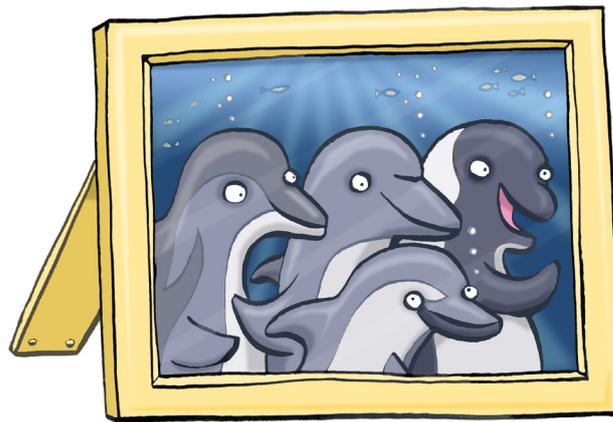


The Dolphin Diploma

activity pack

Created for the 2007/08 UN Year of the Dolphin, the Diploma is an UNESCO-awarded project in the field of environmental education

It's time to
become a
dolphin expert!



Dolphins in danger!

Dolphins are really special individuals, with lots of wonderful species living in the world's oceans and seas, even rivers and lakes. For hundreds of years, they have captured the imagination of people in many countries and have inspired poets, artists, musicians and others.

But, sadly, they face a number of threats that make their survival difficult. In 2006 the world lost its first dolphin species due to mankind, the Yangtze River dolphin, and world-wide others are close to extinction. They need clean and quiet oceans, protected areas and people who care.



So what is a Dolphin Diploma?

A Dolphin Diploma is an award for children. It shows that the participant has a good knowledge of dolphins, and certifies that he / she has been actively involved in the protection of dolphins. We think this is worth honouring.

How are Dolphin Diplomas awarded?

It's simple and it's fun! To receive a Dolphin Diploma, children need to correctly answer all the questions in our Dolphin Quiz and then carry out an activity that will help whale and dolphin conservation – we'll provide lots of ideas to help!

1. Part 1 of the diploma is the Dolphin Quiz, found on pages 2 and 3. Photocopy enough copies for the children (you might like them to work individually or in groups) along with the species fact sheets (pages 6-9) which will help them answer the questions.
2. Answers are provided for you on page 4. You may like to mark them all yourself or ask the children to swap their quizzes with one another and mark their classmate's.
3. Part 2 is the Dolphin Activity. You'll find a number of ideas on page 10 but let your imagination run! If you have any questions or need advice please don't hesitate to contact WDC - we're happy to help.
4. Once you've completed both parts, fill in and return the form on page 11 by post, or email the contact below providing the same details that are requested on the form. In return you'll receive an award certificate to mark your achievement!

More information...

.. and material to help you teach about dolphins can be found on whales.org/kidzone. And WDC can also provide you with free resources including PowerPoint presentation with notes, DVD, and activity posters.

Use the Internet to promote your activities

There are many websites, and social media sites, where you can publish details of your event / activity along with images, and you can email your friends and family with details. Please make sure you get an adult to help you if you're under 16.

Contact

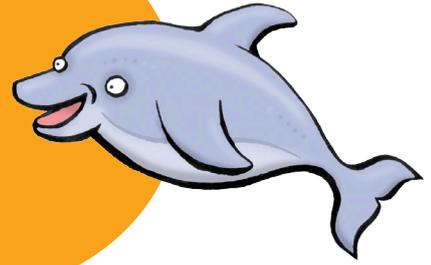
Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions or are in need of advice. We look forward to hearing about any related activities and are always happy to help where we can by providing information and materials for you to distribute.

Jess Feghali-Brown
Youth Engagement Coordinator
WDC UK
38 St Paul Street
Chippenham SN15 1LJ

education@whales.org



Please
read the
questions
carefully and tick
the answer(s)
you think are
right!

