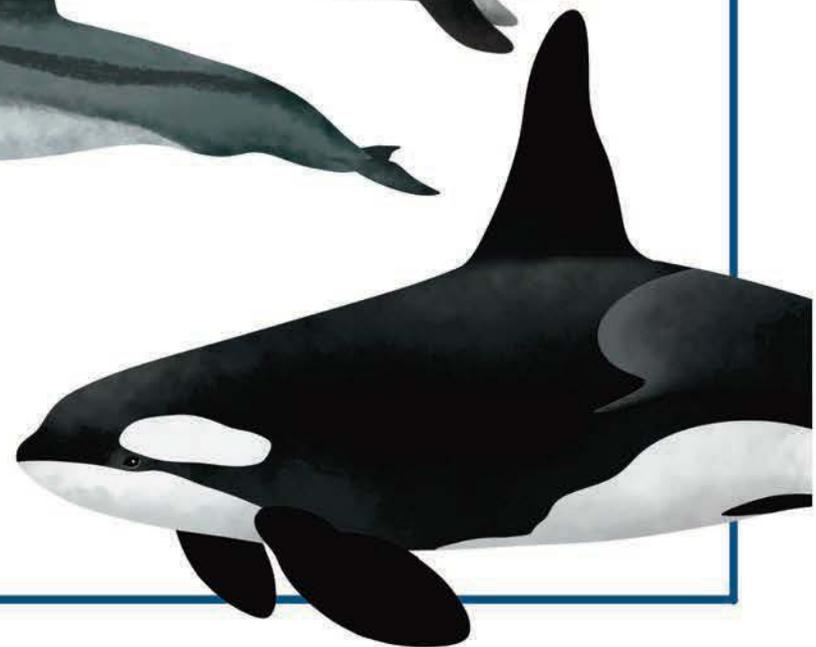
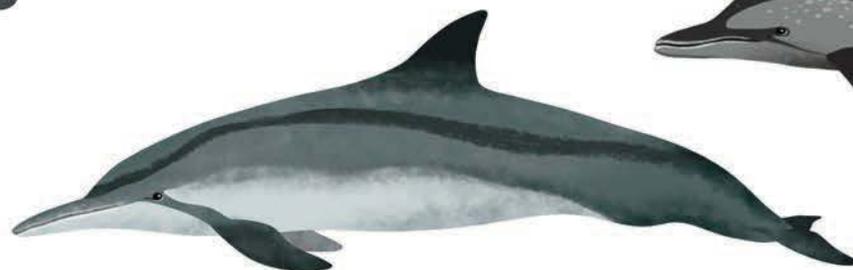
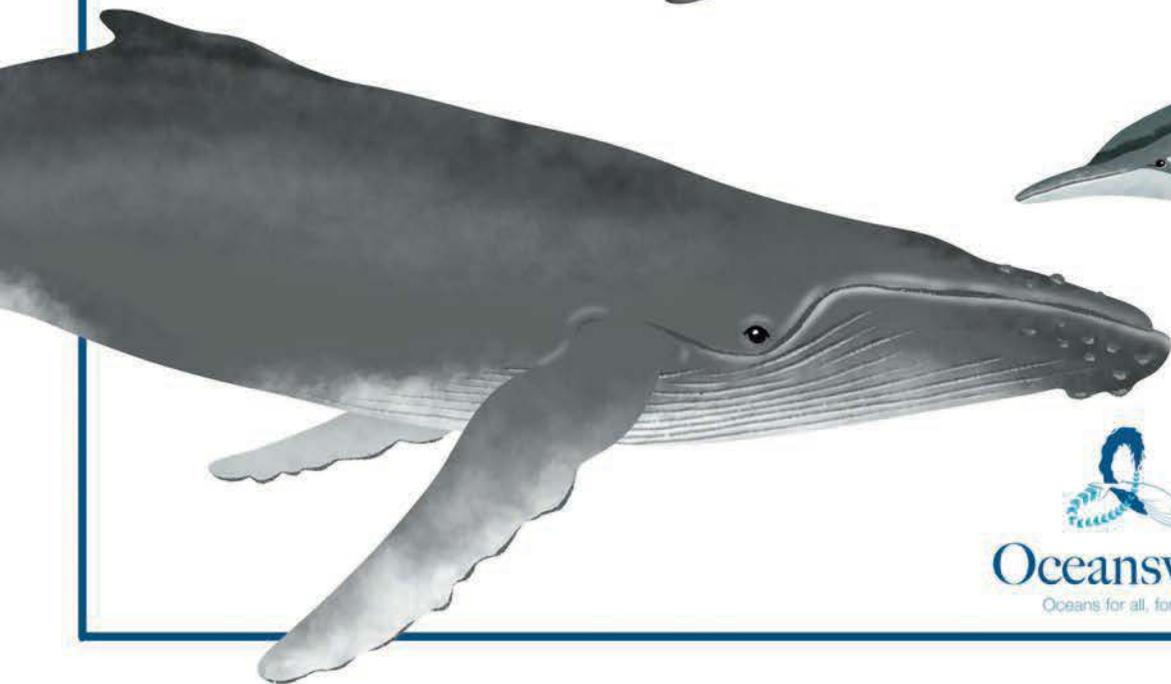
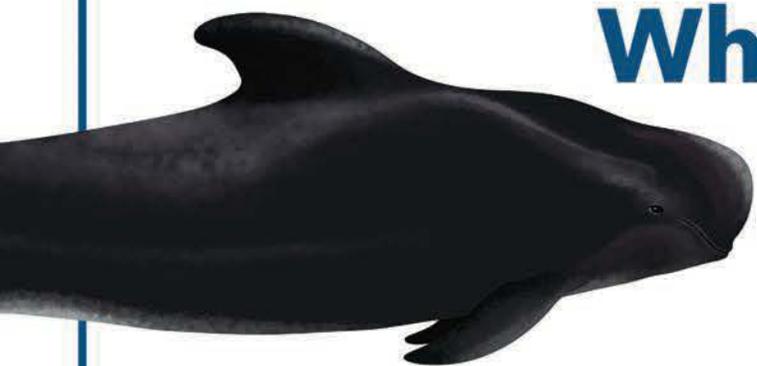


