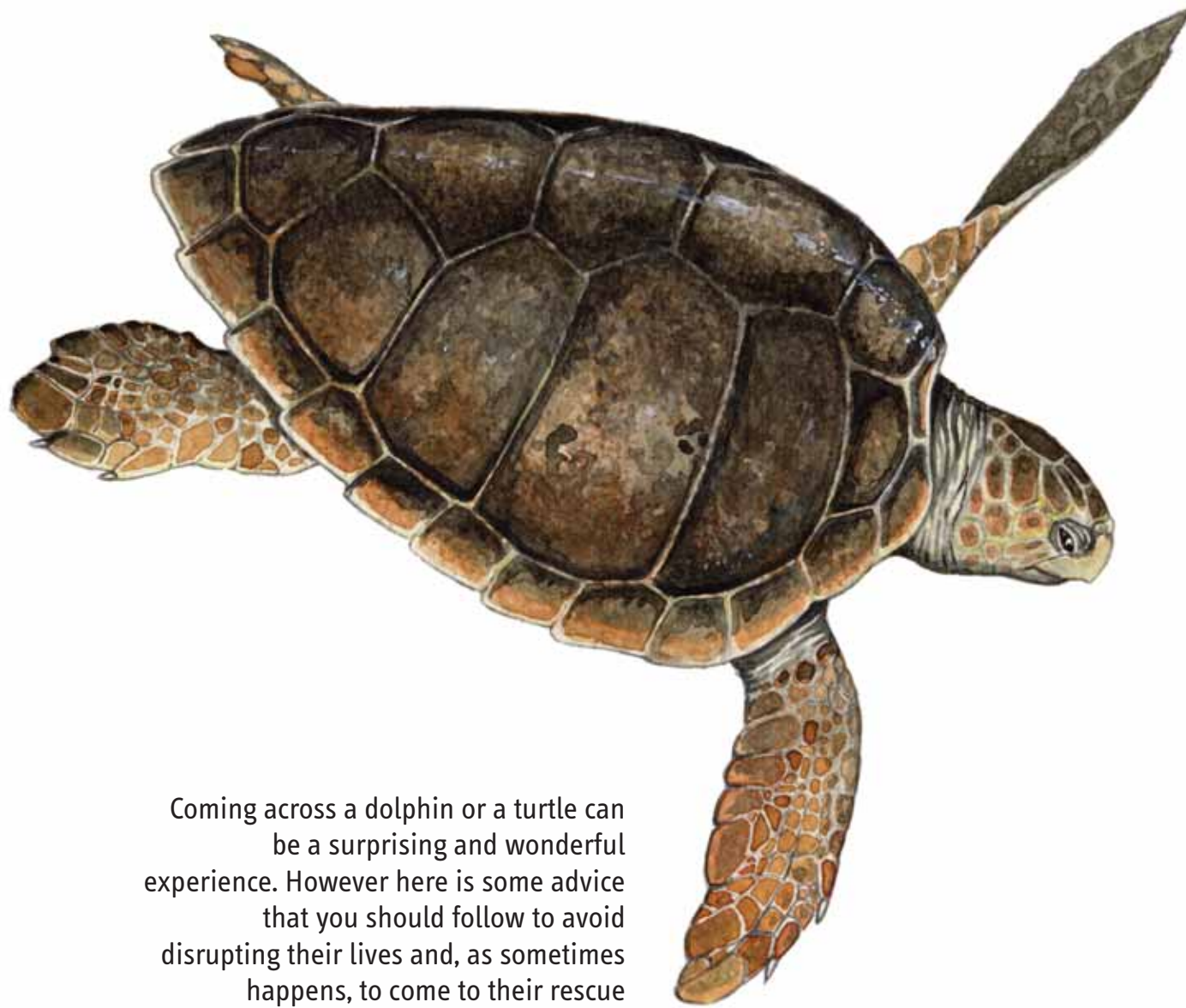


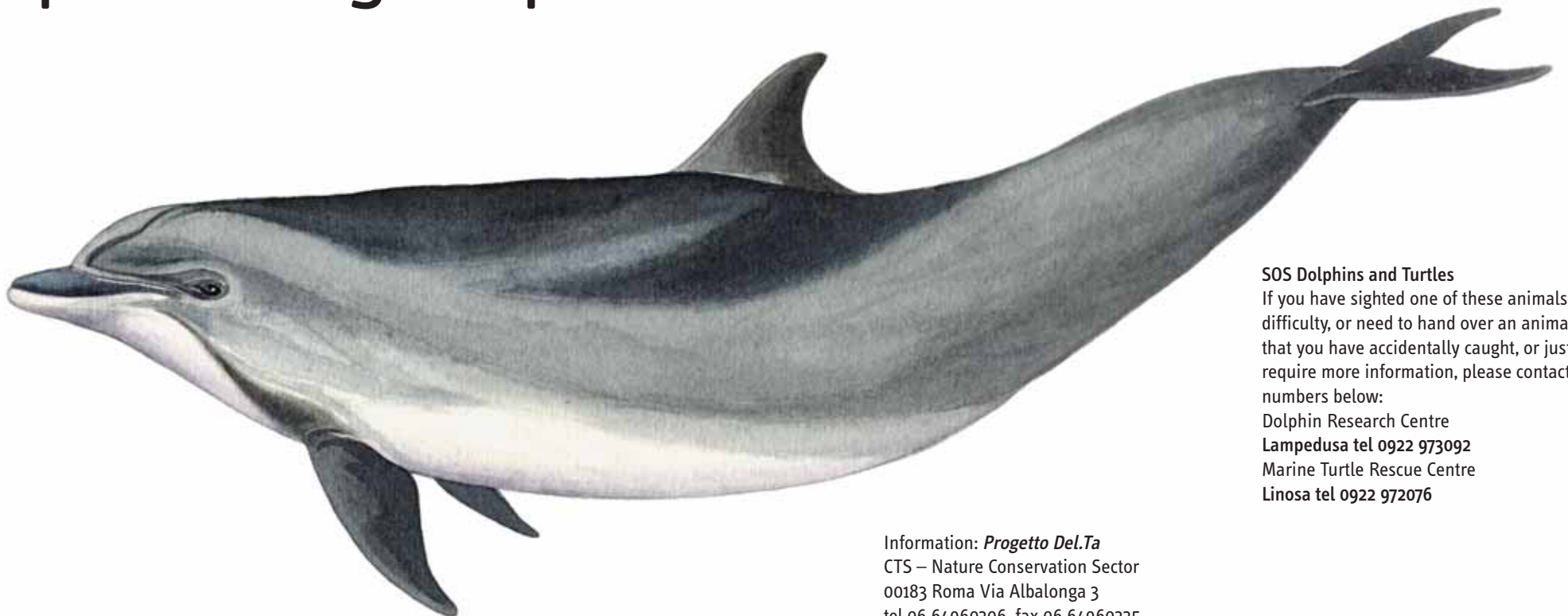
You can help too...



Coming across a dolphin or a turtle can be a surprising and wonderful experience. However here is some advice that you should follow to avoid disrupting their lives and, as sometimes happens, to come to their rescue



protecting dolphins and turtles



- 1 > Never throw litter into the sea as this is inadvertently swallowed by dolphins and turtles, resulting in their death
- 2 > At night time avoid nesting areas, and refrain from making noise or lighting fires in the surroundings: turtles may get scared and therefore stop laying their eggs
- 3 > If you see a dolphin or a turtle keep a distance of at least 60 metres
- 4 > If you are on a boat never chase the animals, try and keep steering parallel to the direction in which they are swimming without changing direction abruptly
- 5 > Do not go into the water to purposely swim with the animals
- 6 > If you come across dolphins in the water do not try to split one of them from the group; never go near the cetaceans with calves and do not make any noise, whistle or shout
- 7 > Turtles often come to the surface to get warm, do not disturb them, do not try to feed them and do not try to capture them
- 8 > If dolphins come and play with the waves in front of your boat do not try to touch them and never give them any food
- 9 > Do not buy live or dead animals or objects made with parts of their body and report any offences to the Authorities (State Forest Ranger Division and Harbour-Office): the *Caretta caretta* and the *Tursiops truncatus* are internationally protected species
- 10 > Report any sightings of animals stranded on the beach or in the water and write down any tags they may have as these are used by researchers to keep track of turtles, or look out for any markings or distinguishing features the Cetaceans may have on their fins or tails

