series of comb-like plates suspended from the upper jaws of baleen whales; fibrous fringes along the inner surfaces of the plates filter and trap prey inside the mouth.

Beak: The forward-projecting jaws of certain toothed cetaceans.

Cape: Dark region on the back of a toothed whale that begins in front of the dorsal fin and often dips onto the sides to varying degrees and in varying formations.

Calving: Giving birth

Cetacean: A species in the mammalian order Cetacea, which includes whales, dolphins and porpoises.

Counter-shading: A form of camouflage exhibited by many fish and cetaceans, with dark upper body surfaces and lighter undersides. When viewed from above the darker surface blends in with the water; from below the lighter surface matches the light coming from the sky.

Dorsal Fin: The fin along the midline of the back of a cetacean.

Dorsal: The upper surface of the back or other body parts.

Flipper: Variably shaped, often paddle-like limbs of a cetacean, seal, sea lion or manatee.

Fluke: The two horizontally flattened, fin-like structures that comprise a cetacean's tail.

Gestation: The process of carrying young in the uterus from conception to birth.

Gulp Feeding: Method of feeding by baleen whales that involves the rapid intake of large volumes of prey-laden sea water, with attendant throat distension and swallowing of prey once the water has been expelled through the baleen.

Gregarious: Tending to occur in fairly large groups.

Lactation: The production of milk by female mammals to nurse young.

Melon: The often bulging forehead of a toothed cetacean. The melon is rich with fats and it thought to play an important role in echolocation.

Rostrum: The upper jaw of a cetacean; also sometimes used to refer to a beak that encompasses both the upper and lower jaws.

Saddle: A more or less saddle-shaped marking that straddles the dorsal midline and extends onto the sides.

Skim feeding: Method of feeding by some baleen whales that involves slow, deliberate movement along or just below the water surface with the mouth open, continuously filtering the water as it streams through the baleen.

Spermaceti: A liquid wax found in the head of the Sperm Whale and a few other species, with chemical properties that made it extremely valuable as a high-temperature lubricant and a base for cosmetics eg. cold cream.

Ventral: On or belonging to the lower surface of an animal.