Lagenorhynchus australis (Peale, 1848)

DELPH Lag 6 **PLD**

FAO Names: En - Peale's dolphin**: Fr -** Dauphin de Peale; **Sp** - Delfín austral.

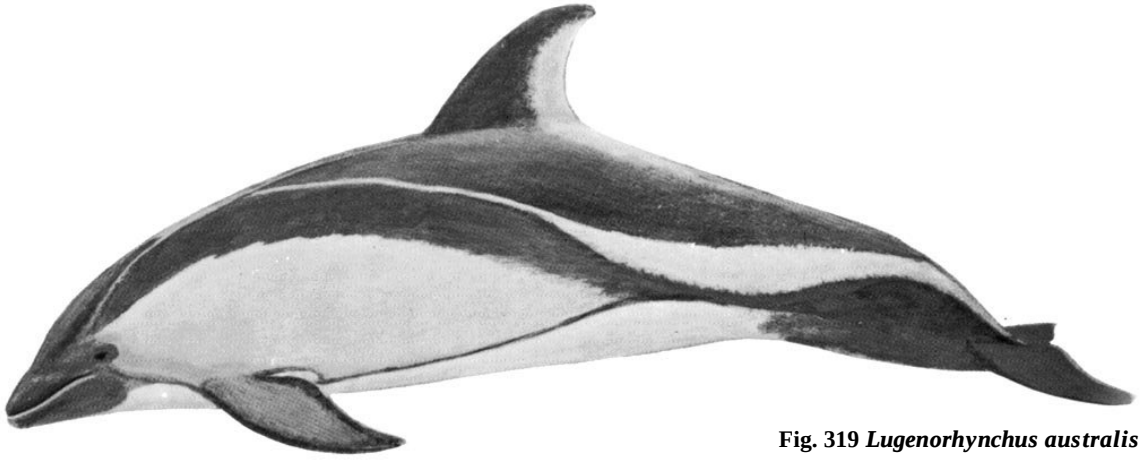


Fig. 319 *Lugenorhynchus australis*

Distinctive Characteristics: The general body shape of Peale's dolphin is typical for dolphins of the genus ***Lagenorhynchus.*** Few specimens have been examined, but observations of Peale's dolphins suggest they are the most robust of the Southern Hemisphere dolphins of this genus. The dorsal fin is pointed and falcate.

Peale's dolphins share coloration pattern components with both dusky and Pacific white-sided dolphins. Peale's dolphins are greyish black above and white below. They have a curved flank patch of light grey with a single dorsal spinal blaze, or "suspender," fading into the black of the back near the blowhole. A large pale grey thoracic patch extends from the eye to midbody; it is separated from the white below by a well-developed dark stripe. The stripe loops up above a small white patch under the flipper. The flippers are grey-black, and the dorsal fin is dark grey-black, with a thin crescent of light grey on the trailing margin. Most of the beak is dark grey to black.

Tooth counts for 3 specimens ranged from 27 to 33 on each side of each jaw.

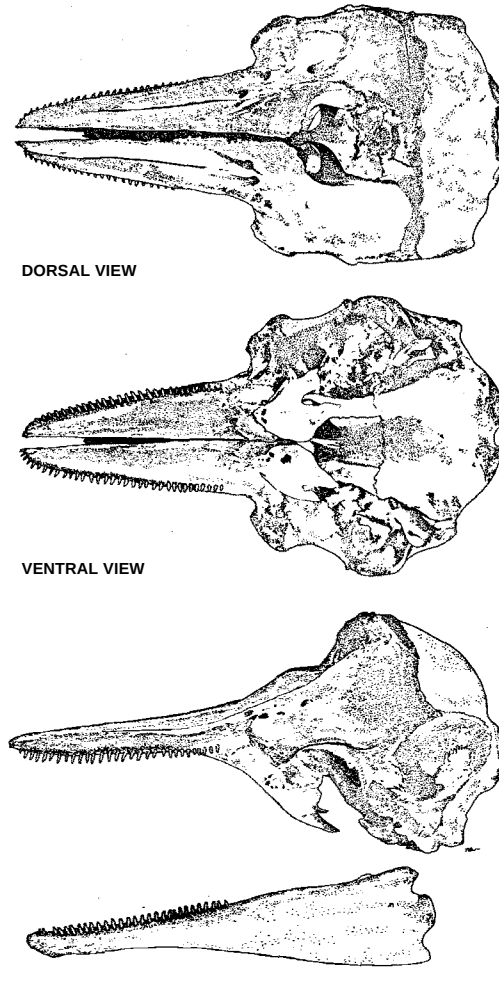
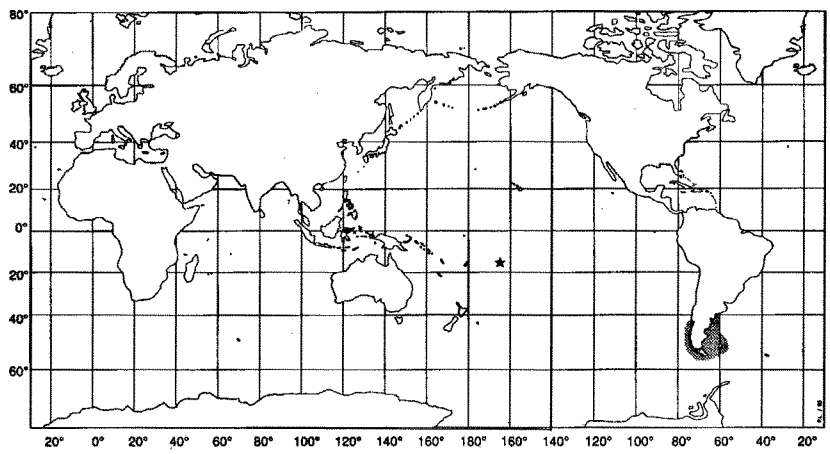