SOS Dolphins and Turtles

If you have sighted one of these animals in difficulty, or need to hand over an animal that you have accidentally caught, or just require more information, please contact the numbers below:

Dolphin Research Centre
Lampedusa tel 0922 973092
Marine Turtle Rescue Centre
Linosa tel 0922 972076

Information: **Progetto Del.Ta**
CTS – Nature Conservation Sector
00183 Roma Via Albalonga 3
tel 06 64960306 fax 06 64960335
progettodelta@cts.it
www.provincia.agrigento.it

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AGCI Pesca, Legambiente Sicilia Ente gestore della Riserva Naturale Isola di Lampedusa
Telespazio, Dipartimento di Biologia animale dell'Università di Torino



LIFE Project NAT/IT/000163
"Reduction of the impact of human activity
on *Caretta caretta* and *Tursiops truncatus*
and their conservation in Sicily"
Financed from the European Commission
Environment DG

Bottlenose dolphins

To protect *Tursiops truncatus*, better known as the Bottlenose dolphin, biologists, researchers, experts, and from this year even **fishermen**, are involved in **monitoring** the existing population and in experimenting **sound deterrent** tools to keep dolphins away from the fishing nets. As well as recording animal sightings and habits using extremely sophisticated technology, the project also tests the use of special devices called Pingers, which can sidetrack the animals that are trying to eat fish caught in the fishing equipment.

Reducing interactions between fishermen and dolphins can achieve two results: better protection of the species and fewer problems for fishermen.

Areas populated by dolphins will also be identified using satellite images, in order to create a proper **Action Plan** for the protection of these animals in the Pelagie Islands.

Where

The *Del.Ta* project covers the **Pelagie Islands**, a small archipelago made up of the main island of Lampedusa and the small Linosa and Lampione islands, which are all part of the **Marine Protected Area**, created by the **Ministry of the Environment in 2002**.

Del.Ta also covers some of the **Sites of Community Importance (SIC) and Nature Reserves in Western Sicily** as part of its work for the conservation of sea turtles. This area includes the beautiful coastline that surrounds the Belice estuary and the Capo Granitola dunes,

the Capo San Marco sea floor, the Magazzolo, Platani, Capo Bianco and Torre Salsa estuaries. Large turtles have also often been sighted in these areas and incidents have taken place which highlight the need for an improved surveillance system and beach monitoring, focusing on areas where nesting could potentially take place.

Research and Rescue Centres

Two centres have been created in Lampedusa and Linosa islands, plus one in Cattolica, on the west coast of Sicily. They focus on the study and conservation of dolphins and the hundreds of turtles that are victims of different incidents. These centres are involved in carrying out research on dolphins and rescuing and recovering turtles.

The Dolphin Research Centre has been operational in **Lampedusa** since 2001. It is involved in research, monitoring, rescuing turtles in danger and raising public awareness for the protection of

the marine environment. The Marine Turtle Rescue Centre is located in **Linosa**. It is equipped with a complete veterinary surgery operating room, X-ray equipment, darkroom, microscope and an area with tanks for convalescing animals. A third Centre has been realized along the Sicilian West Coast in **Cattolica**, in the Province of Agrigento, as part of the Life Nature 2003 project, with the support of the European Union. These Centres will form a proper support network in the Sicilian Channel, in order to raise awareness and support the protection of cetaceans and turtles.

