



Hi Alex

This Sunday 3rd March is the United Nations World Wildlife Day and for the first time has a marine theme of 'Life below water: for people and planet'. What a brilliant opportunity to look at some of the fascinating creatures that inhabit the sea.

We are probably best known for our work on land with lions, elephants, gorillas and more. But from the beginning we have worried about the plight of marine species. You can imagine how frustrating it must be for a species designed to thrive in the expanses of the wild to be cooped up in a tiny tank or enclosure.

Some of our earliest campaigns focused on captive marine animals suffering in UK marine parks and Born Free campaigned to close the UK's last dolphinaria. We have even rescued and rehabilitated bottlenose dolphins back to the wild, including [Tom and Misha](#) pictured above, who in 2012 were successfully returned to the ocean in Turkey. You can watch their story [here](#).

Born Free works to end captive exploitation of marine species and keep them where they belong – in their natural habitat. Let's take a look at a few of them!

From

Laura

Laura Gosset
Wild Crew



Bottlenose dolphin

Inquisitive and playful, dolphins are highly intelligent and self-aware, with the largest brain to body size ratio of any mammal on earth, including humans! They exhibit a wide range of emotions including joy, sadness and empathy, and live in close-knit families called 'pods'. Dolphins can swim at nearly 20 miles per hour and leap several metres out of the water. They are also brilliant team players and skilfully work together to catch fish.



Orca

Also known as killer whales, the orca is in fact the largest species of dolphin, found in every ocean including the sea off north west Scotland. Like us, these intelligent sensitive animals live in supportive families, and hunt, rest, play and travel together. Sound travels well in water and a family communicates with a complex language of calls, clicks and whistles. Orca navigate and find food using 'echo-location' – making clicks and listening for echoes.



Sea turtles

There are seven species from the three-metre 900kg leatherback to the 65cm 40kg Kemp's ridley. These ocean reptiles first appeared 200 million years ago and living species are very like those that lived with dinosaurs. Cold-blooded like all reptiles, they rely on the heat of the sun as they cannot generate heat themselves. Graceful and streamlined, their shield-shaped hard shell provides protection, with paddle-like front flippers adapted for swimming and air-breathing lungs adapted for long, deep dives.



Dugong

Known as the 'sea cow', these plump air-breathing mammals are herbivores with huge appetites. They graze peacefully on sea grass in shallow coastal waters and consume an extraordinary 25kg each day. Unlike their close cousins the manatees, they have a dolphin-like wedge-shaped tail. With a streamlined body and strong flippers they are perfectly adapted for life in the ocean. Often solitary, they also socialise in herds of up to 30 animals, although groups of several hundred animals have been reported – wow!

You can help

Every minute one truckload of plastic ends up in our oceans! It sounds daunting, but we can each make changes to help keep the oceans clean and marine life safe. Please think before you use a plastic straw or ask for a snack that comes in plastic packaging. If you have to use plastic, recycle as much as you can.

IF YOU ARE AGED 13 OR UNDER PLEASE ASK PARENTAL PERMISSION TO FOLLOW BORN FREE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Please do not reply to this email. If you would like to contact us please [click here](#)

Photos: J Foster, D Howitt, P Richardson/MCS, Sea Sense



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