

Burrunan Dolphin

Tursiops australis

The Burrunan dolphin is a unique species of dolphin found in Port Phillip Bay and is one of the oldest species of dolphin in the world. Burrunan is an Aboriginal name meaning “large sea fish of the porpoise kind”.

It was classified as a separate species from the Common Bottlenose Dolphin in 2011. Less than 300 Burrunan dolphins remain and almost all of this species can be found in Port Phillip and Corio Bay. Due to their rare abundance and distribution, they are listed as endangered in the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. They can be recognised by the distinct tri-colouration: Darker grey on top, lighter grey along the sides, and a whiter colour underneath.

Threats

There are 44 species of dolphin found in the world. They are all affected by litter. Dolphins become so full of plastic they have no appetite for fish and starve, and the toxic plastic slowly poisons them. Around 60% of stranded cetaceans worldwide have consumed plastic.