Whales and dolphins of Sri Lanka

Asha de Vos, Ph.D.



Oceanswell

Oceans for all, forever



Oceanswell

Oceans for all, forever

Whales and dolphins of Sri Lanka

Asha de Vos, Ph.D.

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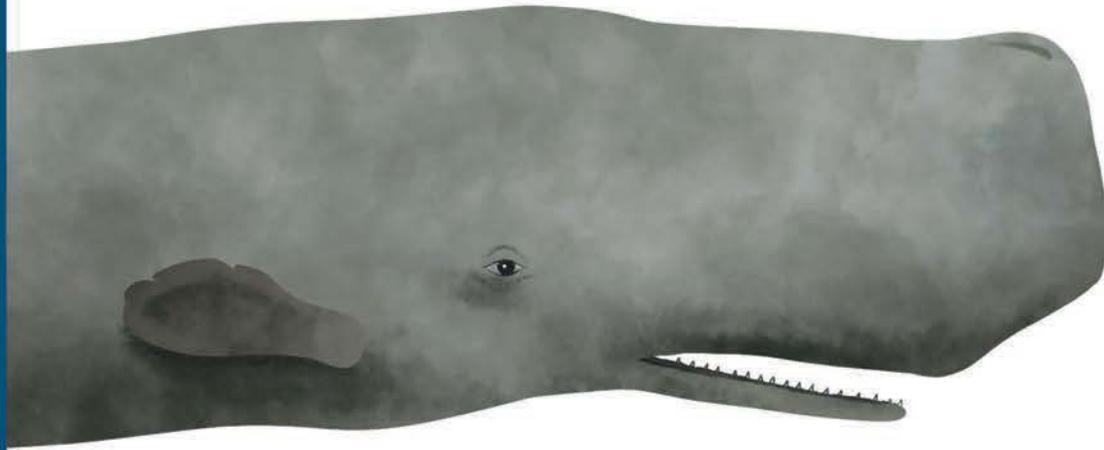
Illustrations by Apsi Sumanasiri



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CETACEANS *Toothed vs. Baleen whales*



TOOTHED WHALES

- Have teeth
- Use teeth for feeding
- Have one blowhole
- Echolocate to find prey

