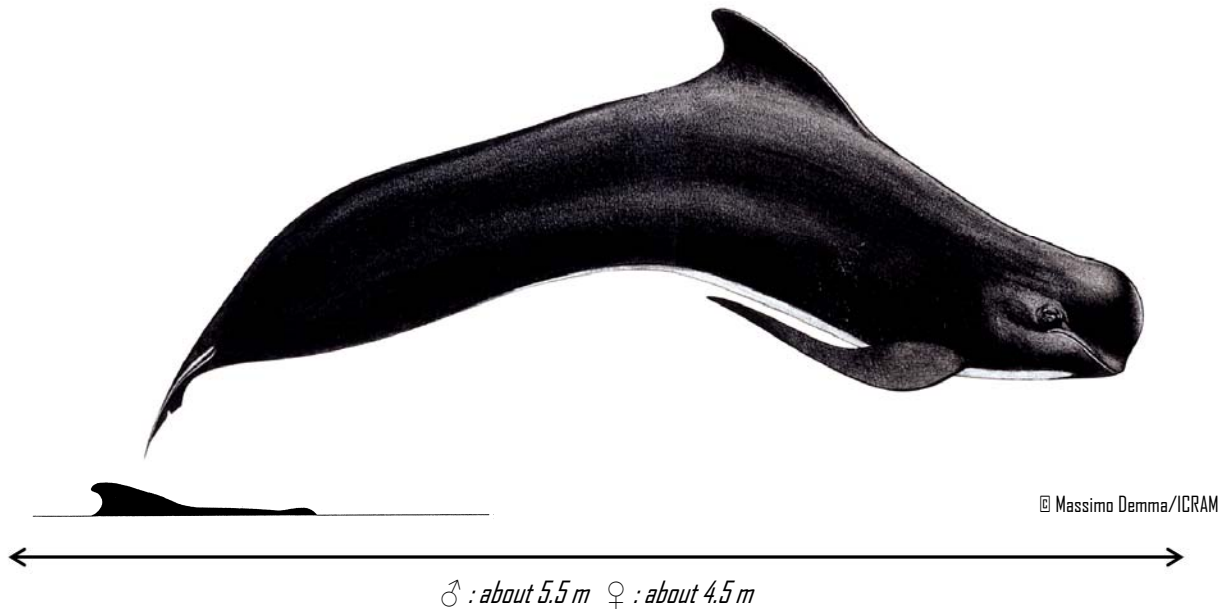


Class: Mammalia Order: Cetacea Sub-order: Odontoceti Family: Delphinidae Genus: <i>Globicephala</i>	IUCN global conservation status: Insufficient data ACCOBAMS/IUCN global conservation status: Insufficient data (Mediterranean)	
	Mediterranean: Regular	Black Sea: Absent
LONG-FINNED PILOT WHALE <i>Globicephala melas</i> (Traill, 1809)		

English: Long-finned pilot whale/ Pothead



Name: ♦ Scientific: From Latin *globus* = round and from Greek *kephalé* = head, and *melas* = black

DESCRIPTION

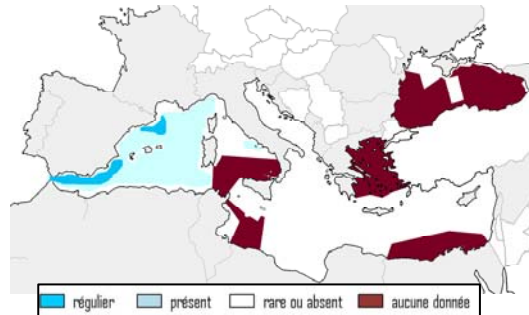
Size:	Male: 5.5-6.2 m (7.2 m in the North Pacific), 1.5-3.5 tons Female: 4.5-5.5 m – 1-2.5 tons Newborn: 1.7-1.8 m - 70-80 kg
Head:	Large and round. Rounded, globous melon, increasingly so with age. Diminutive snout. 8 to 12 pairs of conical teeth about 5 cm long in both upper and lower jaws.
Body:	Long and relatively slim, thicker anteriorly. Colouration: black and may be slightly brownish with a white anchor-shaped spot under the throat and belly. In some populations of the Southern Hemisphere, a more discreet saddle-shaped pattern is found behind the dorsal fin. Calves are grey.
Dorsal fin:	Low and with a wide base (about twice its height), thick and relatively rounded, located mid-body. In old and larger males, dorsal fin is located anteriorly. Allows the easy identification of the species.
Pectoral fins:	Very long and slender, curving posteriorly.
Tail:	Marked median notch, thick keel.
Blow:	At times visible in calm weather. Powerful, may exceed 1 m in height.

DISTRIBUTION

Present in all cold and temperate seas of the North Atlantic and of the Southern Hemisphere.

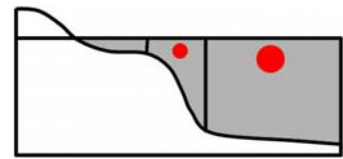
MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS

In the Mediterranean, the species is relatively common in the western basin, in the Alboran Sea or near the Balearic Islands, and becomes rarer towards the east. Its presence in the east of Italy is extremely rare (Marchessaux & Duguy 1978, Frantzis *et al.* 2003). A small group was seen in the Adriatic Sea off the coast of Cattolica (Italy) in May 2010 (M. Affronte, in litt.). A floating carcass of a potential black pilot whale was reported in the Gulf of Taranto (Centro Studi Cetacei, 1996). Absent from the Black Sea.



HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

In the Mediterranean, pilot whales are usually found in deep waters off-shore, (Notarbartolo di Sciara *et al.* 1993, Gannier 1995, Raga and Pantoja 2004, Cañadas *et al.* 2005).



BEHAVIOUR

A highly gregarious species, often forming groups of hundreds and sometimes thousands of individuals. A group appears to be descendants from a single female. To avoid inbreeding, males tend to breed with females of different groups. Social cohesion is strong and may be the cause of spectacular mass strandings.

Although it rarely jumps, this animal is very active on the surface with fluke slaps, pectoral slaps, head erect out of the water ("spy-hopping"), etc. It is often observed in a linear formation, 5 to 15 individuals in front, swimming slowly or surfing on the waves.

These curious animals are often observed over a long period near a boat. They are frequently observed with other species (bottlenose dolphins, sperm whales and common dolphins).

Longevity: 40-50 years in males and 60-70 in females.

Swimming speed: 2-4 kts (4-7 km/h), but may reach 15-25 kts (45 km/h) over short distances.

Dives: Generally, only for a few minutes between 30 m and 60 m, but may dive to over 800 m.

REPRODUCTION

Sexual maturity: 4-5 years but the first reproduction does not take place before, for females: 5-10 years and for males: 12-18 years

Breeding season: In the Mediterranean, mating occurs in summer and autumn. Births are from March to October.

Gestation: 15-16 months

Nursing: 1.5-2 years, occasionally much longer.

FOOD

Pelagic cephalopods (squid), occasionally fish.

THREATS

Because of their oceanic habits and their teuthophages diets, finned pilot whales in the Mediterranean are less affected by human activities than other coastal cetaceans. Threats are bycatch in pelagic driftnets (Northridge 1984, Notarbartolo di Sciara 1990), collisions (Pesante *et al.* 2002), pollution, morbillivirus infections (Fernandez *et al.* 2008) and anthropogenic noise (Rendel and Gordon 1999).