














**MARINE
MAMMAL
ALERT!**

MARINE MAMMALS FREQUENTLY STRANDED ALONG CHENNAI COAST

	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	MAXIMUM SIZE	SIZE AT BIRTH	COLOURATION	KEY IDENTIFICATION FEATURE
	BLUE WHALE	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	29m	7m - 8m	Mottled or bluish grey and lightcoloured underneath	60-88 ventral pleats on throat extending to navel
	SPERM WHALE	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	12.5m (F) 19.5m (M)	3.5m - 4.5m	Square shaped head with 18-26 pairs of teeth only on lower jaw	Missile shaped head with 18-26 pair of teeth only on lower jaw
	BRYDE'S WHALE	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>	15m - 16.5m	3.5m - 4.5m	Black to brownish grey with white areas around mouth and belly	Three prominent ridges on the rostrum
	DWARF SPERM WHALE	<i>Kogia sima</i>	2.7m	1m	Counter shaded brownish grey (dorsal) to white (ventral) coloration	Shark like head with narrow lower jaw with 7-12 pairs of teeth in lower jaw, 3 pairs of teeth on the upper jaw, fang-like sharp teeth
	HUMPBACK DOLPHIN	<i>Sousa sp</i>	2.7m	1m	Steely grey with pink patches around mouth, dorsal fin and tail	A distinct hump before the dorsal fin. Has 32-38 pair of teeth
	PANTROPICAL SPOTTED DOLPHIN	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>	1.6m - 2.6m	80cm - 85cm	Solid grey and light grey fused on the dorsal and ventral portion of the body. Light coloured underbelly	Stripe from eye to beak. Dark cape starts above the eye and dips under dorsal fin. 34-48 slender, sharp pointed teeth
	STRIPED DOLPHIN	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	2.56m	93cm - 100cm	White or pinkish belly and dark grey cape are separated by a light greythorax	Stripe running from eye to flipper and tail stock. Blaze before dorsal fin. 40-45 slender point teeth in each row
	RISSO'S DOLPHIN	<i>Grampus griseus</i>	3.8m	1.5m	Dark grey to nearly white but covered with white scratches, spots and blotches	Blunt headed animals without a distinct beak. Tall dorsal fin. 2-7 pairs of stout pointed teeth in the front of the lower jaw, none or occasionally 1-2 pair in the upper jaw
	SHORT-FINNED PILOT WHALE	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>	5.5m (F) 7.2m (M)	1.4m - 1.9m	Black to dark brownish-grey with light grey anchor shaped patch on the chest.	Large, rounded, anteriorly placed dorsal fin. Bulbous head, upsloping mouthlines and extremely short or non-existent beaks. Peculiar flipper shape. 7-9 sharply point teeth in each row.
	INDO-PACIFIC BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN	<i>Tursiops aduncus</i>	2.7m	85cm - 112cm	Belly is white to pale grey Body is uniform grey.	Adult animals have dark speckles under belly. 21-29 pair of teeth
	INDO-PACIFIC COMMON DOLPHIN	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>	1.9m - 2.2m (F) 2m - 2.5m (M)	80cm - 100cm	Characterized by an hour glass pattern on the side forming a V below dorsal fin	47-60 sharp pointed teeth in upper row and 48-57 in the lower row
	SPINNER DOLPHIN	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>	2.0m - 2.3m	75cm - 80cm	Have tripartite (three layer) colour pattern: dark grey cape, light grey sides and white belly	Slender animal with extremely long beak. 40-62 pair of very fine teeth.
	INDO-PACIFIC FINLESS PORPOISE	<i>Neophocaena phocaenoides</i>	1.7m	75cm - 85cm	Dark grey in colour with light areas on the throat and around genitals.	No dorsal fin. 15-22 small and tender tooth in each row

Note: The list of marine mammals provided above covers the species that have stranded along the Chennai coast and surrounding areas. It is based on strandings reported by volunteer organisations and media. This list is not comprehensive and has not been published elsewhere. Reference: Jefferson, Thomas A., Marc A. Webber, and Robert L. Pitman. Marine Mammals of the world: a comprehensive guide to their identification, second edition. Academic press, 2015.