

## SIGHTING DETAILS

Please fill out the following details, noting the grid number or location description of your sighting, below.

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Post Code:.....

### Sighting Information - # 1

Date: ..... Time: .....

Location: .....

.....

Dolphin  Number: ..... Other  Describe: .....

Behaviour/Comments: .....

.....

### Sighting Information - # 2

Date: ..... Time: .....

Location: .....

.....

Dolphin  Number: ..... Other  Describe: .....

Behaviour/Comments: .....

.....

### Sighting Information - # 3

Date: ..... Time: .....

Location: .....

.....

Dolphin  Number: ..... Other  Describe: .....

Behaviour/Comments: .....

.....

Please forward sightings to:  
Dolphin Research Institute  
PO Box 77  
Hastings Vic 3915

## Whale Watching Regulations

The *Wildlife (Whales) Regulations* state that you must not deliberately approach whales and dolphins within the prescribed minimum distances, which are:

- \* 100m for recreational vessels & personal watercraft
- \* 50m if using a surfboard
- \* 30m if swimming or diving
- \* 200m inside the Ticonderoga Bay Sanctuary Zone  
(between Police Point & Point Nepean at Portsea, to 500m offshore)

Dolphin tour vessels with DSE permits may approach closer than 100m outside the Ticonderoga Bay Zone.

It is illegal under any circumstance to touch or feed dolphins and whales.

Penalties apply for breaches of these Regulations. Note that it is *not an offence if dolphins approach you*. If this happens whilst on a boat, do not make any sudden changes in speed or direction.

If you happen to find a stranded dolphin, whale or seal, alive or dead, immediately notify either of the following:

DSE Call Centre **136 186**

Wildlife Victoria **0500 540 000**

In addition, please notify the Dolphin Research Institute on **1300 130 949**. Cases of dolphin harassment can be reported to DSE or the Dolphin Research Institute.

**DOLPHIN RESEARCH INSTITUTE**  
Western Port Marina, Hastings, Vic 3915  
PO Box 77, Hastings Vic 3915  
Ph. 1300 130 949 Fax 03 5979 7150  
E-mail: [mail@dolphinresearch.org.au](mailto:mail@dolphinresearch.org.au)  
Website: [www.dolphinresearch.org.au](http://www.dolphinresearch.org.au)



## Community Dolphin Watch



*Helping us learn more  
about Victoria's dolphins*

**1 3 0 0 1 3 0 9 4 9**

## Who is the Dolphin Research Institute?

The Dolphin Research Institute is a non-profit community organisation which has been working to protect Victoria's dolphins since the early 1990's. The Institute is concerned with the impacts of tourism and broader environmental issues and is an active supporter of marine protected areas.

In addition to building a credible database on dolphin numbers, behaviours and movements, the Institute's research has provided the basis for Victoria's *Whale Watching Regulations*—the first of their kind in the country.

The Dolphin Research Institute's experienced research staff conducts a year-round research program, which is complemented with the analysis of data provided by community sightings throughout all Victorian waters.

## Community Dolphin Watch

The Institute has been operating Community Dolphin Watch for several years and now has a significant database of sightings. Our researchers cannot cover all of Victoria's coastal waters full time, so ask the community to be their extra eyes on the water.

Understanding dolphin behaviour and being able to identify both individual and group movements is an excellent way of monitoring the health of the marine environment.

Sighting information from the community has already assisted researchers in identifying potentially important areas of habitat.

Whilst Community Dolphin Watch provides the means for gathering a large and varied amount of data, it also encourages communities to develop and build on their appreciation of the marine environment.

## How to Report Dolphin Sightings

If you'd like to report a sighting, please fill in the details on the form overleaf. Try to fill in as much detail as possible—we will then enter your results into our database. This information is confidential and site specific results are not released to the public. The Institute prefers to summarise the results and inform the community via newsletters.

### Counting Dolphins

This can be difficult, but the easiest way is to watch them for a while and estimate the group size as a range, i.e. 25-30 (3), where the number in brackets refers to the number of calves included in your estimate.

### Defining Behaviours

The Institute uses 5 main behavioural categories:

*Travelling*—regular surfacing with steady direction

*Feeding*—often lots of direction changes, long dives over the same spot, herding into shallows, working together

*Social*—body contact between individuals, leaping, chasing

*Milling*—low activity, no particular direction

*Human interaction*—includes bowriding, surfing in wake, approaching swimmers

Behaviours may overlap or be combined, i.e. social/feed. If unsure, try to describe what you saw as best you can.

