

# Charleston Dolphin Fact Sheet

Brought to you by Carolina Marine Group  
Private Boat Tours with Captain Dave

## Species in Charleston

*Bottlenose Dolphin (Tursiops truncatus)*

- Most common marine mammal in South Carolina
- Seen daily in Charleston Harbor, Intracoastal Waterway, and around Shem Creek



## Quick Facts

<b>Av Length:</b>	8–12 feet
<b>Wg.:</b>	300–600 lbs
<b>Lifespan:</b>	40–50 years (females often live longer)
<b>Speed:</b>	Up to 20 mph
<b>Jump Ht.:</b>	Up to 15 feet in the wild



## Smart & Social

- Among the most intelligent animals on Earth
- Use tools and solve problems
- Live in pods of 5–20; may form large superpods
- Each dolphin has a unique signature whistle (like a name!)



## Communication & Behavior

- Communicate with clicks, whistles, and body language
- Often seen bow-riding – surfing the wake at the front of boats
- Use strand feeding during low tide – a technique only seen in SC, GA, and FL
- Sleep with half their brain at a time to stay alert and breathe



## Baby Dolphins

- Called calves
- Stay with mom for up to 3 years
- Learn hunting, swimming, and social skills from the pod



## Best Time for Sightings

- All year round in Charleston
- Active during low tide, especially in fall (mullet run)
- Morning and evening are often great times for viewing

## Predators & Protection

- Natural predators: large sharks (tiger, bull sharks)
- Human threats: boat strikes, pollution, illegal feeding
- It's illegal to feed or touch wild dolphins (fines up to \$100,000)
- Always observe from a respectful distance

***Want to see dolphins up close?***  
Join Captain Dave for a private Charleston dolphin tour.