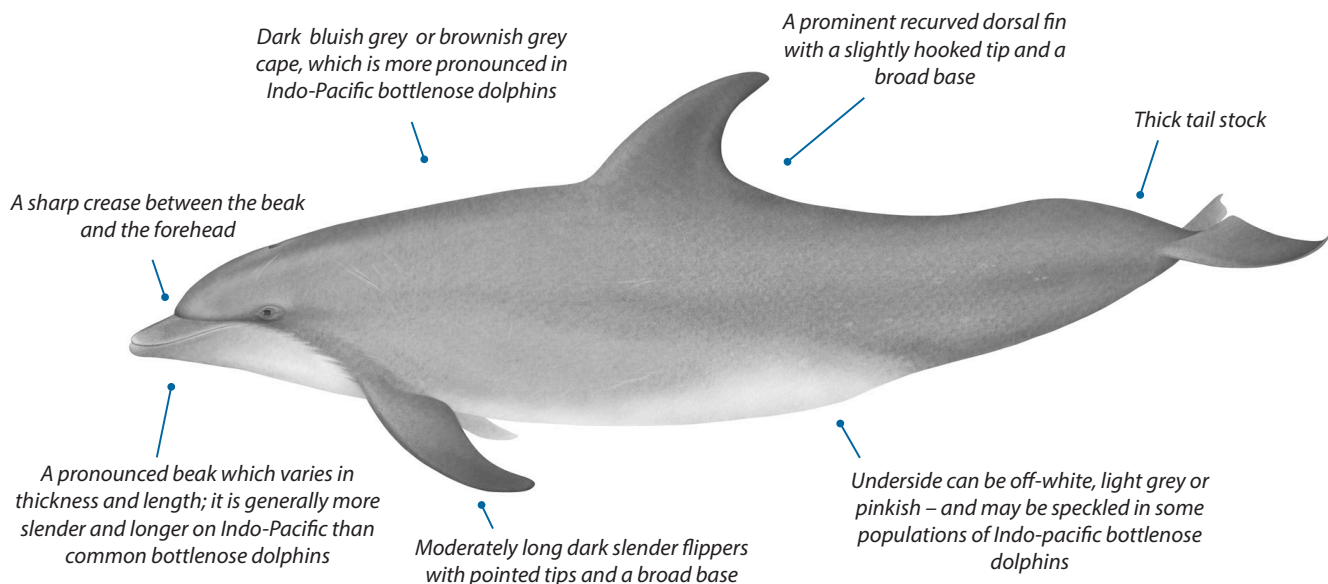


Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops sp.*)

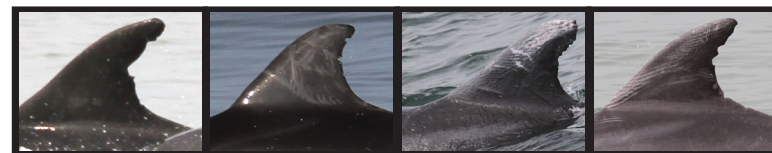
Distribution: Worldwide (see map below and full list of countries in the detailed species account online at: <https://www.handbook.iwc.int/en/species/bottlenose-dolphin>)

Adult length: 2.6m
Adult weight: up to 230kg (male)
Newborn: 84-112cm /9-20kg



Threats: bycatch, contaminants, habitat loss
Habitat: estuarine, nearshore, continental shelf, offshore
Diet: fish, crustaceans, squid


IUCN Conservation status:
Common Bottlenose dolphin: **Least Concern**
Indo-Pacific bottlenose: **Data deficient**




Individual bottlenose dolphins can be recognised by the nicks and scars on their dorsal fins, through a process called photo-identification. Some dolphins in well-studied populations have been re-sighted over periods of more than 40 years. (photos Gianna Minton/WWF Gabon)

Males and females are difficult to distinguish at sea – but only females will accompany calves, and males may have more scarring from aggressive interactions with other males.

Fun Facts

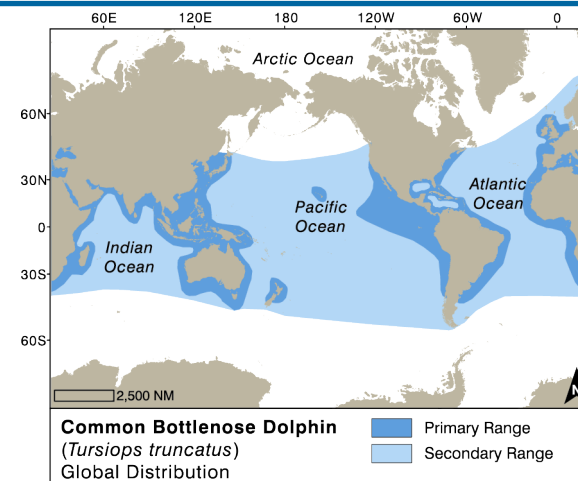
 Bottlenose dolphins have a range of feeding techniques: some use 'tools' like sponges to protect their beaks when they dig in the sand, others hunt in formation temporarily beaching themselves to chase fish onto the land.

 Many male dolphins have 'toothrakes' on their bodies - the result of aggressive behaviour between males.



Photos courtesy of Chris Parsons (Left), Chris Johnson (centre) and Fabian Ritter (right)

Bottlenose dolphins are often more approachable and more active than other species of dolphins, sometimes engaging in aerial displays or 'bow-riding' on the waves in front of vessels.



Blue whale global distribution. Adapted by Nina Lisowski from Jefferson, T.A., Webber, M.A. and Pitman, R.L. (2015). "Marine Mammals of the World: A Comprehensive Guide to Their Identification," 2nd ed. Elsevier, San Diego, CA. Copyright Elsevier: <http://www.elsevier.com>.

There are two recognised species of bottlenose dolphins that occur in different parts of the world –sometimes with overlapping ranges. These are the common bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), and the Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops aduncus*). There is also a great deal of variation between inshore and offshore populations of common bottlenose dolphins in different parts of the world.