

Fact Sheet about the Hector's Dolphin

Hector's World™ Limited would like to thank the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society for providing this factsheet for our website visitors. We hope that school classes will want to study and help protect these rare marine mammals.



The world's smallest and rarest marine dolphins are only found in New Zealand waters. They are called Hector's dolphins! Whilst sharing the same first name as Hector Protector®, Hector's dolphins are a different species and look very different. Hector's dolphins can be identified by:

- Their round dorsal fin – Hector's are the only dolphin in New Zealand with a rounded dorsal fin. All other dolphins have a pointed or crescent shaped fin;
- Their body markings - Hector's dolphins are grey, white and black; and
- A short or rounded nose.



Hector's dolphins are very special – not just because they are so small (up to 1.4 metres long) but because they are in deep trouble. In the 1970's, there were around 25,000 Hector's dolphins, now there are just over 7,000 left. In the North Island of New Zealand, Hector's dolphins (called Maui's dolphins there) number less than 111 individuals. They face a very high risk of extinction.

Find out why Hector's dolphins are in so much danger and what you can do to help, by visiting the Department of Conservation website at www.doc.govt.nz, The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society website at www.forestandbird.org.nz, or the WWF – New Zealand website at www.wwf.org.nz.



Photo by Steve Dawson / NZ Whale and Dolphin Trust