

A SIGHTING OF BRIDLED DOLPHIN, STENELLA FRONTALIS (G.CUVIER) IN THE  
MEDITERRANEAN SEA °

by

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SUMMARY

A sure sighting of the bridled dolphin, Stenella frontalis, in the western Mediterranean Sea is reported in the present note. The absolute rarity and exceptionality of such species in the Mediterranean Sea is also confirmed.

RESUME

Cette brève note reporte sur le repérage de trois individus de Stenella frontalis dans les eaux de la Méditerranée occidentale. Il est retenu opportun de présenter cette note à cause du peu de nouvelles sur la presence de cette espèce dans le Méditerranée, soit actuelle qu'historique.

Stenella frontalis, de toute façon, est à se considérer extrêmement occasionnelle dans les eaux méditerranéennes.

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This note reports a record of a Bridled dolphin, Stenella frontalis (G.Cuvier, 1829), in the Mediterranean Sea.

The sighting is due to the training ship "Amerigo Vespucci", a big old sailing vessel of the Italian Navy, and it happened on July 18, 1982, at 10.30 a.m., in the western Mediterranean, near the isle of Minorca (Spain); the exact position of the specimens was 40°00' N and 003°45' E.

The weather conditions were very good but there was a little rough sea.

The pod was of three specimens, with a length of 1.5-2 m. The original course of the pod was 135° (south-east) but, when they saw the vessel, they approached it, following its course (210°) for several minutes, jumping clear of the water and riding the bow wave. The distinctive pattern of the body (side of the head light gray, distinct cape on top of the head, grayish-white spots on the dorsal portion of the body) was well observed by the sailors. That is the first record of Stenella frontalis in the Spanish sea, because CASINOS and VERICAD (1976) don't report such species for the Spanish coast; maybe the present record could be, also, the first in the Mediterranean sea during the present century: infact, neither TOSCHI (1965) or DUGUY (1978) list the bridled dolphin within the mediterranean Cetaceans.

#### REFERENCES

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