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Dolphins and Whales

Bottlenose dolphins and orcas (killer whales) belong to the same family and are both marine mammals. They have blowholes located on the tops of their heads, which allow them to breathe. Both tend to live and hunt in groups. They are carnivorous and feed on fish and squid. They help one another target schools of fish in order to hunt their prey. By traveling in pods, they also have a greater chance of surviving attacks from predators.

Orcas can be found in almost all oceans, mostly in the Arctic and Antarctic seas. Their coloring helps them stay camouflaged as well. They have white light undersides which blend into the brightness of the water's surface from below. Their backs are black which tend to blend in with the dark look of the water's surface from above. Killer whales can grow up to 25 feet in length and weigh up to 15,000 pounds. Whales communicate with each other by making high-pitched click and whistle sounds.

Unlike the whale, bottlenose dolphins are gray in color. They can be found in tropical and temperate shallow waters. A full grown male dolphin can be 10 feet in length and weigh up to 150 pounds.

Both dolphins and orcas face threats to their survival. The dolphins' greatest threat is due to climate change. As ocean water temperatures rise, the prey of dolphins start to look for deeper, cooler waters. On the other hand, whales' biggest threat to survival is pollution. Many whales face contamination, which leads to low rates of birth and disease.

