

Bottlenose Dolphin

Tursiops truncatus



**Ulster
Wildlife**



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About

A curious and friendly dolphin with a fairly short beak, a rounded forehead and a sharp crease between the beak and forehead. It has a grey body and white belly with a tall, slender sickle-shaped dorsal fin. They sometimes travel in groups of up to 30 individuals together known as a pod.

Where

Wide range of habitats from rivers, shallow seas and deeper water, in coastal waters and shipping routes.

Local Hotspots

All along the north coast.

Size

Adult length ranges between 2m and 4m and weighs 400kg on average.

Lifespan

Average life span 25 years.

Diet

Dolphins use echolocation to search for prey. Similar to sonar, they emit clicking sounds and listen for the return echoes to locate the whereabouts of potential prey. They usually hunt in groups, feeding on bottom-dwelling fish, shrimp and squid.

Did you know?

- Bottlenose dolphins use sound for communication, including squeaks and whistles emitted from the blowhole and sounds emitted through behaviour, such as leaping from the water and slapping their tails on the water surface.
- They sometimes follow fishing boats in the hope of getting leftovers.
- They have been known to reach over 18 miles an hour when swimming.



Recorded distribution of Bottlenose Dolphin:

Data source: The Marine Life Information Network – www.marlin.ac.uk



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www.ulsterwildlife.org

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