

World Wildlife Fund website

Reading non-fiction



Learning objective

Recognize key characteristics of non-fiction text types.

Word Cloud

extinct habitat
generation marine

Only 55 Maui's dolphins left in the world

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The World Wildlife Fund is urging people to support their campaign to protect Hector's and Maui's dolphins from extinction. Hector's dolphins are endangered, with about 7,000 remaining, while Maui's dolphins are critically endangered, with only about 55 individuals left. Hector's and Maui's dolphins live round the shores of New Zealand and are among the rarest marine dolphins in the world, but unless urgent action is taken, these amazing creatures could become extinct within a generation. But there is hope. By taking the necessary action and removing all human threats, New Zealand can give the dolphins their best chance of survival.

Stop their extinction

The biggest threat to Hector's and Maui's dolphins is from commercial and recreational fishing. The dolphins are unable to detect set nets – fixed nets that are held on or off shore with anchors – and, if they become entangled, they drown in minutes. They are also accidentally caught by commercial fishing vessels. Add to this the disturbance to their natural habitat from tourism, polluted water, coastal development and boat traffic, and survival for one of the world's rarest marine dolphins is a daily battle.

Supporting research studies

Scientists have been studying Maui's dolphins for over 20 years, but some questions remain unanswered. For example, where do they live during the winter months? And how many of these tiny mammals are left?

A Maui's dolphin

New Zealand

Involving schools

Young New Zealanders have become fully involved in the WWF campaign, for example, sending e-cards to ask for full protection for the dolphins. Students of Te Huruhi Primary School produced a short film with WWF-New Zealand Take Action for Maui's showing how involved they are in the conservation project.

Working with Government

WWF-New Zealand has asked the Government to:

- regulate fishing to protect Maui's and Hector's dolphins
- produce an action plan that will lead to increased dolphin numbers
- support scientific research.

If everybody supports the WWF campaign, including the Government and the fishing industry, these rare dolphins can be saved for future generations.