Fig. 320 Skull

Can be confused with: Peale's dolphins are most easily confused with dusky dolphins (p. 142). The face, rostrum, melon,and most of the chin of Peale's dolphins are dark grey-black, as if encased in a mask. This feature, plus the well-developed black stripe below the thoracic patch, readily distinguishes Peale's dolphins from dusky dolphins.

Size: The largest specimen recorded was 2.16 m long, and adults are estimated to weigh about 115 kg. Length at birth is estimated to be about 1 m.

Geographical Distribution: Peale's dolphins are coastal animals, found in bays and inlets, around islands, and over the continental shelf. They are frequently seen close to shore and sometimes shoreward of kelp beds. Peale's dolphins are confined to South America, south to about the latitudes of Valparaiso, Chile, and south central Argentina. They are regularly seen around the Falkland Islands. One exceptional sighting was reported from Palmerston Atoll.



* Extralimital record

Fig. 321

Biology and Behaviour: Peale's dolphins have been seen in small groups (5 to 30 are typical). Photoidentification studies have shown that some dolphins spend the entire year in limited areas close to shore, in the magellan strait. They frequently bowride, and will sprint to a ship's bow. At the bow, they often speed ahead, leap high into the air and fall back into the water on their sides, producing a large splash with a loud slapping noise.

Newborns have been observed in Magellan Strait as early as October.

Little is know of food and feeding habits; one animal collected in the Falkland Islands had recently consumed an octopus and others have been observed feeding on róbalo (snooks, family Centropomidae) and pejerrey (silversides, family Atherinidae).

Exploitation: Peale's dolphins are incidentally entangled and drowned in nets; also, they are intentionally harpooned in the Strait of Magellan and around Tierra del Fuego. The number harpooned, for use as bait in crab traps, may pose a serious threat to their status. A population estimate does not exist.

IUCN Status: Insufficiently known.

Grampus griseus (Cuvier, 1812)

