

MARINE MAMMAL REPORT 2005

Mike Cahill

There were a good number of sightings this year, amongst which were 5 sightings of Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*, 3 dead strandings, but also 2 live sightings which is quite unusual in the seas around the Island.

On the 9th October, a Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*, was seen at Yarmouth Pier swimming around boats. It remained in the Yarmouth area for at least a week.

On the 2nd November, sightings were reported of a dolphin in Southampton Water, on the 8th at Calshot Spit swimming around buoys, on the 9th off Cowes and on the 26th in Portsmouth Harbour. A dolphin was again seen on the 22nd and 31st December off Cowes and in Cowes harbour. It is likely that the same dolphin remained in the Solent from October through to December, a very unusual occurrence for the Solent.

On 17th November, a dead FinWhale *Balaenoptera physalus*, was sighted near the Nab Tower and a hazard warning was broadcast to shipping. On 19th November it was seen close inshore in Seagrove Bay, Seaview. Later that morning it was taken in tow and beached at Springvale where, a few days later, contractors removed the carcass for disposal.

Other sightings include : Striped Dolphin *Stenella coeruleoalba*, Common Seal *Phoca vitulina* and Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus*.

A full list of sightings is attached in Table 1.

Acknowledgments Our thanks to all who have submitted sightings for this year`s report.

Author M.Cahill. 4 Nodes Road, Cowes, IOW. PO31 8AB

Marine Mammal Records for 2005
Table 1

Species	Site	Date	Qty	Comments
Harbour Porpoise	Chilton Chine	1-Feb	1	
Seal	Ventnor, off coast	1-Feb	1	Seen in Bay
Harbour Porpoise	Sudmoor Point	4-Feb	1	
Common Seal	Western Yar	10-Feb	1	Feeding on a Bass.
Harbour Porpoise	Chilton Chine	12-Feb	1	Stranded, decomposing.
Harbour Porpoise	Woody Bay	19-Feb	1	Stranded, decomposing.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Rocken End, offshore	21-Feb	2	Heading West
Harbour Porpoise	Dunnose Point, off coast	6-Mar	2	1.5km off shore, heading SW
Bottlenose Dolphin	Ventnor Bay	8-Mar	10	1km offshore heading West, inc 3 juveniles approx 2m in length.
Dolphin	Compton Chine	16-Mar	1	Stranded, Parts of skeleton - tail/flukes /flippers&front of head missing.
Seal	Western Yar	11-Apr	1	Hauled out on sandbank
Bottlenose Dolphin	Colwell Bay	1-May	7	Seen 1.5km NW of Colwell Bay. Leaping and breaching, seabirds overhead.
Grey Seal	Chiltern Chine	4-Jun	1	
Striped Dolphin	Isle of Wight	9-Jun	1	Stranded, deep cut by blow hole, put down by Vet.
Common Seal	St Cath`s Lighthouse, offshore	30-Jun	1	
Common Seal	Medina River, Folly Inn	28-Aug	1	
Grey Seal	East Cowes Seafront, offshore	30-Aug	1	
Bottlenose Dolphin	Seaview, offshore 1km	23-Sep	1	2m long.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Seaview, offshore 1km	24-Sep	1	swimming fast.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Seaview, offshore 1km		1	leaping.
Dolphin	Seaview, offshore 4km	26-Sep	1	Seen east of Horse Sands Fort.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Seaview, offshore 10km	4-Oct	2	Scars near blowhole, Breaching, heading South.
Common Seal	Culver Cliff, offshore	6-Oct	2	Seen from Culver Cliff, heading South.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Cowes , offshore	7-Oct	1	Seen from Ferry.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Yarmouth Pier	9-Oct	1	stayed for 1 week, seen close to pier and with boats.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Yarmouth Pier	9-Oct	1	catching fish.
Bottlenose Dolphin	Yarmouth Pier	11-Oct	1	
Bottlenose Dolphin	Yarmouth	13-Oct	1	Seen from Ferry
Bottlenose Dolphin	Solent, off Calshot	8-Nov	1	
Bottlenose Dolphin	off Cowes	9-Nov	1	
Fin Whale	Seagrove Bay	19-Nov	1	53ft long, dead, beached at Springvale for disposal.
Common Seal	Medina River	20-Nov	1	hauled out at Island Harbour.
Fin Whale	Castle Haven, offshore	24-Nov	1	Remains of dead whale.
Dolphin	Cowes, offshore	22-Dec	1	Riding bow wave of Ferry.
Common Seal	Cowes Harbour	31-Dec	1	Near Passenger Ferry Terminal.