

MANATEE MANIA

MANATEE ANATOMY, BIOLOGY, AND CONSERVATION



Watch the "Baby Manatee Calf with Mom" video to learn about a manatee's basic anatomy and ways you can protect this amazing marine mammal.

<https://vimeo.com/400389320/695c0e142c>

For instructors, parents, or guardians:

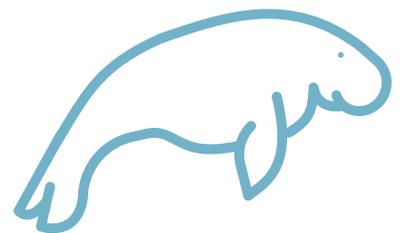
Lesson learning objectives: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify basic manatee anatomy, connect features that make them mammals, and learn ways to protect wild manatees.

1. Introduce the topic:

This lesson will cover basic manatee anatomy and biology and touch on ways that we can protect their wild populations. Start off the lesson by showing your student(s) the video. Let your student(s) know to listen to the Rescue Biologist in the video, Kerry, when she talks about the animals' anatomy.

2. The Florida Manatee:

The Florida Manatee is a marine mammal native to Florida and migrates to some parts of Georgia, Texas, and South Carolina. These animals are about 9-10 feet long and about 1,000 pounds. Manatees are herbivores which means that they only eat plants. In the wild, they eat seagrass. Manatees cannot stay in cold water for a long time, so in the winter they often hang out in Florida's springs, which are always 72 F.



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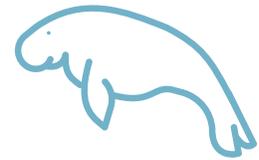
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3. Review the video:

Ask the following questions to see how much your student(s) learned from Kerry. Watch the video one more time if you think your student(s) needs a refresher.

- Name 2 body parts of a manatee.
 - Paddle and front flippers.
- What did the mother manatee have on her back?
 - Algae.
- Why do manatees need to come to the water's surface?
 - To breathe air. They are mammals which means they cannot breathe water like a fish.
- What are some ways Kerry said we could protect manatees in the wild?
 - Avoid touching or swimming with wild manatees. Designate a manatee spotter when driving a boat.



4. Put your student(s) learning to the test!

The next two pages are activities for your student(s). First see if your student(s) can circle the correct word(s) based on each statement below. Next, students can color in their own manatee.

Answers: Air, vibrations, up and down, bones, manatee spotter, touching.

5. Additional Challenge

Test the students' knowledge of manatee anatomy by comparing and contrasting manatee anatomy to dolphin anatomy.

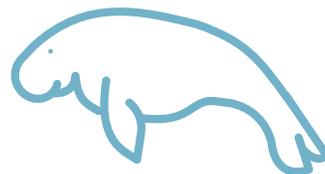
Answers: 1. Blowhole, 2. rostrum, 4. dorsal fin, 4. Pectoral flippers, 5. tail flukes.

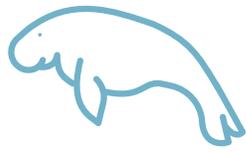
MANATEE MANIA TRIVIA!

Circle the correct word choice from the bolded options in each statement



1. Manatees are marine mammals which means that they need to come to the surface to **breathe water or air** (circle one).
2. The little hairs on the body of a manatee are called vibrissae. These allow the manatee to feel **vibrations or electricity** (circle one) in the water around them.
3. The paddle is another word for a manatee's tail. The paddle moves **up and down or side to side** (circle one) to help the manatee move.
4. Manatees have two flippers in the front of their body. Flippers have **blubber or bones** (circle one) inside of them for support.
5. Boats can harm a manatee at the water's surface. If you want to protect a wild manatee on your boat, you should always have someone be a **manatee spotter or lifeguard** (circle one).
6. Harassment is any action that changes an animal's natural behavior and can be harmful to manatees. Examples of harassment are pouring water in a wild manatee's mouth, swimming with a manatee, and **avoiding or touching** (circle one).