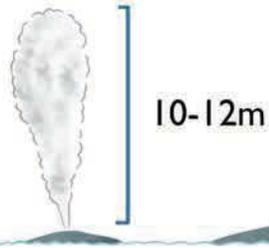
BALEEN WHALES

- Have baleen
- Filter feed
- Have two blowholes
- Do not echolocate

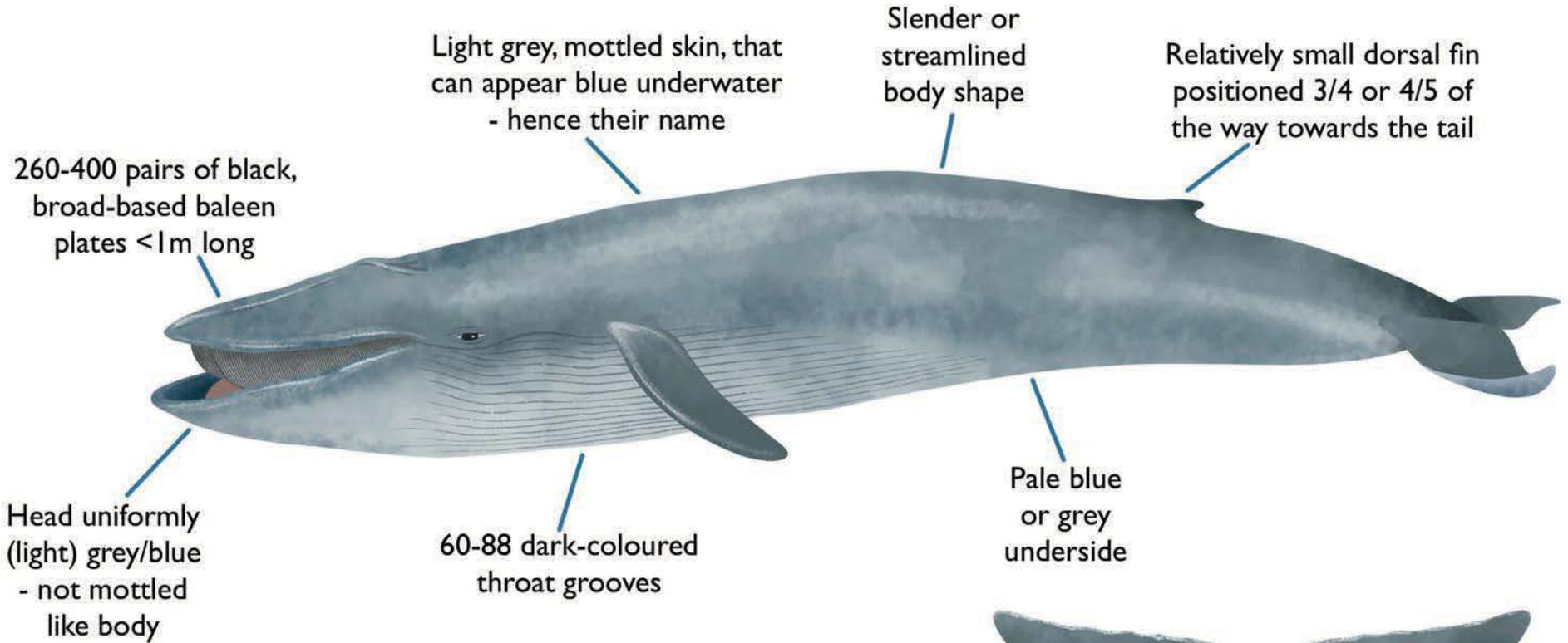


Northern Indian Ocean blue whale

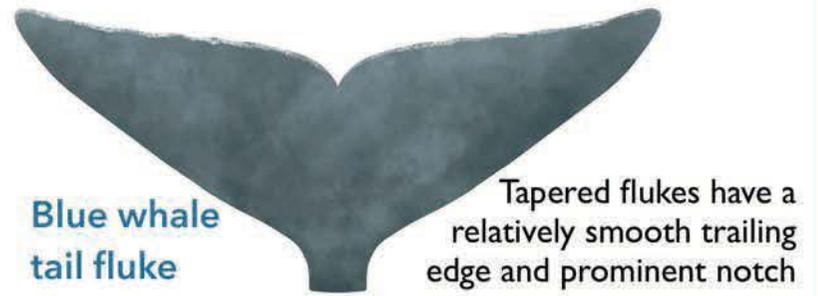
(Balaenoptera musculus indica)



Dive sequence



Adult length: up to 20-25m
Adult weight: up to 180,000kg
Newborn: 6-7m, 2000-3000kg