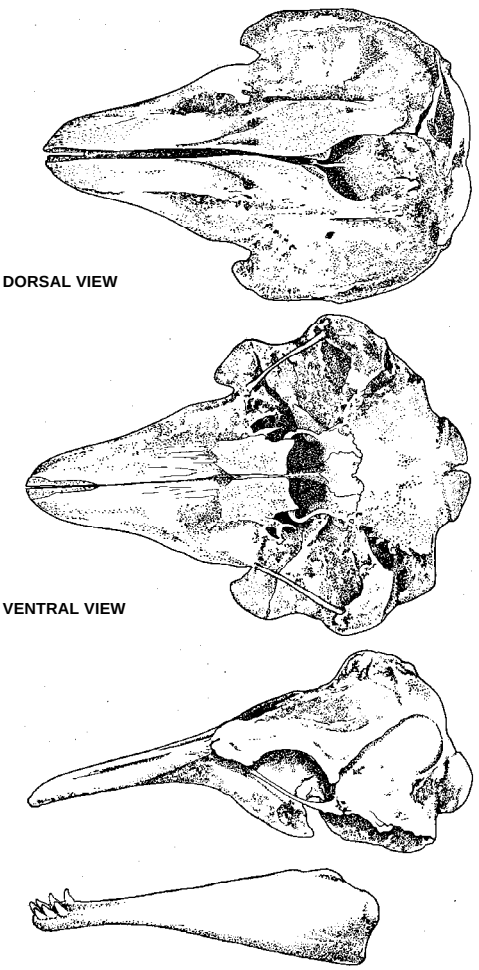
DELPH Gram 1 **DRR**

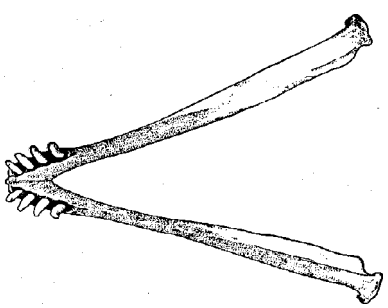
FAO Names: En - Risso's dolphin**; Fr -** Grampus**; Sp -** Delfín de Risso.

Fig. 322 *Grampus griseus*

Distinctive Characteristics: Risso's dolphins are robust blunt-headed animals without distinct beaks. The flippers are long, pointed, and recurved; the dorsal fin is tall and falcate. Risso's dolphins have mouthlines that slope upward. One of the most distinctive features is a vertical crease on the front of the melon. However, at sea, the best identification character is the coloration and scarring. Adults range from dark grey to nearly white, but are typically covered with white scratches, spots, and blotches. The chest has a whitish anchor-shaped patch, and the appendages tend to be darker than the rest of the body. Young animals range from light grey to dark brownish grey and are relatively unmarked.

The teeth are also unique; there are 2 to 7 pairs in the front of the lower jaw and usually none in the upper jaw. Some or all of the teeth may be worn-down in, or missing from, adults.





DORSAL VIEW OF MANDIBLE

Fig. 323 Skull

Can be confused with: Risso's dolphins are generally easy to identify when seen at close range; however, from a distance they may be confused with other large delphinids with a tall dorsal fin (such as bottlenose dolphins [p.154], false killer whales [p. 126], and killer whales [p. 120]). When visible, the light, extensively scarred bodies and squarish heads of Risso's dolphins make them unmistakable.

Size: Newborns are 1.2 to 1.5 m long and adults range up to at least 3.8 rn long. Weights of up to 400 kg have been recorded, and the maximum may be near 500 kg.

Geographical Distribution: This is a widely distributed species, inhabiting deep oceanic and continental slope waters from the tropics through the temperate regions in both hemispheres. They are found from Newfoundland, Norway, the Kamchatka Peninsula, and Gulf of Alaska in the north to the tips of South America and South Africa, southern Australia, and southern New Zealand in the south.

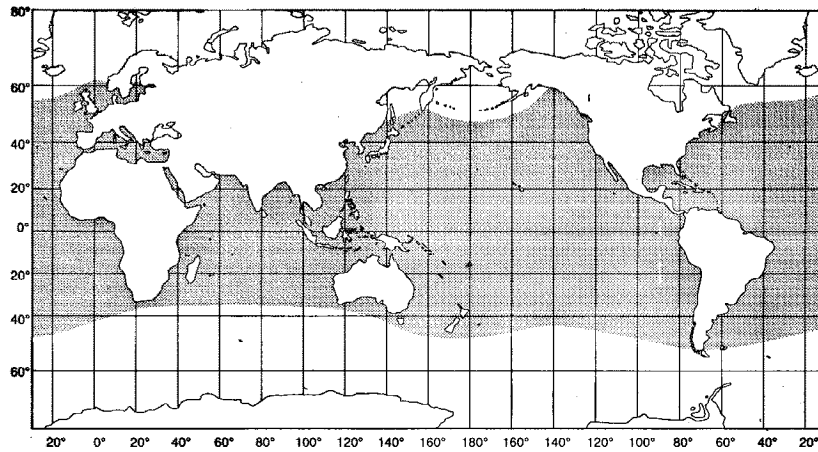


Fig. 324

Biology and Behaviour: These large dolphins are often seen surfacing slowly, although they can be energetic, sometimes breaching or porpoising, and occasionally bowriding. Herds tend to be small to moderate in size, but groups of up to 4 000 have been reported. Risso's dolphins commonly associate with other species of cetaceans. Hybrids between this species and the bottlenose dolphin have been recorded, both in captivity and in the wild.

In the North Atlantic, there appears to be a summer calving peak.

Risso's dolphins feed on crustaceans and cephalopods, but seem to prefer squid. Squid bites may be the cause of some of the scars found on the bodies of these animals.

Exploitation: Risso's dolphins have been taken in small numbers, (both incidentally and intentionally) in drive, gillnet, seine, and harpoon fisheries throughout the species' range. In Sri Lanka, they are apparently the second most commonly taken cetacean in fisheries, providing fish and meat for human consumption and fish bait; stocks there may be adversely affected.