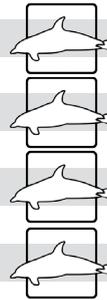


Dolphin Diploma Part 1: the Dolphin Quiz

Species diversity

Dolphins come in all sorts of shapes, colours and sizes!
Can you name one thing that makes the Irrawaddy dolphin look very different to common dolphins and bottlenose dolphins?

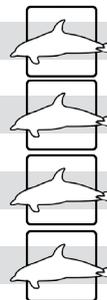
- a) The Irrawaddy dolphin is grey
- b) The Irrawaddy dolphin doesn't have a blowhole
- c) The Irrawaddy dolphin is double the length of the other two
- d) The Irrawaddy dolphin doesn't have a beak



Communication

Dolphins are very social and like to spend time together. When they are with each other it is important that they can communicate. Do you know how they do this? (Clue – more than one answer is correct!)

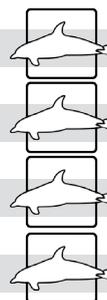
- a) With clicks and whistles
- b) Talking through their mouths
- c) Using body language
- d) By blowing bubbles



Threats

Humans are the cause of many threats that dolphins face. Can you name a threat that troubles a number of different dolphin species around the world?

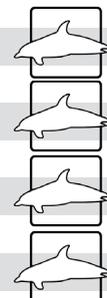
- a) Eating too much food
- b) Being caught on fishing hooks
- c) Losing their habitat
- d) Dying of thirst due to climate change



Bycatch

Hundreds of thousands of dolphins get trapped and die in fishing nets every year all over the world. This issue is known as bycatch. Why is getting caught in an underwater net such a problem for dolphins?

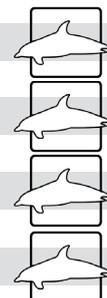
- a) They can't get out of the way of sharks
- b) They can't breathe air underwater and so will suffocate
- c) They might get lost or disorientated
- d) They might get cold because they can't move about



Protecting dolphins

So that we can help protect dolphins around the world, groups like WDC have to run special campaigns. What do you think has to be done to protect dolphins? (Clue – more than one answer is correct!)

- a) Use research to discover more about the dolphins
- b) Make sure as many people as possible know about the problems by organising awareness events
- c) Talk to politicians and other important decision-makers
- d) Build fences around their habitats to keep the threats out



Dolphin Diploma quiz – answers and notes

1. Species diversity (correct answer is 'd')

There are over 30 species of dolphins around the world, with great characteristic variation between them.

Irrawaddy dolphins are similar in size to common dolphins and some bottlenose dolphins but, unlike the other two, Irrawaddy dolphins have no obvious beak.

This is not unusual within the dolphin family. Although many species do have a prominent beak, there are a similar number that don't (including Risso's dolphins, dusky dolphins and Hector's dolphins).

2. Communication (correct answers are 'a' and 'c')

Dolphins live in a world dominated by sound, which travels better than light underwater. Although most dolphins have good vision, they can't always rely on sight because waters can be dark (unlike humans they can't turn lights on at night or at depth!) and visibility in seas and rivers can be poor. So, vocal communication is very important to them.

Although they don't have vocal cords, dolphins can produce a range of calls, which might include greeting and warning calls. The variety of noises they make include whistles, barks, squeaks, clicks, croaks and grunts.

They also use body language to signal to one another, including slapping the water, clapping their jaws, and twisting their bodies.

3. Threats (correct answer is 'c')

Dolphins face a number of man-made threats ranging from hunting to capture for display in marine parks to prey-depletion to pollution to bycatch (incidental capture in fishing nets).

Of the multiple choice options, the loss and degradation of their habitat is a significant problem faced by a wide range of dolphin species across the globe. Pollution (chemical, noise and litter), the building of docks, dams and marinas, and other industry development can change habitats to such an extent that dolphins may no longer be able to survive there.

Although climate change is likely to negatively affect dolphins, they don't need to drink like we do. Their main prey (fish and squid), contains large amounts of water and so dolphins gain water from their food. In addition, dolphins don't actually need to take in very much fluid because, unlike us, they don't lose water by sweating.

