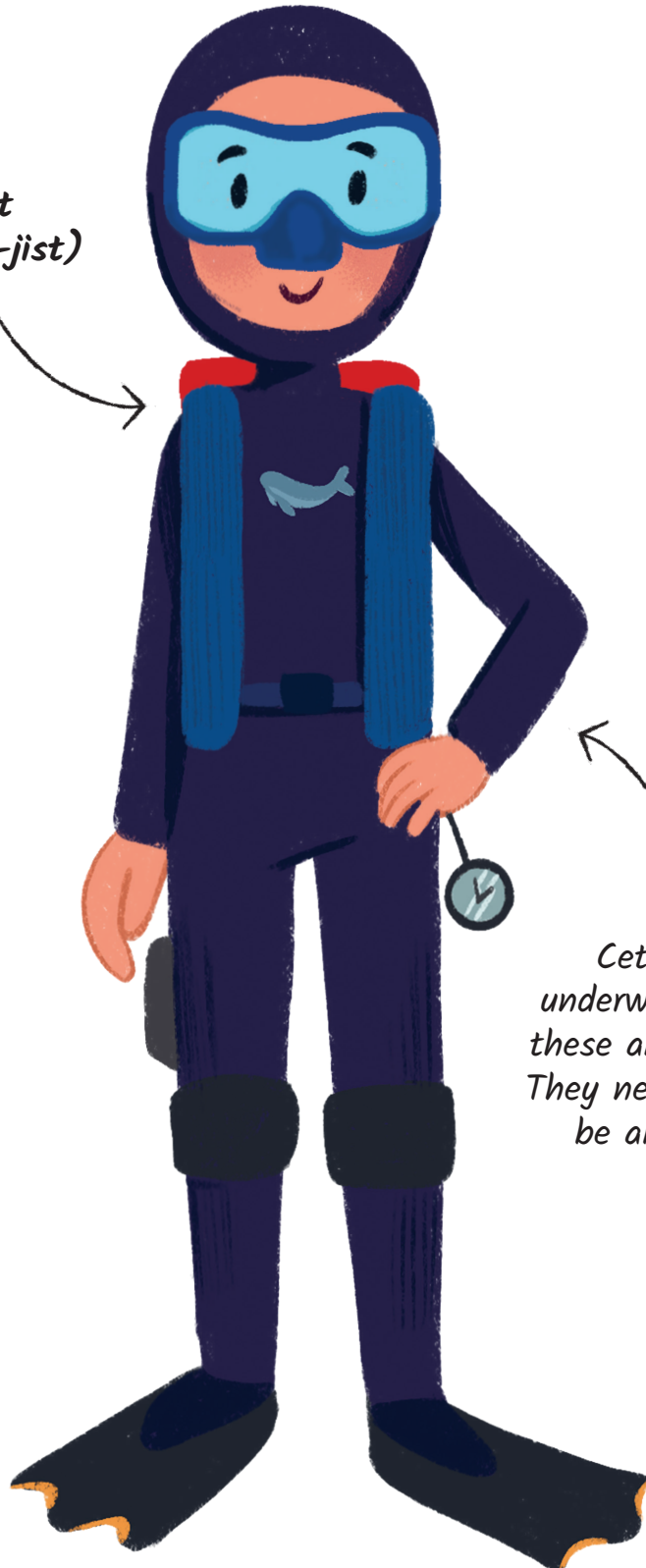


THE WORLD OF CETOLOGISTS

Cetologists study marine mammals known as cetaceans, which include whales, dolphins, and porpoises. Cetologists are interested in knowing as much about cetaceans as they can!

*Cetologist
(see-TOL-uh-jist)*



*Cetologists work
underwater to look into
these amazing creatures.
They need **diving gear** to
be able to do this!*

WHAT DO CETOLOGISTS DO?

A cetologist's work is really interesting because there is always a chance of making new discoveries.



FIELDWORK

One of the best things about being a cetologist is the fieldwork! Getting out on the water to observe whales, dolphins and porpoises can be very exciting indeed. Although it's not always easy to find them!

Once they do, cetologists use equipment to listen to them and cameras to watch them. They also take skin samples, using a harmless dart that bounces off their body. Next, it's time for cetologists to take their findings back to the lab!

LAB WORK

Once back in the lab, cetologists record all the information they have gathered and study it closely to see if they can learn anything about how these mammals are behaving.

They have a successful system of **photo-identification** which helps them recognise whales and dolphins they have seen before, often by noticing their unique dorsal fin, and any scars they have from being attacked.



WHO DO CETOLOGISTS WORK FOR?

Universities around the world employ cetologists to teach students, as well as allowing them to continue with their exciting marine research.

There are **conservation** organisations all around the world, that work with universities and governments that employ cetologists to help them. These organisations rely on donations of money, from companies and from wealthy people, to be able to carry out their important research.

A cetologist may also work in a zoo or in a marina, where there are concerns about the numbers of whales and dolphins falling.

FAMOUS DISCOVERIES

Cetologists have made so many amazing discoveries that have changed our understanding of whales, dolphins and porpoises. Here's just a few of the biggest and best!

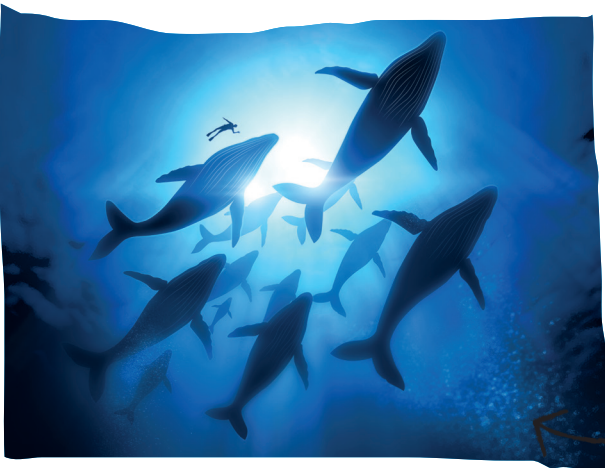


DOLPHIN EMOTIONS

In 2018, a group of cetologists noted that because of special cells in some whale and dolphin species, these animals could experience complex feelings, just like humans can! This was an important discovery in understanding just how intelligent these animals really are.

DIVING DEEP

In the 1970s, cetologists began to understand more about sperm whales. One particular discovery was how deep they can dive underwater. It's believed they can dive over 2,000 metres (6,600 feet) when hunting for their prey!



LONG WAY TO GO

In the 2010s, cetologists began to use satellites to track whales as they migrated around the world. This new way of observing whales allowed cetologists to truly understand the impressive distance whales travel each year.

Cetologists are making discoveries all the time, who knows what they might discover next!

FAMOUS CETOLOGISTS

There have been so many clever cetologists over the years.
Here's just a few of the most famous.



ROGER SEARLE PAYNE

Roger Searle Payne was an American biologist, who had a particular interest in humpback whales. In 1967, he became famous for his discovery of whale song, and how humpback whales use these impressive sounds to communicate with each other.

MICHAEL BIGG

Michael Bigg was a Canadian marine biologist, who is known as one of the first scientists to study orca whales. In the 1970s, he discovered that orca whales have unique fin shapes, saddle patches, and scars, which now help scientists identify and understand the relationships within pods.



HAL WHITEHEAD

Hal Whitehead is known for his research into the behaviour of sperm whales. In 2024, he discovered that sperm whales live in groups with different cultures, just like humans do. Some of these structured groups are believed to include up to 20,000 whales!



These are just a few of the many cetologists who have made a huge difference to the science.