

Ziphius cavirostris Cuvier, 1823

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BCW

FAO Names: En - Cuvier's beaked whale; Fr - Ziphius; Sp - Zifio de Cuvier.

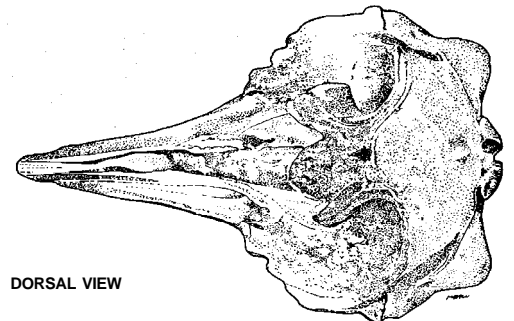


Fig. 217 *Ziphius cavirostris*

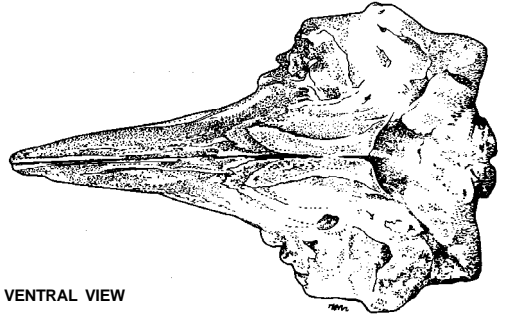
Distinctive Characteristics: Cuvier's beaked whales are relatively robust, as beaked whales go. They have a short, poorly defined beak, and a mouthline that is upcurved at the rear. A pair of V-shaped throat grooves is present. A diagnostic feature is the slight concavity on the top of the head, which becomes increasingly more noticeable in older animals. A fluke notch is sometimes present. The dorsal fin is small and falcate, and is set about two-thirds of the way back from the snout tip.

The body is dark grey to light rusty brown, with lighter areas around the head and belly. The head and much of the back of adult males can be completely white. Generally, adults are covered with light scratches and circular marks.

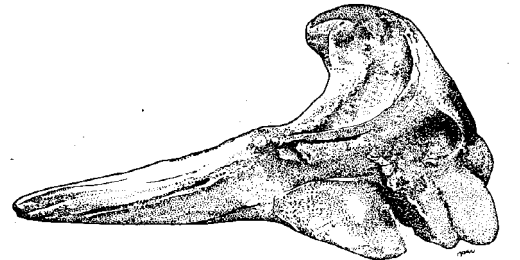
There is a single pair of forward-pointing conical teeth at the tip of the lower jaw; they generally erupt only in adult males and are exposed outside the closed mouth in large bulls.



DORSAL VIEW



VENTRAL VIEW



LATERAL VIEW



Fig. 218 Skull

Can be confused with: This species is most likely to be confused with other beaked whales, especially species of *Mesoplodon* (starting on p. 90). The robust body, blunt head, and lighter coloration (especially around the head, and in adult males) may be sufficient to distinguish Cuvier's beaked whales, if seen. Whales of the genera *Hyperoodon* (starting on p. 84) and *Berardius* (starting on p. 78) are larger and have more bulbous foreheads and long tube-like snouts.

Size: Length at birth is about 2.7 m; adults reach 7.5 m (males) and 7 m (females). Maximum recorded weight is nearly 3 000 kg.

Geographical Distribution: Cuvier's beaked whales are widely distributed in offshore waters of all oceans, from the tropics to the polar regions. They may have the most extensive range of any beaked whale species, and are fairly common in certain areas, such as the eastern tropical Pacific.

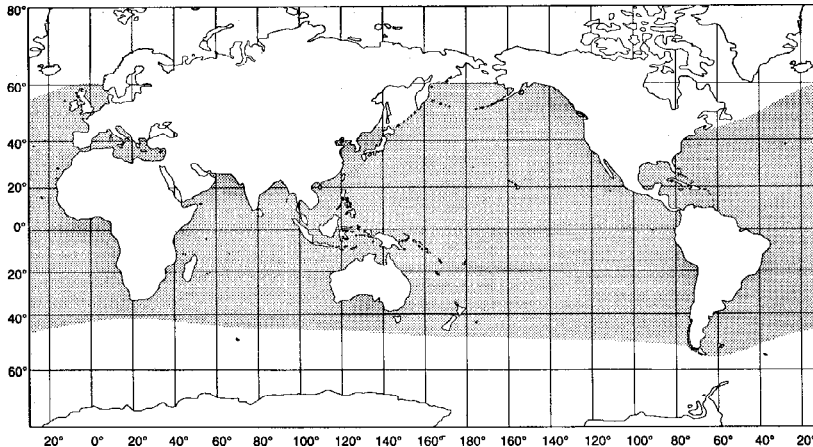


Fig. 219

Biology and Behaviour: This species tends to be rather inconspicuous in its behaviour. Dives of up to 40 minutes have been documented. Cuvier's beaked whales are found mostly in small groups of 2 to 7, but are not uncommonly seen alone.

Seasonality of calving is not known in this species.

Cuvier's beaked whales, like all beaked whales, appear to prefer deep water; they feed mostly on deep sea squid, but also take fish and some crustaceans.

Exploitation: There have been no major fisheries for this species, although small numbers have been taken deliberately in Japan, the Lesser Antilles, and the Mediterranean, and incidentally elsewhere.

IUCN Status: Insufficiently known.

