

Dolphins

You might think a dolphin is a big fish, but you would be wrong. A dolphin is a mammal that lives in water but breathes air just like we do. They are very smart and have developed their own form of language to communicate with each other. They are friendly and playful with each other and with humans.

There are almost forty species of dolphin, and they are found worldwide, mostly in shallow waters. Five species live in the river. Dolphins vary in size from 4 feet and 90 pounds and up to 30 feet and 10 tons for Orca or Killer Whale. That's right, an Orca Whale is actually a big dolphin!

Dolphins live in social groups of five to several hundred. Although they have good eyesight they mostly use echolocation to find prey and often hunt together. Dolphins are carnivores, mostly eating fish and squid. Dolphins will also follow seabirds, other whales and fishing boats to feed on the fish.

Just like humans, most dolphin species have a long lifespan. They give birth like humans, too. A dolphin usually starts having babies when she turns 8. She only has one baby at a time, and will give birth every 2 or 3 years. Gestation lasts from 9 to 17 months depending on the species.

When it is time to give birth, the female will distance herself from the pod, often going near the surface of the water. As soon as the calf is born, the mother must quickly take it to the surface so it can take its first breath. The calf will nurse from 11 months to 2 years, while its mother teaches it how to catch and eat fish.

A baby dolphin will stay with its mother until it is between 3 and 8 years old. Dolphin mothers are great teachers and spend a lot of time and energy preparing their children for life as a dolphin. They teach them how to find and catch prey, how to avoid dangers, how to interact with other dolphins and how to find their way around their home range.

What is the difference between dolphins and porpoises? They do look similar. They are both mammals who are gray with darker backs. Dolphins are longer and sleeker than porpoises, though, and have less fear of humans. Dolphins live in large groups while porpoises live in small groups of two to four animals and are quite shy. Porpoises rarely approach boats or people. In fact, you rarely see them at the surface unless they're coming up to breathe.

The life expectancy of dolphins and porpoises is also quite different. While most porpoises only live 15 to 20 years, dolphins can live up to 50 years or more. One last difference is that dolphins produce sounds that humans can hear. Many people have seen firsthand how "talkative" dolphins can be. Porpoises, on the other hand, make sounds that humans cannot hear.

See the video at <https://youtu.be/rISCNAdcMt8>