

**ADAPTATION**

Unique characteristic that helps an animal to survive in its habitat.

AQUATIC

Living mostly in water.

BALEEN

Plates from two to twelve feet long, and sometimes a foot wide, which in certain whales, are attached side by side along the upper jaw, and form a fringelike sieve by which food is retained in the mouth.

See: Mysticeti

BLOWHOLE

The hole located on the top of a whale, dolphin or porpoise's head. Used for breathing and vocalizing.

BLUBBER

Thick layer of fat beneath the skin of a whale, dolphin or porpoise that helps to keep the animal warm and stores energy.

BREACHING

When a whale, dolphin or porpoise jumps out of the water falling back into the water on its side, back or belly with a large splash.

BRIDGE

A sound or action that tells the animal it has completed a correct behavior. Some trainers use a clicker, others a whistle and some just use their voice and say "Good." The Bridging Stimulus bridges the gap in time from when the behavior occurred and the presentation of the Positive Reinforcement. It is a signal that a reward is coming.

CAMOUFLAGE

The way in which animals avoid the attention of their enemies by resembling their surroundings or blending in with them.

CETACEAN

Scientific order including whales, dolphins and porpoises.

CLASSIFICATION

Organisms in the animal kingdom follow a set method of classification from most general to most specific (Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, Species).

COLD-BLOODED (ECTOTHERMIC)

An animal whose body temperature is regulated by the temperature of the surrounding water or air. Includes all reptiles, amphibians and fish.

COUNTER SHADING

A type of camouflage. The animal is dark on top, therefore blends into the dark ocean depths and light on their bellies to blend with the light from the sky above.

CREPUSCULAR

Active during twilight hours like dawn and dusk.

DORSAL FIN

The fin on the back of the whale, dolphin or porpoise, which helps with balance and to regulate their body temperature.

ECHOLOCATION

The ability to locate objects by emitting sound waves and interpreting the resulting echo. A system of sonar that allows a dolphin to "see" without using their eyes. Dolphins use echolocation to navigate and to find food.

ENVIRONMENT

See: Habitat

EXTANT

Opposite of Extinct: A living species.

EXTINCT

When the last member of a species dies and the organism is no longer in existence on Earth.

FETUS

A mammalian embryo.

FLIPPER

Two fins on the side of a dolphin, which help it to turn and steer, AKA: Pectoral fin.

**FLUKES**

The two tail fins of a whale, dolphin or porpoise, which helps them move through the water.

FUR

The thick coat of soft hair covering the skin of some mammals. Fur, as opposed to hair is a hair follicle without a root. Fur is barbed (has scales along its length), hair is smooth. Most mammals have fur except for primates; most animals have fur rather than hair. This nonrooted hair falls easy from its anchor point which is known as shedding.

GENOTYPE

The genetic make-up of an organism (not necessarily visible externally).

GESTATION

The period of development of a fetus in the uterus (pregnancy time).

HABITAT

The place where an animal lives. Habitat consists of food, shelter, water, and space.

HETERODONT

Having different shaped teeth in the mouth, as in humans having incisors, canines and molars.

HETEROZYGOUS

Genetic trait where the organism is a carrier of a recessive gene for a condition (i.e. Heterozygous tigers are carriers of the recessive "white" trait).

HOMODONT

The opposite of Heterodont. Having same shaped teeth in the mouth, as in dolphins, all teeth are conical.

HUSBANDRY

A behavior that is trained (conditioned) in order to facilitate the overall care of an animal.

INVERTEBRATES

A multi-celled animal lacking a backbone.

LACTATION

The secretion of milk from the mammary gland.

LEUCISM

Lack of dark pigmentation.

MAMMAL

Animal that is warm-blooded, breathes air, gives birth to live young, produces milk to feed its young, and has hair, fur or blubber at some point in their life.

MAMMALOLOGY

The study of mammals.

MARINE MAMMAL

A mammal that lives in or in close proximity to the water and depends on the water for food.

MATRIARCHAL

A society in which most activity and behavior is centered around the dominant female.

MELANIN

The dark pigmentation found in the skin.

MELANISTIC

Dark coloration of the skin, hair, fur, or feathers because of a high concentration of melanin.

MYSTICETI

Suborder of Cetacea; includes all Baleen Whales.

NATURAL BEHAVIORS

Behaviors that are part of an animal's natural tendency (i.e. sitting, walking, swimming, jumping).

NOCTURNAL

Animals that are most active at night.

ODONTOCETI

Suborder of Cetacea; includes all the toothed whales (dolphins are toothed whales).

OVIPAROUS

Animals that lay eggs are oviparous.

OVOVIVIPAROUS

Animals that appear to give live birth; however, eggs develop and are hatched inside the female's body and are nourished by a yolk sac.

PARASITE

A plant or animal that lives off of a living host and causes harm and possible death to the host.

PECTORAL FIN

See: Flipper

PHENOTYPE

The physical make-up of an organism (what they look like).

PISCIVORY

Consuming a fish diet.

PLACENTA (PLACENTAL MAMMALS)

A structure that connects the fetus and mother's womb to ensure a supply of nutrients to the fetus.

POD

A group of whales, dolphins or porpoises. (Nursery Pod: a group of females and young calves. Bachelor pod: a group of young adult to adult male dolphins.)

PORPOISING

The movement of dolphins as they leap out of the water into an arc (also called a "bow").

PUBERTY

The stage prior to sexual maturity.

RAKE MARKS

Scratches on a dolphin made by the teeth of other dolphins, often due to play, dominance establishment or parental discipline.

ROSTRUM

Beak-like mouth of a whale, dolphin or porpoise.

SPECIES

A group of animals that are similar in nature and when they reproduce they produce a fertile offspring.

SUBSPECIES

A recognizable sub-population of a species, usually separated by geographical distribution.

SYMBIOSIS

A relationship developed for the mutual benefit of two or more individuals (i.e. clown fish and anemone, bee and flower).

VESTIGIAL ORGAN

Atrophied or nonfunctional organs that are remnants of a way of life that is no longer required. Occurring or persisting as a rudimentary or degenerate structure.

VIVIPAROUS

Giving birth to live young.

WARM-BLOODED (ENDOTHERMIC)

Maintaining a relatively constant and warm body temperature independent of environmental temperature.

ZOONOSES

Diseases that can be transmitted between human and other animals.