Hyperoodon ampullatus (Forster, 1770)

ZIPH Hyp 2

BOW

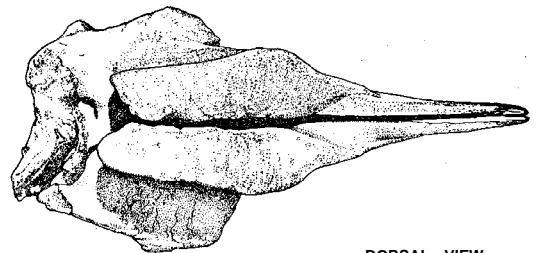
FAO Names: **En** - Northern bottlenose whale; **Fr** - *Hyperoodon boreal*; **Sp** - *Ballena nariz de botella del norte*.

Fig. 220 *Hyperoodon ampullatus*

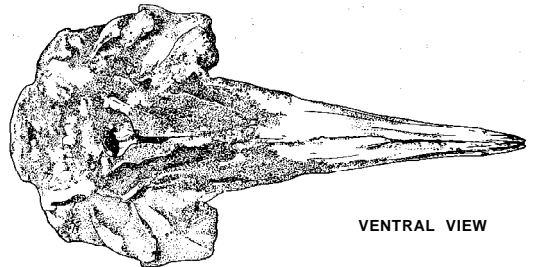
Distinctive Characteristics: Northern bottlenose whales are appropriately named; they have a long tube-like snout that is distinct from the melon. In young animals and females, the forehead slopes gently upward from the beak, but in adult males the forehead becomes very steep and bulging, with a squarish profile. A pair of forward-pointing grooves is found on the throat. The small dorsal fin is falcate and is located far back on the body. The flippers are small and blunt at the tips, and the flukes generally lack a median notch.

Calves are apparently either black or brownish in colour. There is some disagreement as to whether young animals are countershaded. Adults are dark greyish to chocolate brown above and somewhat lighter below. The brownish tinge is enhanced by a covering of diatoms. Some individuals are mottled with white to yellowish splotches and scars, which increase in number with age. Much of the melon and face may be light grey, or in adult males nearly white.

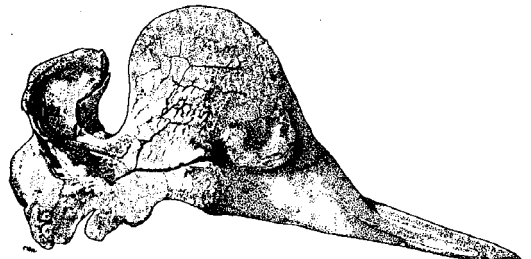
At the tip of the lower jaw are 2 conical teeth that erupt only in bulls, and are not visible outside the closed mouth. A second pair of teeth is sometimes buried in the gums behind the first, and 10 to 20 additional vestigial teeth may be found in the gums of both upper and lower jaws.



DORSAL VIEW



VENTRAL VIEW



LATERAL VIEW

Fig. 221 Skull

Can be confused with: Cuvier's beaked whales (p. 82) can be distinguished from bottlenose whales by differences in head shape and body colour. Species of the genus *Mesoplodon* (starting on p. 90) are distinguishable by their smaller size and more cone-shaped head.

Size: Adult females are up to 8.7 m and adult males up to 9.8 m in length. At birth calves are about 3.5 m.

Geographical Distribution: Northern bottlenose whales are found only in the North Atlantic, from New England to Baffin Island in the west and from the Strait of Gibraltar to Svalbard in the east. These cold temperate to subarctic whales are found in deep waters, mostly seaward of the continental slope.

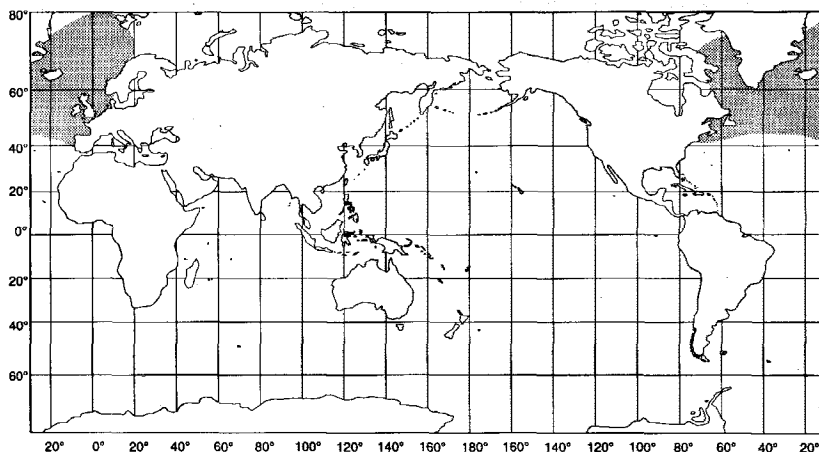


Fig. 222

Biology and Behaviour: Most pods contain at least 4 whales, sometimes with as many as 20, and there is some segregation by age and sex. These deep-divers can remain submerged an hour, possibly as long as 2. They are known for their habit of "standing by" injured companions, which permitted whalers to kill large numbers of whales at the same site. Bottlenose whales are also often curious and attracted to stationary vessels.

Northern bottlenose whales have a peak in calving in April.

Although primarily adapted to feeding on squid, these whales also eat fish, sea cucumbers, starfish, and prawns. They apparently do much of their feeding on or near the bottom.

Exploitation: Northern bottlenose whales have traditionally been the most heavily hunted of the beaked whales. Some hunting has been done by the British and Canadians, but by far the major bottlenose whaling nation was Norway. Early on, they were hunted primarily for oil, but later mainly for animal feed. No hunting has been conducted by Norway since 1973.

IUCN Status: Insufficiently known.