

EUROPE'S SEA MAMMALS, Including the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands and Cape Verde - Robert Still, at £20 / \$24.95. 208 216mm x 152mm pages, in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-0-6911-8216-2

Many times on our Atlantic crossings or sailing along the coast of Europe we've wished we had a reliable guide to help us identify the charming creatures we've encountered. We had a guide for the local waters of Ireland, but nothing for the broader area. We learned later how territorial many of the scientific communities studying cetaceans can be. Cetaceans, of course, don't recognise boundaries.

This new visual reference for identifying 39 species of whales, dolphins and porpoises and nine species of seals covers a region that spans the Eastern Atlantic from Iceland to Macaronesia (the Azores, Madeira, Canaries and Cape Verde archipelagos), as well as the Mediterranean, Caspian and Baltic Seas. Produced in co-operation with the marine conservation charity ORCA, the book includes mapping data from a decade of surveys which show both current distribution and changes over time.

Unlike many other reference guides, this is not the work of scientists but rather of a team of professional tour guides with extensive experience identifying and discussing the range, ecology, behaviour and conservation status of each species. Information is presented in very clear, simple terms. Robert Still is publishing director of WILD Guides and a prolific natural history author. Hugh Harrop is an award-winning photographer and owner of the tourism business Shetland Wildlife. Tim Stenton is a widely-travelled whale photographer and the author of Monty Firth Dolphins. Luis Dias is an accomplished photographer and former marine research biologist who runs ocean tours from Madeira.

Their library of stunningly beautiful photographs is extensive and complemented by illustrations, maps and charts. The visuals are unparalleled, presenting the animals in various states of swimming, diving and feeding, with tips on distinguishing between species. Maps identify where each mammal can be encountered at different times of the year. It wasn't written specifically for cruisers but the format is ideal. Overall, it's a valuable resource to have aboard.

Appendices include Observation Guidelines and what to do in the case of animal sightings. Also included are legislation summaries for the different jurisdictions and a table of names in other languages. The introduction provides a quick overview of morphological terms used to identify animals and tips on how to observe them.

Europe's Sea Mammals is an essential companion for anyone venturing any distance offshore. Encounters with frolicking dolphins, studious whales, performing porpoises and curious seals are magical and inspirational ... we're so fortunate to be out there to see them in their environment, and now we can tell others all about them in an informed manner.

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