

Bottlenose Dolphin

Tursiops truncatus

1. Animal Type: Mammal
2. Conservation Status: Legally protected
3. Size
 - a. Male: 8 feet long and weighing 440-660 lbs.
 - b. Female: Slightly smaller
 - c. They can live over 40 years
4. Social Structure:
 - a. Matrilineal – adult females forming the permanent basis of a group.
 - b. They have a fission-fusion society – the composition of groups changing frequently as individuals come and go.
5. Reproduction:
 - a. Females reach sexual maturity at about 8 years. Afterwards, they only mate every four to five years, usually during spring or summer.
 - b. Gestation: 12 months
 - c. Number of young: One calf. Twins are rare
 - d. Rearing / Mothering: Sometimes the suckling of calves may last for up to four years; Typically nurses 11 months to 2 years.
 - e. Special exhibit needs: If breeding, will need dedicated pool for isolating breeding pairs, then for birthing and mothering the calves. May need multiple pools for social separation and to control breeding, especially if no breeding is planned and the collection includes a male.
6. Behavior
 - a. Nocturnal vs. Diurnal: They never completely sleep
 - b. Shy vs. Curious: Very curious and highly intelligent
 - c. Jumping Ability: 15 to 30 feet above water
 - d. Water speed: Usually swim 3-7 mph with bursts of speed at 18-22 mph
 - e. Unique Behaviors: Occasionally will ostracize a single dolphin and deny them the group play and feeding
7. Captivity
 - a. Frequency in captivity: Rare-Common
 - b. Noteworthy exhibits:
 - i. Sea World Orlando
 1. Size: 1 pool, 1.1 million gallons (13,000 sf)
 2. Opening date: 1996
 3. Number of Animals: 22 bottlenose
 4. Designer: PGAV
 - ii. Discovery Cove
 1. Size: Shared exhibit and show pool, Approx. 1.25 million gal (6500 sf)
 2. Opening date: May 2000
 3. Number of Animals: 41 bottlenose
 4. Designer: PGAV
8. Husbandry Regulations
 - a. USDA APHIS
 - i. Minimum Horizontal Distance: 24'
 - ii. Minimum Depth: 6'
 - iii. Minimum Surface Area: 452 square feet per 2 dolphins
 - iv. Minimum Volume per Additional Dolphin: 763 cubic feet (5707 gallons)
 - v. Minimum Surface Area per Additional Dolphin: 95.38 square feet

- b. Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums
 - i. Minimum Depth: 8.5'
 - ii. Minimum Volume: 7800 cubic feet per 4 dolphins (58,500 gallons)
 - iii. Minimum Volume per Additional 2 Dolphins: 4400 cubic feet (33,000 gallons)
 - c. Water Temp per AMMPA: No less than 50 deg F and no more than 90 deg F
9. Enrichment
- a. Zoo Approved Enrichment Ideas
 - i. Basic training –
 1. Meet and greet: Visitor's presence sends a positive reinforcement to an animal.
 2. Never reinforce the bad behavior.
 3. All based on relationship sessions.
 - ii. Pick a toy and have a playtime sessions. Balancing ball on his rostrum
 - iii. Tossing the large disk, surfs on it.
 - iv. Backrub – for a positive reinforcement
 - v. Playing sounds or music directly into the exhibit stimulate the excitement.
 - vi. Kolmarden Zoo in Sweden - Algae held and wrapped by the wooden triangle or plastic toy – Natural setting and most of all dolphins enjoy this enrichment.
 - b. Untested Enrichment Ideas
 - i. Large Rope – jumping enrichment
 - ii. Large Plastic Storage bins to stand and stroll

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