



# MarLIN

## Marine Information Network

Information on the species and habitats around the coasts and sea of the British Isles

# Northern bottlenose whale (*Hyperoodon ampullatus*)

MarLIN – Marine Life Information Network  
Marine Evidence-based Sensitivity Assessment (MarESA) Review

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2008-06-02

A report from:

The Marine Life Information Network, Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom.

**Please note.** This MarESA report is a dated version of the online review. Please refer to the website for the most up-to-date version [<https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/111>]. All terms and the MarESA methodology are outlined on the website (<https://www.marlin.ac.uk>)

This review can be cited as:

Barnes, M.K.S. 2008. *Hyperoodon ampullatus* Northern bottlenose whale. In Tyler-Walters H. and Hiscock K. (eds) *Marine Life Information Network: Biology and Sensitivity Key Information Reviews*, [online]. Plymouth: Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom.

DOI <https://dx.doi.org/10.17031/marlinsp.111.1>



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A pair of breaching Northern bottlenose whales, showing their underside and left side.  
 Photographer: Sue Scott  
 Copyright: Sue Scott

See online review for  
 distribution map

Distribution data supplied by the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). To interrogate UK data visit the NBN Atlas.

<b>Researched by</b>	Morvan Barnes	<b>Refereed by</b>	Admin
<b>Authority</b>	(Forster, 1770)		
<b>Other common names</b>	-	<b>Synonyms</b>	<i>Hyperoodon (Hyperoodon) ampullatus</i>

## Summary

### Description

*Hyperoodon ampullatus* is a toothed whale and can be recognised as such by the single blowhole and the presence of teeth (rather than baleen). It is a member of the beaked whale family with the characteristic V-shaped crease on the throat and the short dorsal fin set relatively far back. The Northern bottlenose whale is a large beaked whale that can reach up to 10 m in length. The lower jaw has a single pair of teeth (exposed only in adult males). It has a very distinct beak and a very steep, often bulbous forehead. It has a dark grey to chocolate brown dorsal and lateral colouration and somewhat lighter below. Much of the face may be light grey in colour. Adults are often covered with scratches and scars.

### Recorded distribution in Britain and Ireland

Has been found at several locations around the British Isles but more expected off north-west Scotland.

### Global distribution

-

### Habitat

The northern bottlenose whale is an offshore species. It may be seen breathing at the surface or

diving down to a depth of up to 1,000 m.

## ↓ Depth range

-

## Q Identifying features

- Up to 10 m in length.
- Small dorsal fin two-thirds down the body.
- High bulged forehead and well-demarcated beak.
- Pair of V-shaped throat grooves.
- Mouthline curved up at the rear.

## 🏛️ Additional information

The northern bottlenose whale may be confused with Cuvier's beaked whale *Ziphius cavirostris* but can be recognised by having a very distinct beak and a very steep, often bulbous forehead. Northern bottlenose whales are usually found in small pods of 4 to 35 individuals, with some degree of either age or sex segregation. It can be seen, on occasion, to leap clear out of the water. Dives may last up to 2 hours long (Kinze, 2002).

## ✓ Listed by



## 🔗 Further information sources

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