4. Bycatch (correct answer is 'b')

Although dolphins look very similar to large fish (especially sharks), they are, in fact, mammals. So, like all mammals, they have lungs with which to breathe air and cannot breathe underwater.

At the surface of the water, a dolphin will open the blowhole on top of its head to breathe through. But, if trapped underwater by a net, the blowhole will remain shut and the dolphin will suffocate.

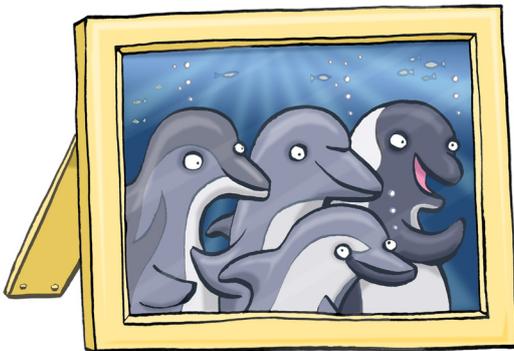
5. Protecting dolphins (correct answers are 'a', 'b' and 'c')

Campaigning is an important part of conservation, and a successful campaign is often made up of a number of elements.

Research is vital to discover which dolphin species and populations may be under threat and what those threats are. Armed with this knowledge, we are in a better position to tackle issues and lobby for better conservation laws and regulations.

Influencing governments to better protect dolphins obviously requires dialogue with relevant decision makers, so a campaign will usually involve the lobbying of politicians and authorities.

And public support for an issue no doubt helps to influence authority. So awareness raising activities such as the organisation of special events and other publicity are also vital.



Did you know:

The marine dolphin family - Delphinidae - is the largest whale or dolphin family of them all with 35 members in total. It includes bottlenose dolphins, Irrawaddy dolphins, common dolphins and spotted dolphins but, perhaps more surprisingly, orcas and pilot whales too.

Yes, they are dolphins!

Dolphin Diploma quiz: fact-sheet 1

The Irrawaddy dolphin –
A dolphin clown at home in oceans and rivers

What does the Irrawaddy dolphin look like?

Irrawaddy dolphins have round heads with no beaks and flexible necks. They are grey in colour but this can vary from one dolphin to another - some are dark to medium grey, others light bluish grey. They have a small triangular shaped dorsal fin (the fin on their backs) which has a rounded or blunt tip, large paddle-like flippers and a U-shaped blowhole. They can have up to 40 teeth on their upper jaw, and 36 teeth on the lower jaw.



Photo: Dipani Sutaria

Adults grow to between 2.1 and 2.6 metre

Spitting clowns!

Irrawaddy dolphins have been seen to spit water from their mouths whilst spy-hopping (popping their heads out of the water), maybe to scare fish!

They feel comfortable in rivers or coastal waters ...

Irrawaddy dolphins are found in the warm coastal waters and rivers in the Indo-Pacific area. Although they are classed as marine dolphins, some may spend all their lives in freshwater river systems.

Dying in nets ...

The greatest threat to Irrawaddy dolphins is being accidentally caught in gill-nets (a type of fishing net). This issue is known as bycatch. Other threats include habitat loss and human disturbance, including being hit by boats and other vessels.

Fascinating Facts

In Vietnam, the Irrawaddy dolphin is believed to be a sacred animal. Dolphins caught in nets are released and if villagers come across a dead Irrawaddy dolphin they will cremate the body and give it a religious ceremony as a mark of respect.

Irrawaddy dolphins usually steer clear of humans. However, in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) they famously cooperate with fishermen, where the dolphins herd fish into the nets and in return get to eat all the fish that escape!

Dolphin Diploma quiz: fact-sheet 2

The bottlenose dolphin – the best-known dolphin of all?

What does a bottlenose dolphin look like?

The easiest way of recognising a bottlenose dolphin is to look out for an obvious dark and curved-back dorsal fin on a lively grey dolphin! The shape of their dorsal fin, along with nicks, scratches and other markings on their skin, are what researchers use to identify individual bottlenose dolphins.

