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**Name:**

- ♦ Scientific: From Greek *Stenos* = narrow, referring to the shape of the snout, and from Latin *caeruleus* = blue and *albus* = white.
- ♦ Common: Called "striped dolphin" due to the dark stripes running along its body.

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<i>The sparrow of the seas</i>
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**Size:** Adult: 1.8-2.6 m - 90-160 kg.  
Newborn: 85-95 cm - < 10 kg  
In the Mediterranean, animals are smaller (record: males 220 cm and 105 kg; females: 225 cm and 95 kg).

**Head:** Snout clearly separated from melon. The bony palate is flat, without grooves, which allows its differentiation from common dolphins.  
35-50 pairs of teeth in each jaw.

**Body:** Slender and spindle shaped.  
Complex colouration: the dorsal side is dark grey or black with blue shades, the ventral side and flanks are white.  
Characteristic: a diagonal, light-coloured chevron extending from the thoracic field towards the base of the dorsal fin.  
Four dark stripes depart from the eye: two of these, one wide and dark and the other narrower, parallel stripe extend to the insertion of the flipper; a lighter stripe extends towards the genital region where it becomes wider; the fourth stops on the side just posterior to the flipper.  
Several variants of the typical colouration are observed.

**Dorsal fin:** High and curved, located mid-body, dark-coloured, like the dorsal side.

**Pectoral fins:** Short and sickle-shaped, with pointed tips. Darker above than below.

**Tail:** Very concave, with a well-marked median notch.

## DISTRIBUTION

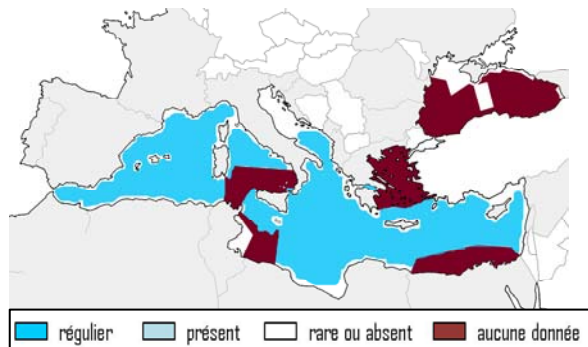
In temperate and subtropical waters of all oceans.

## MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEAS

The most common cetaceans in the Mediterranean ocean, present in the offshore waters of Gibraltar to the Aegean Sea in the Levant basin. However, movements across the Strait of Gibraltar have been observed. Found from Gibraltar-the Levant basin and the Aegean Sea. The abundance of striped dolphin appears to decrease toward the eastern part of the Mediterranean basin, which probably reflects a decreasing gradient of marine productivity.

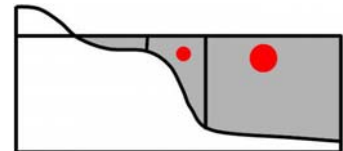
Two strandings were recorded in the Marmara Sea in 1990 (Öztürk et al. 1999).

Absent from the Black Sea.



## HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Typically an oceanic species, inhabiting preferably deep and highly productive waters of the continental shelf (Notarbartolo di Sciara et al. 1993, Forcada et al. 1994, Frantzis et al. 2003, Gannier 1995).



## BEHAVIOUR

A gregarious species usually living in groups from 10-100 individuals. Greater aggregations, including hundreds and even thousands of individuals have been observed. There may be segregation by age and sex; observations exist of herds of immature individuals.

Very conspicuous at the surface, frequently tail-slaps, bowrides and performs astonishing acrobatics and jumps.

Often in mixed groups of common dolphins, Risso's dolphins, and fin whales.

**Longevity:** 30-40 years.

**Swimming speed:** 5 kts (9 km/h), at times up to 10-20 kts (18-35 km/h).

**Dives:** 5-10 min down to a few tens of metres deep, but can dive regularly to depths greater than 200 m.

## REPRODUCTION

**Sexual maturity:** About 10 years in females, 12-15 years in males.

**Breeding season:** Mostly at the end of summer and the beginning of autumn.

**Gestation:** About 12 months.

**Nursing:** 18-20 months.

Births generally occur every three years.

## FOOD

Mesopelagic fish, cephalopods and planktonic crustaceans.

## THREATS

Morbillivirus epizootics (Domingo et al 1995 Bortolotto et al 1992, Aguilar & Raga 1993, Aguilar and Borrell 1994 Raga et al, 2008, Garibaldi et al 2008), high levels of contaminants (heavy metals and organochlorines) (Marsili and Focardi 1997, Aguilar 2000, Aguilar and Borrell 2004), bycatch in pelagic drift fishing nets (Notarbartolo di Sciara 1990 Tudela et al 2005), prey depletion by overfishing (Pulcini et al, 1992, Blanco et al 1995), habitat change, climate change (Gambaiani et al, 2009).