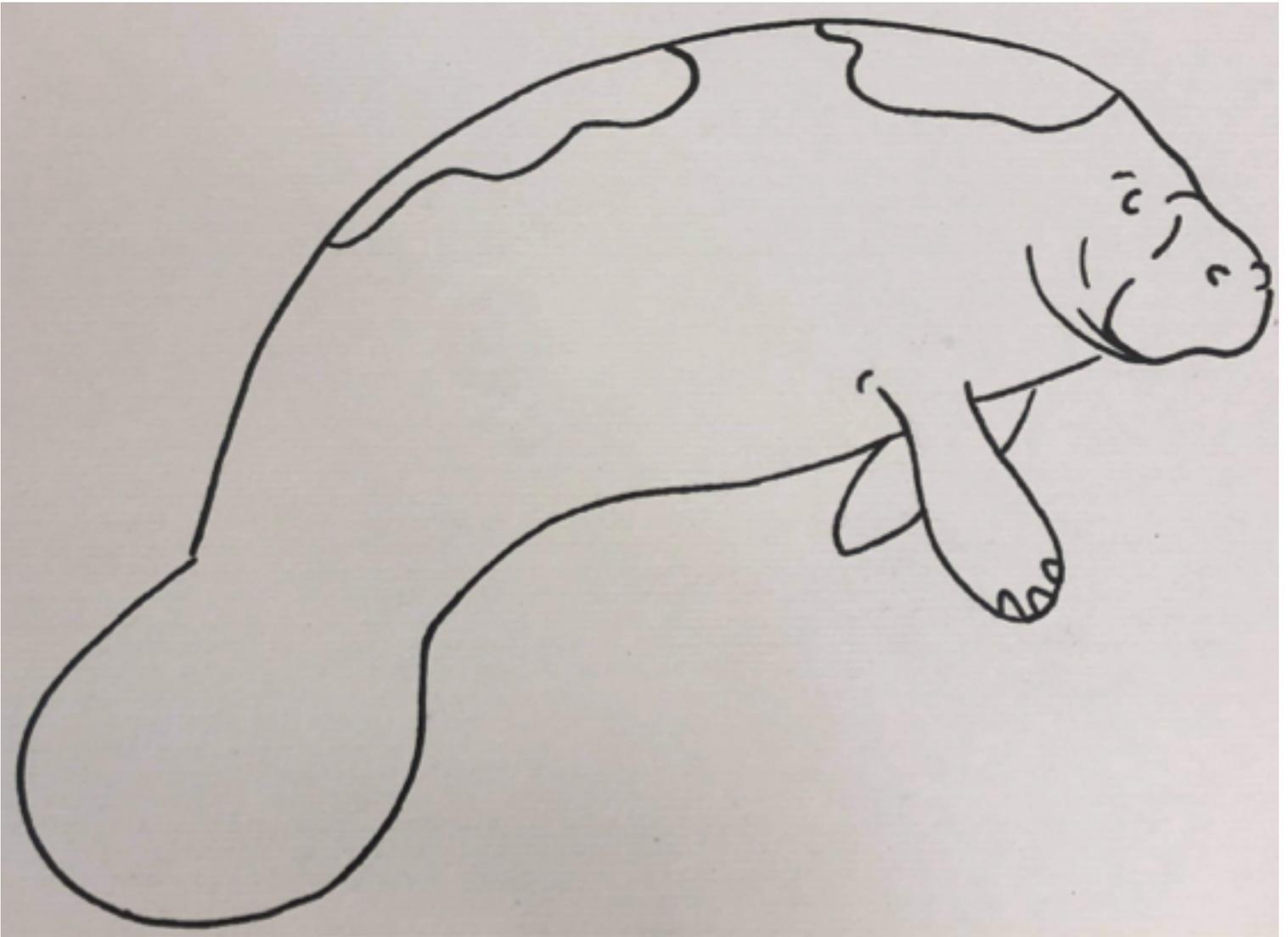




MY MANATEE'S NAME IS _____

Suggestions:

- Add vibrissae to your manatee so it can feel a nearby boat and swim down from the surface.
- Label the paddle and front flippers.
- Color in the algae patches on your manatee's back.

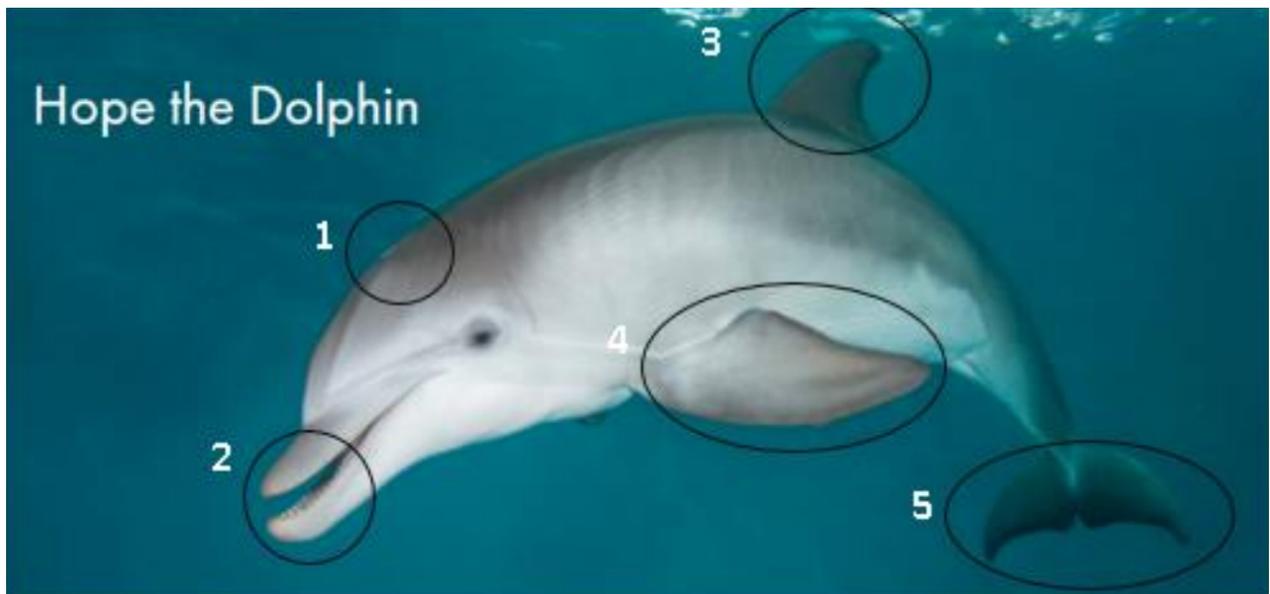


MARINE MAMMAL ANATOMY



Dolphins and manatees are both marine mammals. This means that they both have the same name for some of their body parts but different names for others.

Compare and contrast your knowledge of manatee anatomy to that of a dolphin. Which of the circled body parts are different from the manatee? Which are the same?



Do you know the names of these body parts?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____