Bottlenose dolphins from different parts of the world are very different in sizes. There can be as much as a two metre difference between some adults, ranging from 1.9 to 3.9 metres in length. Some of the world's largest bottlenose dolphins, for example, live around the United Kingdom. They can be a good metre longer than those living off Florida in the USA, and will probably be fatter with shorter beaks.

There are two different species of bottlenose dolphin – the common bottlenose dolphin and the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin.



Photo: Charlie Phillips/WDC

Bottlenose dolphins hang out with friends ...

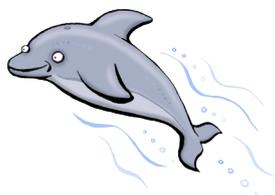
Although they can be found on their own, they tend to live in family groups called 'schools'. They are very active swimmers and are often seen bowriding (riding on the pressure waves at the front of boats), surfing, lobtailing (slapping their tails) and breaching (jumping out of the water, often falling back sideways with a big splash). They are able to leap several metres out of the water. They are sometimes seen playing 'games' with things such as seaweed, coral or other animals, and some Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins carry sponges on the ends of their beaks to protect them when looking for food on the sea bed!

Where do they live?

Bottlenose dolphins are found in many places around the world although not in polar regions. In fact, they can be found off all the continents, and in-between, except around Antarctica. Common bottlenose dolphins are found in most warm to tropical oceans whilst Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins are found in the waters around India, Australia and South-China.

Bottlenose dolphins under threat

Perhaps the cruelest of the threats are the "drive hunts" that take place mainly in Japan. Schools of dolphins are driven into shallow bays by people in boats and are either killed for their meat or sold to the captivity industry. Habitat loss, human disturbance, chemical pollution and entanglement in fishing nets also threaten bottlenose dolphins.



Dolphin Diploma quiz: fact-sheet 3

The common dolphin – no longer common

Common dolphins are amazing acrobats ...

Common dolphins are often found in large active groups. They are very energetic and acrobatic, and can seem to spend as much time above the water as they do under it.

They can be seen and heard from long distances, as they jump and splash around. Their loud, high-pitched squeaks can often be heard above the surface of the water.

They usually dive for short periods of 10 seconds to 2 minutes, although dives of 8 minutes have been recorded.



Photo: Ingrid N Visser/www.orcaresearch.org

What does a common dolphin look like?

Common dolphins can be easily recognised by the hourglass/criss-cross pattern of yellow, white, grey and black on their sides. They have a dark V-shaped cape under the dorsal fin, dark fins and fluke and yellow/white patches on their sides and belly.

There are both long-beaked and short-beaked common dolphins. Adult common dolphins grow to between 1.7 and 2.4 meters in length.

Common dolphins are spread out across the world

Common Dolphins are found in many places with lots of different populations in all oceans. They are known as an off-shore species so aren't usually found near the coast, and are rarely seen in waters shallower than 180m. In some areas common dolphin populations can be seen all year around, in other areas they are only seen at certain times of the year.

Common dolphins are no longer common ...

Common dolphins in the Mediterranean Sea used to be just that...common. But now, conservationists believe that the Mediterranean common dolphin is one of the most endangered dolphins in Europe and could face extinction if urgent action isn't taken.

Their main threat is being accidentally caught in fishing nets (which is known as bycatch). Other threats include habitat loss, human disturbance and there not being enough food for them.

Dolphin Diploma quiz: fact-sheet 4

The orca – the largest dolphin on Earth!

What does an orca look like?

Orcas (or killer whales) are large, stocky, and heavy, with paddle-shaped flippers. Their jet black, white and grey markings, and the males' very tall dorsal fin (up to 1.8m or 6ft high), make them hard to muddle up with other species.

Researchers use the dorsal fins to identify individual orcas. Different shapes, sizes, nicks and scars help them remember which whale is which. Saddle-patches (the patch behind the dorsal fin) are also unique to individuals.

The orca is beyond doubt, the largest member of the dolphin family with newborn calves measuring 2.1 – 2.5 metres and adults measuring between 5.5 – 9.8 metres.