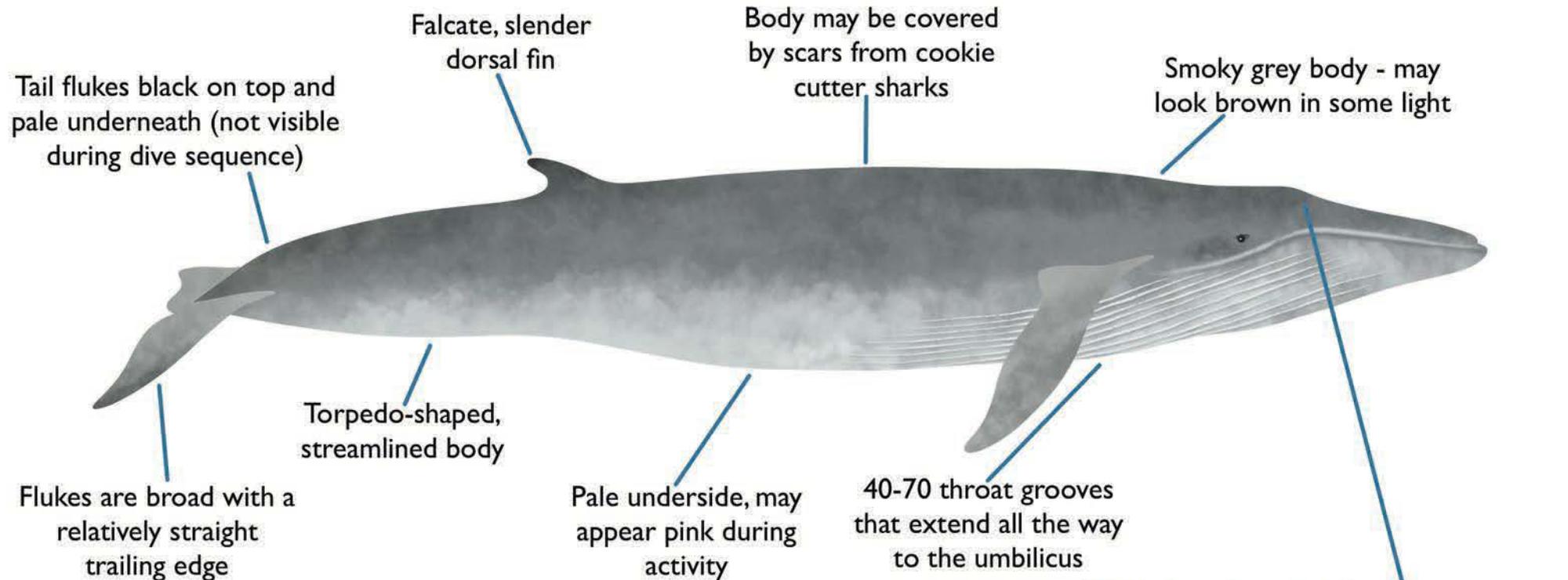
Bryde's whale

(Balaenoptera edeni)

