



MarLIN

Marine Information Network

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

False killer whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*)

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

Morvan Barnes

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/123>]. 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. *Pseudorca crassidens* False killer whale. In Tyler-Walters H. and Hiscock K. (eds) *Marine Life Information Network: Biology and Sensitivity Key Information Reviews*, [on-line]. Plymouth: Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom. DOI <https://dx.doi.org/10.17031/marlin.sp.123.1>



The information (TEXT ONLY) provided by the Marine Life Information Network (MarLIN) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 UK: England & Wales License. Note that images and other media featured on this page are each governed by their own terms and conditions and they may or may not be available for reuse. Permissions beyond the scope of this license are available [here](#). Based on a work at www.marlin.ac.uk

(page left blank)



See online review for
distribution map

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

Researched by	Morvan Barnes	Refereed by	Admin
Authority	(Owen, 1846)		
Other common names	-	Synonyms	-

Summary

Description

Pseudorca crassidens is a toothed whale and can be recognised as such by the single blowhole and the presence of teeth. It is a member of the dolphin family with a characteristic prominent median notch in the flukes, a smooth crease-less throat and sharply pointed teeth. The false killer whale reaches up to 6 m in length. It has moderately long and slender, bent flippers and small tail flukes. The dorsal fin is tall, large and located on the middle of the back. The head is smoothly sloping without a snout. It is entirely black in colour.

Recorded distribution in Britain and Ireland

Has been recorded off the west coasts of Scotland, east of the Orkney Isles and north-west of County Mayo, Ireland.

Global distribution

-

Habitat

The false killer whale is an offshore species although little is known about their preferred bathymetry.

↓ Depth range

-

🔍 Identifying features

- Slender body up to 6 m in length.
- Tall dorsal fin located on the middle of the back.
- Very deepened tail stock.
- Entirely black in colour.
- Rounded head with no beak.
- Flippers bent at the mid-point.
- Straight mouthline.

🏛️ Additional information

False killer whales are usually found in pairs or in groups up to several hundred individuals. Their surface behaviour is typical of dolphins with acrobatic leaps and bow-riding are not uncommon. Dive duration is unknown (Kinze, 2002).

✓ Listed by



🔗 Further information sources

Search on:



Bibliography

- Bruyns, W.F.J.M., 1971. *Field guide of whales and dolphins*. Amsterdam: Publishing Company Tors.
- Fletcher, N. & Curtis, D. 1999. Cetacean monitoring in the English Channel and Bay of Biscay, from platform of opportunity, over six years period (1993-1998) *European Research on Cetaceans*, **13**, 210
- Howson, C.M. & Picton, B.E., 1997. *The species directory of the marine fauna and flora of the British Isles and surrounding seas*. Belfast: Ulster Museum. [Ulster Museum publication, no. 276.]
- Jefferson, T.A., Leatherwood, S. & Webber, M.A., 1994. *FAO species identification guide. Marine mammals of the world*. Rome: United Nations Environment Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- Kinze, C. C., 2002. *Photographic Guide to the Marine Mammals of the North Atlantic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, J.B., Evans, P.G.H., Northridge, S.P. (ed.), 2003. *Atlas of Cetacean Distribution in North-west European Waters*. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Datasets

- NBN (National Biodiversity Network) Atlas. Available from: <https://www.nbnatlas.org>.
- Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service, 2017. NBIS Records to December 2016. Occurrence dataset: <https://doi.org/10.15468/jca5lo> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-10-01.
- OBIS (Ocean Biogeographic Information System), 2019. Global map of species distribution using gridded data. Available from: Ocean Biogeographic Information System. www.iobis.org. Accessed: 2019-03-12
- South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre, 2018. SEWBReC Mammals (South East Wales). Occurrence dataset: <https://doi.org/10.15468/atlxpp> accessed via GBIF.org on 2018-10-02.