



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

Risso's Dolphin (*Grampus griseus*)

Description

Risso's dolphins are a medium-sized cetacean and range in color from pale buff to dark brown or gray, with a light gray or white ventral surface. The front half of the body is more robust than the back, and the extensive scarring makes them easily recognizable. The melon is broad and squarish without the characteristic beak of most other delphinids. The sickle-shaped dorsal fin is tall and erect.



Habitat and Distribution

Risso's dolphins have an extensive distribution in tropical and warm temperate waters of all oceans and large seas. Migratory patterns are not well defined although there are clearly seasonal shifts in distribution.

Sounds

Risso's dolphins produce echolocation clicks while foraging, and vocalizations used in communication such as barks, buzzes, grunts, chirps, and whistles.

Feeding

Risso's dolphins forage primarily at night and specialize on squid. They occasionally eat other cephalopods (octopus and cuttlefish).

Threats

The primary threat to Risso's dolphins is bycatch in fishing gear. They are also occasionally hunted in Indonesia, Japan, the Caribbean, and the Solomon Islands.

Fun Fact

Risso's bodies are scarred by the teeth of other dolphins, as well as their prey; squid!



Family: Delphinidae
Population: > 290,000
Status: Least Concern
Length: 8 — 13 feet
Weight: 660 — 1,100 lbs