

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BOTTLENOSED DOLPHIN, TURSIOPS TRUNCATUS (MONTAGU), IN THE ITALIAN SEAS °

by

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SUMMARY

The bottlenosed dolphin, Tursiops truncatus, is widely distributed in the Italian seas, both in coastal and pelagic waters. Its distribution and the numerical composition of the schools are examined in this paper.

RESUME

Le grand dauphin ou souffleur, Tursiops truncatus, apparaît bien plus répandu dans les eaux italiennes que se que l'on croyait. En effet, il est présent en grande partie dans les eaux côtières et, souvent, même au large. Au total, 41 signalements certains ont été examinés, concernant 284 individus, ils nous fournissent aussi des indications sur la présence des nouveaux-nés dans les branches et sur la composition numérique des écoles.

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The bottlenosed dolphin, Tursiops truncatus (Montagu, 1821), is another common dolphin of the Italian waters. During the four years of Project Cetacea, 41 records, concerning 284 specimens of T. truncatus have been collected; 39 of them (282 specimens) are sightings at sea which give a reliable information about the numerical composition of the schools (see the table in the next page) and on the distribution of that species in the Italian seas, as shown on the map. It is commonly known that bottlenosed dolphins are very common in

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the Adriatic Sea, where they are sometimes captured by tuna purse nets for oceanariums purposes (DI NATALE, 1979), but the certain information about such fact are very scarce.

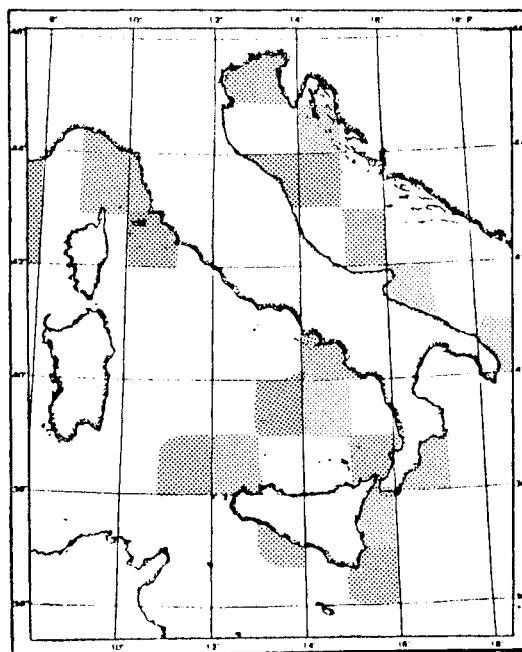
specimens per school													
1	2	3	4	5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-100	101-500	>500
7	3	5	3	4	12	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
amount of records													

Within the period of the research, only one specimen stranded on the beach and another one was captured and killed by a surface drifting gill net.

No new data are available about the breeding season, while calves were sighted during the most part of the year, except January, April, November and December.

Tursiops truncatus generally feeds on several species of fishes (anchovies, sardinas, and other small "blue fishes") and, sometimes, on squids.

It is often seen jumping clear of the water, especially when there is a large school of fishes in the surrounding.



#### REFERENCE

- DI NATALE A., 1979 - Progress of research relating to Mediterranean Cetacea. Project Cetacea, Special report, V. Annex to: Mem Biol.Mar.Ocean., IX (1-2), 50 pp.