

THE MARINE WILDLIFE FOUNDATION  
WWW. JOJODOLPHIN.ORG

Turks and Caicos Islands, BWI, 2003  
By Dean Bernal

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	AREA STOCKS	ITEMS REFERED
Atlantic Bottlenose	Tursiops Truncatus	1 (JOJO specific)	1A, 1B, 1C
Atlantic Bottlenose	Tursiops Truncatus	200 (estimate)	2A,
Spotted Dolphins	Stenella Attenuata	100 (estimate)	3A
Spotted Dolphins	Stenella Frontalis (off)	80 (estimate)	4A
Humpback Whales	Megaptera Novaeangliae	500 (estimate)	5A, 5B 5C
Manatees	Trichechus Manatus	0	6A
Pigmy Sperm Whales	Kogia Breviceps	9	7A
Bryd Whale	Balaenoptera Edeni	2	8A
Cuvier's Beaked Whale	Ziphius Cavirostris	2	9A
Turtles	Unidentified	12 NEST	10A

### **PROGRESS OF ITEMS**

#### **1A**

**JOJO the Dolphin.** He is a sociable wild Dolphin. Declared a National Treasure in 1989. Appointed a Volunteer Warden in 1989 by Government. The warden continually monitors the health and welfare of the dolphin, corrects threats and harassment to the dolphin, and provides an educational role to tourist and residents who encounter the dolphin. Monitoring of tourist on a daily basis is necessary and has prevented injuries to humans and the dolphin.

#### **1B**

**Water-ski** endangered the life of the dolphin, JOJO. Injuries were treated on a monthly basis by JOJO's warden. Life threatening injuries caused by Club Med water-ski boats started a world wide boycott against all Club Meds in order to stop their water-ski facilities in Turks and Caicos. Water Ski is stopped in this CM facility now, but not banned in National Parks areas. Presently JOJO is healthy and between the age of 25 and 30. Details of controversy at WWW. JOJODOLPHIN.ORG. One dolphin, thought to be JOJO, was killed by propeller blades. JOJO's warden identified the dolphin as another dolphin and not JOJO.

#### **1C**

**The JOJO wardenship** is an official appointment by Government but is a volunteer position. Presently the warden is trained for medical treatments, husbandry and care, stranding and recovery, and for an educational field role. There is no funding presently made available to continue the JOJO Marine Mammal Wardenship and Naturalist availability, or the JOJO Project Program in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

## 2A

**Atlantic Bottlenose** populations and small groups exist and travel near shore at NW Point, Providenciales, Pine Cay, Grand Turk and Salt Cay consistently. The groups (about 20 dolphins) are spread through out the Islands, mainly outside of the reef and wall drops. The Sandborn Channel population is believed to come from this population of dolphins and is found in the shallow waters in the middle of the channel on the banks.

## 3A

**Spotted Dolphins (Inshore)** Primarily and commonly found at NW point outside of the reefs off Grace Bay towards N Caicos. They are normally found swimming between 80 and 500 feet of depth range.

## 4A

**Spotted Dolphins (Offshore)** Not commonly seen. Winter of 2003 March 24<sup>th</sup> approximately 80 of these species were filmed cavorting with people swimming off of the island of Salt Cay. Very vocal and inquisitive but remained 60 feet under humans in the water, but only feet away when coming up to breathe.

## 5A

**Humpback Whales:** See Whale Education Programs and Marine Mammal Research Proposals on WWW JOJODOLPHIN.ORG. I recommend viewing "Problems and Solutions" and "Assessments and Recommendations" sections. Whale photo ID matches were confirmed this year for 2003 and photo ID matches were confirmed from prior whale photo ID's taken in prior seasons. Preliminary data shows seasonal returning whales to the area. Other preliminary data suggest the shallow bank areas of Grand Turk and Salt Cay are sensitive nurseries, calving grounds, and mating areas for Humpback Whales and needs further recognition, studies and protection. This data should be collected prior to any commercialization, development, or human effects in the area.

## 5B

**Schools and Projects: Humpback Whales:** Annually the schools are provided a presentation on the prior years research and the results. Students, visitors, and the public are taken out on boats by the Marine Wildlife Foundation naturalist and the appointed Marine Mammal Warden in order to help gather data for the new year. A complete Marine Mammal Foundation program proposed by the Marine Wildlife Foundation has been proposed. The proposal includes a public awareness education project, involvement of the Dept. of Natural Resources, a Marine Mammal Warden and Naturalist appointment, a school study programs, a museum development, a data collection program, a cultural significance program, presentations by the Foundation, a National Trust preservation program, a marketing and public relations program, and Ministry of Tourism involvement. The project is a Marine Wildlife Foundation proposal and is called, The Marine Wildlife and Environment Awareness Project and is proposed for implementation in 2004. Presently there is no funding for this project.

## 5C

**Proposals and Funding:Humpback Whales:** Presently preliminary data collection, research and education programs are not funded and will cease to exist after winter 2003 if no funding is obtained. Presently we are seeking the recovery of programs to continue our naturalist availability, education programs, and preliminary data collection, and the proposed Marine Mammal and Environmental Awareness Project and Whale Programs. The Marine Wildlife Foundation programs, specific to the Turks and Caicos Islands, can be found at WWW. JOJODOLPHIN.ORG Presently there is no funding to continue these Projects.

## 6A

**Manatees: Reintroduction Proposal** Sir Richard Grenville recorded Manatees in the Turks and Caicos Islands, April 9<sup>th</sup> 1585. Presently no stocks of Manatees have been recorded in the Turks and Caicos Islands aside from a sighting of two Manatees in the Autumn of 1994. Proposals for a reintroduction of Manatees in the Turks and Caicos can be found at [www.jojodolphin.org](http://www.jojodolphin.org). The Marine Wildlife Foundation is seeking to complete a proposal to the Turks and Caicos Government. The Foundation is now is seeking advisors and consultants for a feasibility and habitat assessment for a Marine Wildlife Foundation Manatee Reintroduction Project in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

**7A**

**Pigmy Sperm Whales**; One group of 9 Pigmy Sperm Whales sighted in the summer months off the Pine Cay reefs. Depth below the whale was between 300 and 500 feet. Attempted to photo ID the whales, but the whales were too shy for close approach.

**8A**

**Bryde's Whale**: Filmed in 2002 off Great Sand Cay with numerous Humpback Whales.

**9A**

**Cuvier's Beaked**: Two reported seen off North Caicos in the summer months this year. The last Cuvier's Beaked Whale seen was in this same area stranded on the beach in North Caicos about 10 years ago. The data of the whale was documented and given to Fisheries by Dean Bernal. Unfortunately the whale was seen for about three days in shallow water before stranding or notifying authorities.

**10A**

**Turtles**: Twelve (12) turtle nests were located on Great Sand Cay on the date of March 8<sup>th</sup> 2003. Three (3) located on the S SE Bay of Great Sand Cay, Nine (9) located on the West-facing beach high on the sandbanks. Turtles trails led to four (4) nests suggesting those four nests were laid that same morning. This was evident from the tracks that led into the low tidal beach area. Hatching dates were estimated but the sea conditions prevented access to the coast. During the period of Feb- April the Marine Wildlife Foundation made available a Naturalist. During the high sensitive laying and hatching period, the naturalist from the Marine Wildlife Foundation and JOJO Marine Mammal Warden was available to inform visiting boaters not to disturb the nests or go into the high tide dunes where their were eggs. Presently there is no funding to continue this program.

**Notes:**

**Ambergris** samples were collected by the Marine Wildlife Foundation from the island of Cotton Cay and given to the National Museum.