In Sri Lanka, often misidentified as a Fin whale or Omura's whale

Often exhales underwater, then surfaces with little or no visible blow

Dive sequence



Distinctive characteristic



Three parallel ridges running from blowholes to the tip of the V-shaped snout

Adult length: up to 11.5-15m

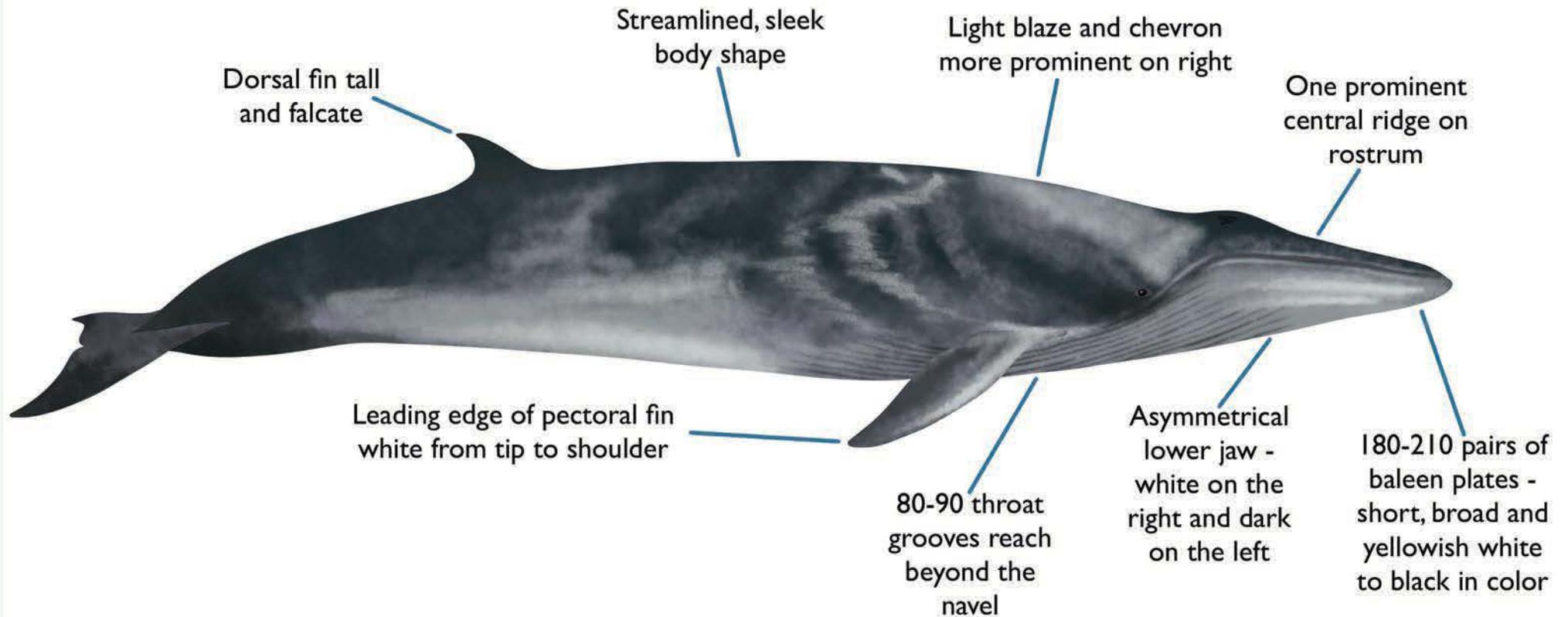
Adult weight: up to 25,000-30,000kg

Newborn: 4-4.5m and 1,000-2,000kg

Omura's whale

(Balaenoptera omurai)