Mum rules!

Orcas are very social dolphins and stay together their entire lives in family pods that are led by matriarchs (female leaders). Orcas can be very acrobatic and are extremely fast swimmers (almost as fast as a galloping race horse).

Like all dolphins, orcas communicate with each other using body language and sound. They don't have vocal cords and can't talk to one another in the same way as humans do, but they can make a wide variety of noises including whistles, barks, squeaks, clicks, croaks and grunts.

Orca pods are known to have their own "dialects" (which are a little like individual languages) and sound different to one another. So orcas from different areas don't use the same orca 'language'!

Free Willy !

One threat some orcas face is being caught to be put on display in marine parks. Other threats include the ruin of their habitat, having less food availability for them, and both chemical and noise pollution.

Noise Annoys!

Sound is extremely important in their underwater world, probably more so than sight, because it is often dark and visibility can be very poor in the seas and oceans. This doesn't trouble them though as they use sound to communicate, find their prey and find their way around. But it is why other underwater noises, made by boats for example, can disturb them.



Dolphin Diploma Part 2: Dolphin Activity

Knowing about dolphins is fantastic but, in order to best protect them, action is also needed!

Below are just a few ideas for children's activities that they could undertake with your help and be awarded with their diploma:

Make an origami dolphin

WDC is collecting origami dolphins to help captive dolphins in the EU. See whales.org/kidzone for more info.

Sponsored silence

How about organising a sponsored silence (or other sponsored activity) and get sponsored by family and friends for every minute you stay quiet. WDC's events team have many ideas and can provide you with sponsorship forms and information.

Poster Display

On your own, or with a group of friends, why not create a range of posters that you can display in your school hall/classroom or maybe at a club meeting you go to (such as Brownies or Cubs). You could show the different species of dolphins there are, where they live and what threats they face. Let people know how they can help!

Artwork Auction

In your art class at school, perhaps you can create some dolphin artwork – paintings, models, mosaics etc. Then hold a fun auction to raise awareness and a few funds!

Raffle or Sale

Run a raffle - maybe asking friends and family if they can donate goodies (books, toys, biscuits and chocolates etc.) for you to use as prizes. Or you could organise a cake or 'healthy eating' sale at school break time!

What happens to any money you raise?

Any money you send will be put to good use helping to fund dolphin protection projects around the world. This might be a project in the Mediterranean Sea to protect common dolphins from extinction for example, or a project in Scotland to help the bottlenose dolphins that live in the Moray Firth.

Any funds should be sent to...

Dolphin Diploma WDC 38 St Paul Street Chippenham SN15 1LJ UK
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Keep an eye on
whales.org/kidzone
for the latest ways
to help!

WHALE AND
DOLPHIN
CONSERVATION

Please include the response form found on the following page.

Dolphin Diploma response form

To claim your award certificate, please print off, complete and return this form to the address at the bottom of the page (or fax to (44) (0)1249 449501).

Full contact name of teacher, parent, leader

Position (if applicable):

Address:

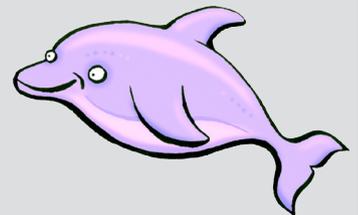
Postcode:

Email address:

Number of children that took part *:

Age of children (please provide dates of birth if possible**):

Dolphin Activity (please include DATE, LOCATION, ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION and ANY RESULTS - number of visitors to your event, donations collected, feedback received for example):



* We'll need names if they'd like a certificate each.

** If you have been working with a class of children, their ages are enough.

PLEASE SEND ANY IMAGES OF YOUR EVENT - WE MAY USE THEM IN OUR PUBLICATIONS OR WEBSITE.
PLEASE NOTE THAT WE REQUIRE WRITTEN PERMISSION AND A PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE TO USE ANY PHOTOS OF CHILDREN.

WHALE AND
DOLPHIN
CONSERVATION



Please tick the box if you would rather not receive any further information from WDC by post or email