

Abstract

This volume brings together some of the best known and respected experts in the field of marine mammal biology to provide a cohesive and accessible text. A very broad scope of topics and examples are presented in an integrated analysis of all of the species that are classified as marine mammals; the whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans), seals, sea lions, fur seals and walruses (pinnipeds), manatees and dugongs (sirenians), and the sea otter and polar bear (carnivores). Topics covered include diversity, distribution and evolutionary patterns, anatomical and physiological adaptations, vocal and social behaviour, problem solving and memory, feeding ecology and energetics, life history and reproductive strategies, patterns of movement and population genetics, and conservation and management. Chapters are fully cross-referenced and illustrated, and the citations are numerous and current. All chapters are united by the theme of evolutionary context, addressing the question of how these diverse mammalian species have adapted to life in the oceans. The intended audience includes students of marine biology, ecology and evolution, as well as professionals with an interest in marine mammals, evolutionary pattern and process, zoology and ecology.