IUCN Status: Insufficiently known.

Tursiops truncatus (Montagu, 1821)

DELPH Tur 1 **DBO**

FAO Names: En - Bottlenose dolphin; **Fr -** Grand dauphin: **Sp** - Tursion.

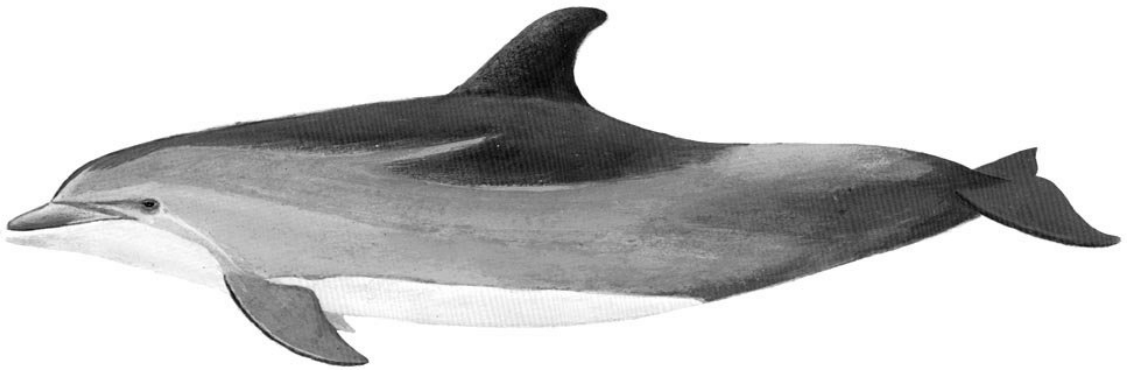


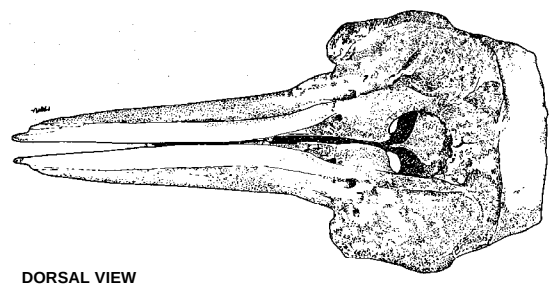
Fig. 325 ***Tursiops truncatus***

Distinctive Characteristics: The bottlenose dolphin is probably the most familiar of the small cetaceans because of its coastal habits, prevalence in captivity worldwide, and frequent appearance on television and in advertising. It is a large, relatively robust dolphin, with a short to moderate-length stocky snout that is distinctly set off from the melon by a crease. The dorsal fin is tall and falcate, and set near the middle of the back.

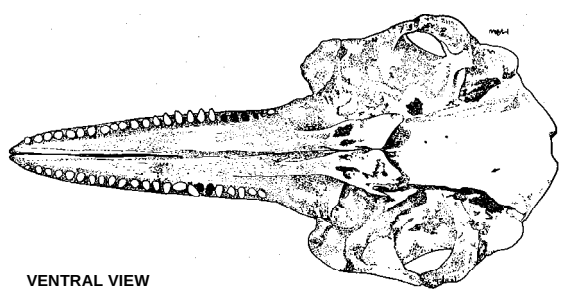
Colour varies from light grey to nearly black on the back and sides, fading to white (sometimes with a pinkish hue) on the belly. The belly and lower sides are sometimes spotted. There is a dark stripe from eye to flipper, and a faint dorsal cape on the back (and sometimes an indistinct spinal blaze), generally only visible at close range. Often, there are brushings of grey on the body, especially on the face, and from the apex of the melon to the blowhole.

Bottlenose dolphins have 18 to 26 pairs of robust teeth in each jaw. In older animals, many of these may be worn down or missing.

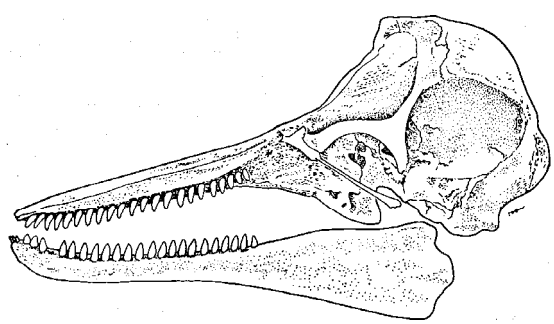
In many areas of the world, such as South Africa, the Northwest Atlantic, Peru, and the eastern North Pacific, there appear to be 2 forms, a coastal type and an offshore type; however, the taxonomy of bottlenose dolphins is still somewhat confused, due to the great extent of geographical variation.