The European LIFE Nature programme works to conserve natural habitats and the wild fauna and flora of European Union interest, according to the Birds and Habitats directives, thus supporting implementation of the European Union's nature conservation policy and the Natura 2000 Network

Financed from the European Commission Environment DG

"Reduction of the impact of human activity on *Caretta caretta* and *Tursiops truncatus* and their conservation in Sicily"

LIFE Project NAT/IT/000163

AGCI Pesca, Legambiente Sicilia Ente gestore della Riserva Naturale Isola di Lampedusa, Telespazio, Università di Torino

in collaboration with

Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio

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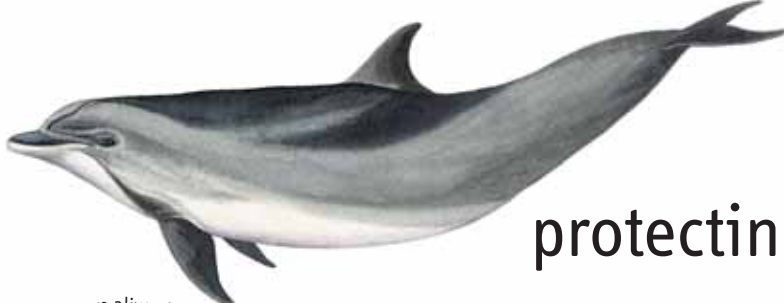
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protecting dolphins and turtles



They are strong, they are alive, they have no reasons of fear, they move wonderfully in the entire volume of their space, liberated from gravity

free from any solid support: therefore they live in a state we just know through dream... PAUL VALÉRY

The world, in truth, is a flat disc that rests on the back of one gigantic turtle. STEPHEN HAWKING

The things you're telling us are nothing but lies.

protecting dolphins and turtles

The project
New help is now available for Sea Turtles (*Caretta caretta*) and Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) in Italy. *Del.Ta – Delfino e Tartaruga protetti (Protecting Dolphins and Turtles)* is a Life Nature project, started in 2003 with the funds of the European Commission, aimed at the conservation of these two precious marine species in Sicily.

The project's **main objective** is to **control the interaction** between the two species and human activities, in order to protect the animals and at the

same time limit the damage caused to fishermen's equipment and their catch. The initiative, wich follows the previous 1999 Life Nature Caretta caretta project, is promoted by the **Environmental Department of the Regional Province of Agrigento** and by the Nature Conservation Division of **CTS**, together with the professional fishery association **Agci Pesca**, the **Nature Reserve of the Island of Lampedusa, Telespazio** and the Animal Biology Department of the **University of Turin**. The project is also sponsored by the Nature Conservation Office of the Ministry of Environment.

Animals at Risk
Intense nautical traffic and professional fishery can put the lives of turtles and cetaceans at risk. These species are protected both nationally and internationally. **Main threats** are:
– Pollution.
– Being accidentally caught up in fishing gear.
– Collisions with boats crossing the waters of the Sicilian channel.

Marine Turtles
Present risks do not always result in loss of life for the turtles, but can often mean surgery, hospitalisation and a lengthy period of convalescence. Thanks to the *Del.Ta Project* animals which are inadvertently caught by fishermen, hit by boats or are suffering because of pollution, can be rescued and looked after in the special **Marine Turtle Rescue Centres** set up by CTS in the Pelagie islands, in Lampedusa and Linosa and in the new Cattolica Centre in the Province of Agrigento.

The project also includes activities such as constant **monitoring** of the females of *Caretta Caretta*, that are used to lay eggs on the beaches of Lampedusa, Linosa and the southern coast of Sicily, as well as the **protection of their nests**



and hatchlings. Between 2000 and 2004 females were able to build 19 nests in the archipelago, resulting in a total of about 2000 eggs and nearly **1400 young turtles** could reach the Mediterranean Sea. The project is also experimenting methods to lower the **impact of professional fishery**, preventing the turtles from getting caught in the special fishing hooks used for tuna and swordfish.