

New Species in Tanon Strait - Homo Delphinus

Contributed by Wolfgang Dafert
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Recently there have been first sightings in the Philippines of a new species with the scientific name Homo Delphinus.

Homo Delphinus, first seen in Tanon Strait near Moalboal, can get up to 6 feet in length and 200 pounds weight. They have a long elongated body, two long pectoral fins and a forked fin, but some sightings also speak of only one large tailfin! They are mostly found in depths up to 100 feet and more mostly along costal reefs, but some have also been sighted in open water. Some of the sightings have also been at nighttime and it can be that Homo Delphinus uses some kind of new photophores (light-emitting organs) which helps them to navigate even in complete darkness. Their body colours appear in big variations from black to camouflage brown.

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It looks like the species prefer warm waters, but they have also been seen in such extreme water conditions like under ice. Since common Dolphins are often regarded as one of Earth's most intelligent animals, this should also account for Homo Dolphinus. They live in small to medium size pods and use very differentiated acoustic sounds to communicate with each other on the surface. Interestingly species from different places sometimes have problems communicating with each other. Reasons for this are still unclear. Homo Dolphinus also shows a highly evolved cultural behaviour.

Like their close relatives, the Homo Dolphinus seem to be in the classification of marine mammals, making it necessary for them to come to the surface for breathing air. Homo Dolphinus can hold their breath for up to 10 minutes and dive down to depths of 700ft. Feeding and reproductive behaviors are still quiet unclear, but since there are more and more sightings especially near White Beach in Moalboal it shouldn't be a problem to get more data in the following months and years. We will keep you updated.

For more Information visit [Freediving-Philippines](#) where researcher Wolfgang Dafert successfully studies and trains Homo Dolphinus.

