

Animals of the World: Mammals



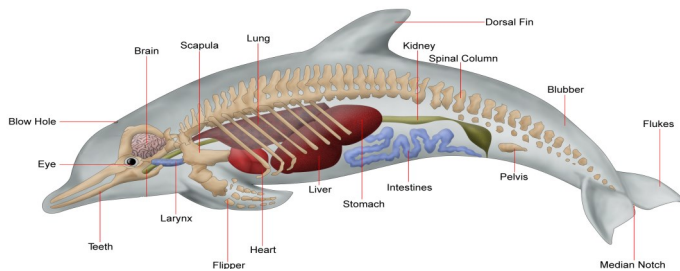
THE DOLPHIN



Although it may seem like dolphins are fish because they swim in the sea, they are mammals. They are from the same family as the sperm whales and whales.



Since dolphins are mammals, they have lungs, a large brain, and a heart. They measure between two and nine meters long, depending on the species. Dolphins have a large head and breathe through a blowhole.



A dolphin has between 20 and 50 teeth, depending on the species. Their teeth are only used to capture their prey, not to chew.

Its skin is soft and silky. The hand glides smoothly along its back when caressed. The color of its skin varies from one species to another, ranging from white to gray to blue.

The dolphin gestation period is about twelve months, although it can be as long as seventeen months. At birth, the tail comes out first and then the head. The mother dolphin breastfeeds her baby for nine months until it can feed itself. They are carnivorous animals that eat fish and squid.

Dolphins reach speeds of 70 km per hour when swimming. The fins on their tails called flukes are used to propel them and the pectoral fins to control the direction they want to head.

Using echolocation, dolphins emit different sounds to obtain various information about the surrounding environment. It is a unique sensory system used in the sea.

To communicate with each other, dolphins use whistles and screaming language. They are social animals and live in family groups.

Humans have developed a special connection with dolphins. It has been documented that dolphins have helped humans get rescued many times. In captivity, dolphins are trained and offer wonderful spectacles of jumps and stunts. Dolphins are considered very intelligent animals.



Although it is more common to find dolphins in marine waters, some species of dolphins live in freshwater.

The average lifespan of a dolphin is 30 years.



One of the dolphins' main enemies is the shark, but some get caught in large fishing nets and die before they can be released.

Speaking of fishing, did you know that dolphins also help humans catch large numbers of fish? In Brazil, when dolphins find a school of fish, they notify humans by banging their heads or tails against waves. The fishermen know to let go of the nets there and catch the fish.



Dolphins are noble and good animals.

What about you? Do you like dolphins?

Name _____

Date _____

THE DOLPHIN



Answer the questions.

1. Dolphins are mammals because _____

- a. they have large lungs, kidneys, and brain.
- b. they are from the same family as whales and salmon.
- c. they are carnivorous animals.
- d. All answers are false.

2. What color is the dolphin's skin?

- a. Gray
- b. Blue
- c. White
- d. All the answers are correct.



3. Because dolphins are carnivorous, they _____

- a. feed on meat.
- b. feed on humans.
- c. feed on plants.
- d. All answers are wrong.

4. How many kilometers per hour can dolphins reach by swimming?

- a. 70 km
- b. 60 km
- c. 9 km
- d. 30 km

5. One of the main enemies of dolphins is _____

- a. the squid.
- b. little fish.
- c. the shark.
- d. seaweed.



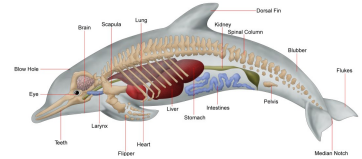
Name _____

Date _____

THE DOLPHIN

6. Dolphins help humans _____

- a. in some parts of the world, mainly in Barcelona.
- b. by hitting his head or tail against the waves.
- c. by singing to the fish.
- d. because squids have more than 70 teeth.



7. In captivity, dolphins have been _____

- a. trained to fish large numbers of fish and turtles.
- b. trained to save humans in case of accident.
- c. taught to jump and acrobatics in different shows.
- d. captured to help fish humans.

8. The average life of a dolphin is _____

- a. similar to that of a human.
- b. greater than that of the mammals of the world.
- c. about thirty years old.
- d. between twelve and seventeen months.

9. The gestation of a dolphin lasts longer than that of a human being.

- a. True
- b. False

10. Dolphins use echolocation to _____

- a. broadcast music and get various information about the surrounding environment.
- b. move their fins and get various information about the surrounding environment.
- c. move their tail and get various information about the surrounding environment.
- d. emit sounds and get various information about the surrounding environment.