

# Common Bottlenose Dolphins of Kaua'i

♀



© Rebecca A. Springer/Cascadia Research

HITt0353 sighted 2005-2023



© Kim A. Wood/Cascadia Research

HITt0463 sighted 2003-2022

♂



© Brenda K. Rone/Cascadia Research

HITt0702 sighted 2011-2017



© Colin J. Cornforth/Cascadia Research

HITt0703 sighted 2011-2021



© Colin J. Cornforth/Cascadia Research

HITt0715 sighted 2003-2018



© Colin J. Cornforth/Cascadia Research

HITt0806 sighted 2004-2021



© Shannon E. Vasquez/Cascadia Research

HITt0823 sighted 2012-2024

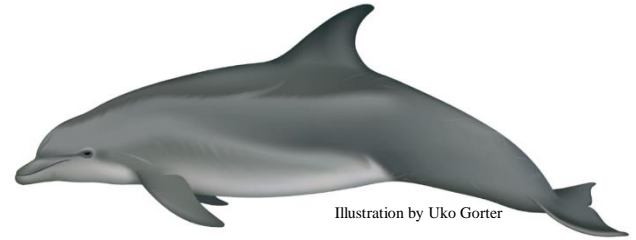
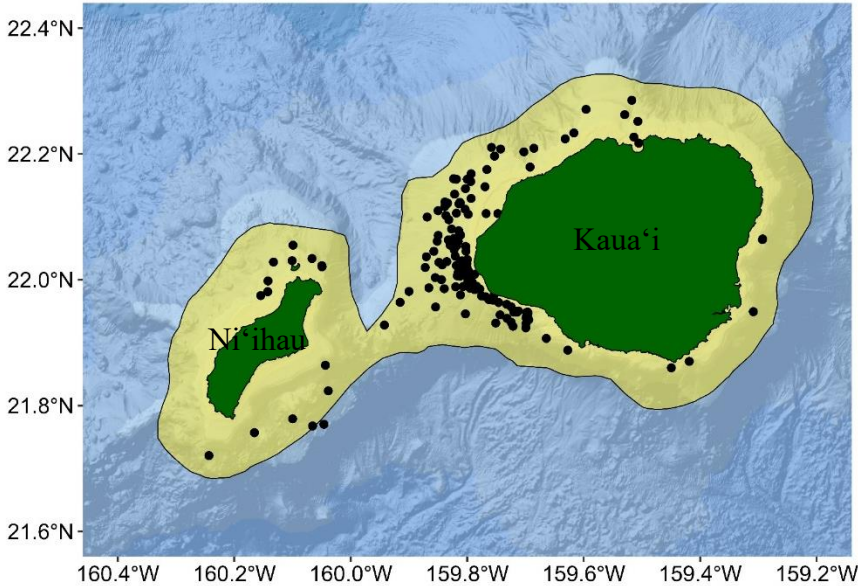


© Shannon E. Vasquez/Cascadia Research

HITt0905 sighted 2011-2022

# Common Bottlenose Dolphins of Kaua'i

The Hawaiian Islands are home to five genetically differentiated populations of common bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), including four island-associated resident populations centered around Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, O'ahu, Maui Nui, and Hawai'i Island, and a rarely seen offshore population that lives in deeper waters. With the exception of the Hawai'i Island population, there is evidence that bottlenose dolphin populations in Hawai'i have declined over the last 25 years.



Island-associated bottlenose dolphins are a shallow-water species, and are most frequently seen off Kaua'i in waters less than 500 m (~1,650 ft) deep. Here, you can see the recognized boundary (yellow) for the Kaua'i population, along with the locations (black dots) where we've sighted groups of bottlenose dolphins during our field work from 2003-2024.

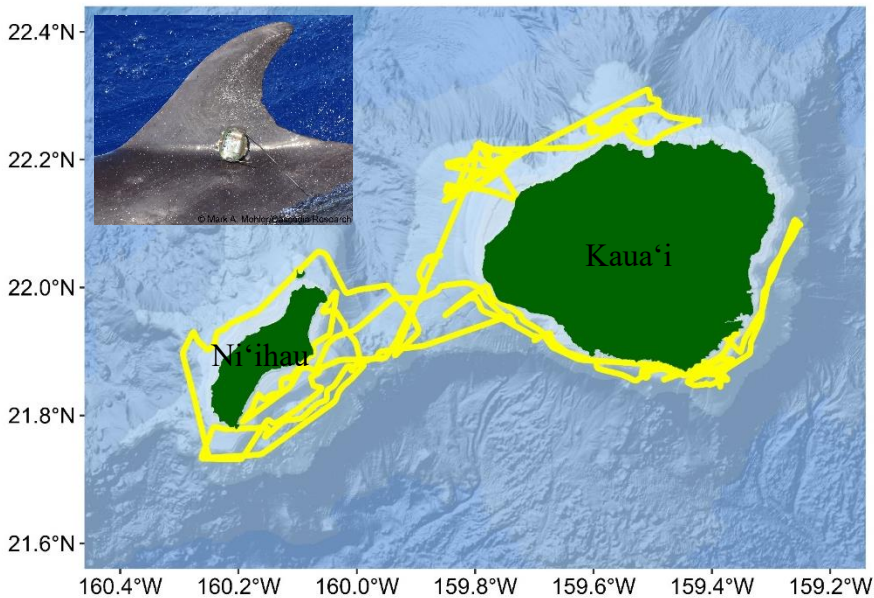
We know from visual observations that bottlenose dolphins eat a wide variety of reef-associated and nearshore fish species, but they are also capable of incredibly deep foraging dives: the deepest dive we've ever recorded off Kaua'i was to 896 m (2,940 ft)!



To contribute your photos of whales and dolphins to our research, scan the QR code below, or email [Hawaii@cascadiaresearch.org](mailto:Hawaii@cascadiaresearch.org)



Cascadia  
Research  
Collective   
non-profit research and education since 1979



We are currently using satellite tags that track both locations and dive behavior to study where and how bottlenose dolphins spend their time. We can also use satellite tags to observe how animals respond to environmental stressors like mid-frequency active sonar. With funding from the U.S. Navy, we have deployed several satellite tags on bottlenose dolphins shortly before the start of Submarine Command Courses on the Pacific Missile Range Facility off Kaua'i, allowing us to examine the behavior of animals before, during, and after exposure to sonar. On the left you can see a satellite tag trackline from a bottlenose dolphin tagged off Kaua'i in August 2023, along with an image of the tag attached to the dorsal fin.