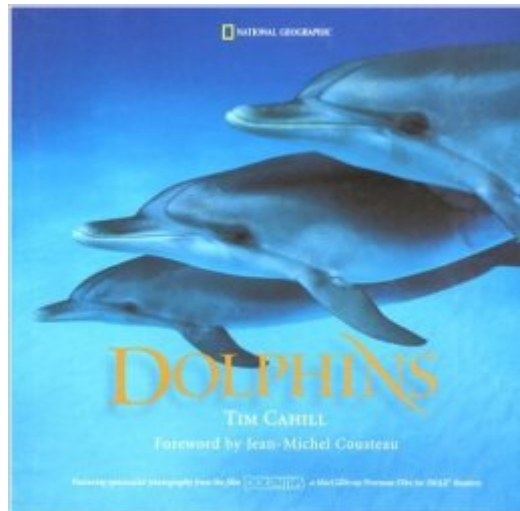


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# Dolphins



## Synopsis

Adventure writer Tim Cahill highlights the lives and careers of two young and renowned scientists on the cutting edge of dolphin research including stories from the field, the pressures and difficulties of a research career, and the risks and rewards of studying wild marine mammals in their habitat.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you're a dolphin freak or a Tim Cahill freak (both of which I am), you're going to like this book. The photographs are just incredible, and as always, Cahill's breezy, sardonic style makes for enjoyable reading. The book does a good job of not romanticizing the dolphins (If I see one more New Age painting of noble dolphins swimming among a sea of stars, I'll get nauseous) but still conveys an appreciation of these impressive creatures. Cahill also does a good job of profiling a team of cetologists studying the dolphins. This isn't hard biology, but there are some interesting sections authored by dolphin investigators, and references for more technical readings in the notes.

This high quality hardbound book is a tome of sorts to state-of-the art wild dolphin scientific research and the personalities of some of their researchers. Spellbinding, graphic text replete with dozens of large format full color portraits -- captured primarily for its sister IMAX film -- *Dolphins* contains a pirate's treasure of newly-found knowledge to permeate the casual reader's grey matter. Intended primarily for lay audiences; but, with enough quantitative analysis to keep the most discerning scientist interested, *Dolphins* saturates the reader with a feeling that he's watching and researching

the dolphins alongside the real scientists. Conservative in the Aldo Leopold sense of the word, Cahill provides the facts and lets the reader reach his/her own conclusions regarding the impacts of man on some dwindling dolphin populations.

I found, after seeing MacGillivray Freeman's IMAX film *Dolphins*, that I wanted to know more. The book follows the basis of the film, but goes into much more detail. This book is a superb account of what it is like to study and be around dolphins in the WILD. Cahill's style of writing makes you feel as if you are with him each night as he recounts a day of activity and research. He doesn't "write down" to the reader, i.e., you feel as if you're right there with him, learning along the way. He conveys a true sense of real-life scientific adventure that is fun and intriguing. The incredible pictures alone, many from the IMAX film, are worth buying the book for. I'm a conservative and will not tolerate "tree-hugger" political agendas. This book, like the film, is far from being one that attempts to drill dolphin conservation into your head. Instead, it offers a refreshing angle that provides the reader the knowledge to draw his/her own conclusions about these fascinating animals. Even the lovely scientist, Dr. Kathleen Dudzinski, who Cahill makes the main subject of the book, lets the dolphins "sell themselves" vs. her preaching conservation. It is quite enlightening and is certainly one to keep on the coffee table.

As a coffee table reference, its main virtues lie in absolutely spectacular pictures. Nothing so impressive appeared before on paper. Moreover, text is comprehensive and well balanced without aspiring to scholarly detail. In the style of the 'National Geographic' magazine, interviews and reports from the latest in the field are the core of narration. As we discover new things on their sensorial life and communication, dolphins become a more fascinating subject. No lover of sea mammals can miss this book.

This was one of my favorite books back in high school. I would shove it into my backpack somehow and bring it out anytime I was supposed to be doing something else (say, learning math or basic writing skills). Yes, I mainly looked at all the gorgeous photos and read the captions, but every now and then I read actual text. Tim Cahill pretty much follows PhD student Kathleen Dudzinski around as she studies Atlantic spotted dolphins in the Bahamas, bottlenose dolphins off Mikura Island in Japan, and finally dusky dolphins off Peninsula Valdes in Patagonia, Argentina. Interludes written by experts cover such topics as anatomy and evolution (featuring an awesome illustration showing a dolphin's internal anatomy), intelligence, mating and reproduction, tool use, and echolocation,

among other topics, while photo galleries illustrate such dolphin behaviors as communication, aggression, and play. At the end of the book is a chart by Pieter Folkins illustrating the various species of dolphins worldwide (including belugas and narwhals, which I guess you could call really fat, slow dolphins) as well as an index. Although a very informative and entertaining read, I seriously just like looking at all those photos (call me a simpleton I guess).

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