

ORCA

Lifespan: : 30 to 50 years in the wild (females can live up to 80 years)

Weight: 3,000 to 6,000 kg (males are significantly larger and heavier than females)

Body Measures: 6 to 8 meters in length with a dorsal fin up to 1.8 meters high

Body temperature: between 97.5°F and 100.4°F (36.4°C to 38.0°C)

TAXONOMY & ANATOMY

As the largest member of the dolphin family, this apex marine predator features a robust hydrodynamic body with a striking black and white coloration. It possesses large paddle-like pectoral flippers, a tall prominent dorsal fin, and a conical head armed with interlocking conical teeth designed for ripping prey.

SC. CLASSIFICATION

This apex marine predator belongs to the Mammalia class, falls under the Cetartiodactyla order, and is a member of the Delphinidae family.

HABITAT

This highly adaptable marine mammal inhabits all of the world's oceans, spanning from the freezing polar regions to warm equatorial waters. It shows a strong preference for colder, nutrient-rich coastal waters where food sources are highly abundant. Coastal fjords and pelagic zones serve as their primary hunting grounds.

DIET

The species operates as an apex carnivore with highly specialized regional diets depending on their specific ecotype population. Resident pods feed almost exclusively on fish like salmon and herring, while transient pods hunt marine mammals. They target seals, sea lions, porpoises, and even massive baleen whale calves.



INTRODUCTION

The orca reigns as the undisputed, highly intelligent ruler of the global marine ecosystem. Known alternatively as the killer whale, this magnificent social predator combines unmatched tactical teamwork with complex vocal cultures, standing as a profound symbol of oceanic power, cognitive sophistication, and wild beauty across every ocean basin on Earth.





ETHOLOGY AND TEMPERAMENT

This social mammal lives in complex, matrilineal pods, exhibiting a highly cooperative and protective temperament. They communicate through unique vocal dialects, passing down specific hunting traditions across generations. Extremely intelligent and playful, they coordinate advanced group strategies to herd fish or wash seals off ice floes while avoiding aggressive conflicts within their own pods.

FUN FACT

The creature does not actually sleep completely, as it must keep one half of its brain awake to remember to surface and breathe. Furthermore, different pods possess entirely distinct vocal languages and cultural behaviors, meaning two groups swimming in the same area might not understand each other at all.

BREEDING SEASON

Mating can occur at any time of the year, though births often peak during the winter months. Following an exceptionally long gestation period of fifteen to eighteen months, the female gives birth to a single calf underwater. The entire pod assists in protecting and raising the newborn, which nurses for up to two years.