DORSAL VIEW



VENTRAL VIEW



LATERAL VIEW WITH MANDIBLE

Fig. 326 Skull

Can be confused with: Bottlenose dolphins can be mistaken for several other species of dolphins, depending on the area. There can be confusion in the tropical Atlantic with Atlantic spotted dolphins (p. 158), along the east coast of South America with dolphins of the genus Sotalia (p. 132), and in the Indo-Pacific and off West Africa with hump-backed dolphins (starting on p. 134). When seen from a distance, they could also be confused with Risso's (p. 152) or rough-toothed (p. 138) dolphins. Such confusion will generally only occur when the animals are not seen well; in most situations, bottlenose dolphins are distinctive.

Size: Adults range from 1.9 to 3.8 m, with males somewhat larger than females. There is incredible variation between different populations. Maximum weight is at least 650 kg, although most animals are much smaller. Length at birth is about 1 to 1.3 m.

Geographical Distribution: Bottlenose dolphins are found primarily in coastal and inshore regions of tropical and temperate waters of the world. Population density appears to be higher nearshore. Bottlenose dolphins are known also to inhabit some pelagic waters, such as those in the eastern tropical Pacific.Except for their occurrence around the United Kingdom and northern Europe, they generally do not range poleward of 45º in either hemisphere.

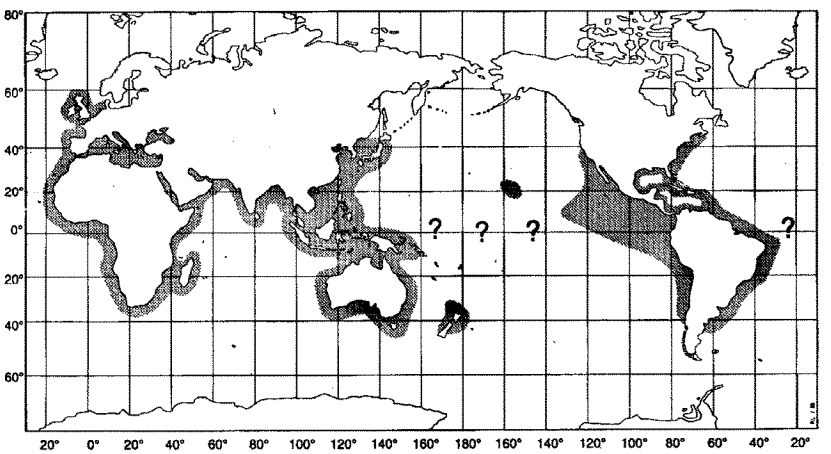


Fig. 327

Biology and Behaviour: More is known of the biology of this species than of any other dolphin. Group size is commonly less than 20, but large herds of several hundred are often seen offshore. Bottlenose dolphins are commonly associated with other cetaceans, and hybrids with other species are known from both captivity and in the wild. Based on a number of studies of nearshore populations, bottlenose dolphins seem to live in relatively open societies. In some areas, dolphins have limited home ranges; in others, they are migratory, generally ranging further. Mother and calf bonds and some other associations may be strong, but individuals may be seen from day-to-day with a variety of different associates. The bottlenose dolphin is the most common species of dolphin held in captivity. It has proven highly adaptable and is easily trained. Much of what we know of the general biology of dolphins comes from studies of bottlenose dolphins, both in captivity and in the wild. Bottlenose dolphins are sometimes active (especially when feeding or socializing), often slapping the water with their flukes, leaping, and performing other aerial behaviours. Spring and summer or spring and autumn calving peaks are known for most populations. They are opportunistic feeders, apparently taking whatever suitable prey is most abundant at the time. Feeding behaviour is varied, ranging from cooperative foraging on schooling fish, to individually chasing fish onto mudbanks, to feeding behind shrimp trawlers and other fishing operations.

Exploitation: Both incidental and direct exploitation of bottlenose dolphins are known to occur, generally at low to moderate levels. The largest direct kills have traditionally been in the Black Sea, where Russian and Turkish hunters apparently have reduced local populations. Bottlenose dolphins also are taken elsewhere in gillnets, shark nets, shrimp trawls, and purse seines (the latter in the multi-national tuna purse seine fishery of the eastern tropical Pacific). They also are occasional viotims of harpoon and drive fisheries. Live capture removals have had considerable effects on some populations, such as those in the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. southeast coast.

IUCN Status: Insufficiently known.

click for next page