In Sri Lanka, often misidentified as a
Bryde's whale



Adult length: up to 12m

Adult weight: up to 20,000kg

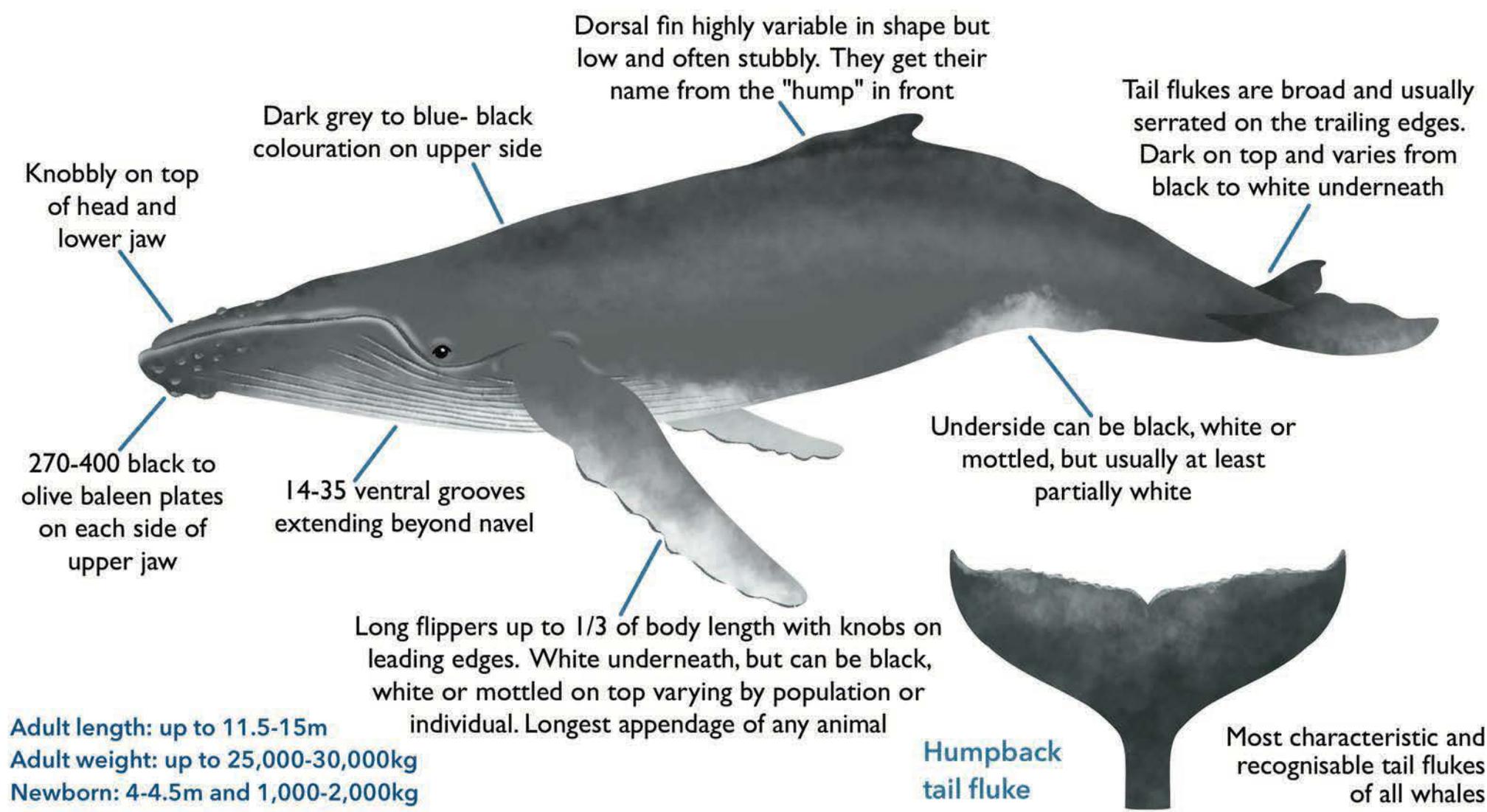
Newborn: 3.5-4m

Humpback whale

(*Megaptera novaeangliae*)

Rare visitor to Sri Lankan waters

Dive sequence



Dorsal fin highly variable in shape but low and often stubby. They get their name from the "hump" in front

Tail flukes are broad and usually serrated on the trailing edges. Dark on top and varies from black to white underneath

Dark grey to blue- black colouration on upper side

Knobbly on top of head and lower jaw

270-400 black to olive baleen plates on each side of upper jaw

14-35 ventral grooves extending beyond navel

Underside can be black, white or mottled, but usually at least partially white

Long flippers up to 1/3 of body length with knobs on leading edges. White underneath, but can be black, white or mottled on top varying by population or individual. Longest appendage of any animal

Adult length: up to 11.5-15m

Adult weight: up to 25,000-30,000kg

Newborn: 4-4.5m and 1,000-2,000kg

Humpback tail fluke

Most characteristic and recognisable tail flukes of all whales

Sperm whale

(Physeter macrocephalus)

Dive sequence

Due to position of blowhole, blow is slanted to the left

5m



Single blowhole at the front left of the head

Dorsal fin is only a low hump (Older females have callosities)

Visible 'knuckles' between the dorsal fin and tail fluke

Enormous head - up to 1/3 of total body length and uniquely square in shape

Narrow lower jaw, underslung. 18-26 pairs of teeth only in lower jaw

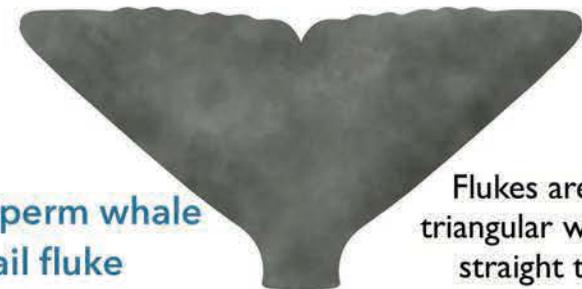
Small spatula-shaped flippers

Dark grey or brownish, wrinkled, prune-like skin

Adult length: up to 18m (male)/11-12m (female)
Adult weight: up to 57,000kg (male), 15,000kg (female)
Newborn: 3.5-4.5m and 1,000kg

Sperm whale tail fluke

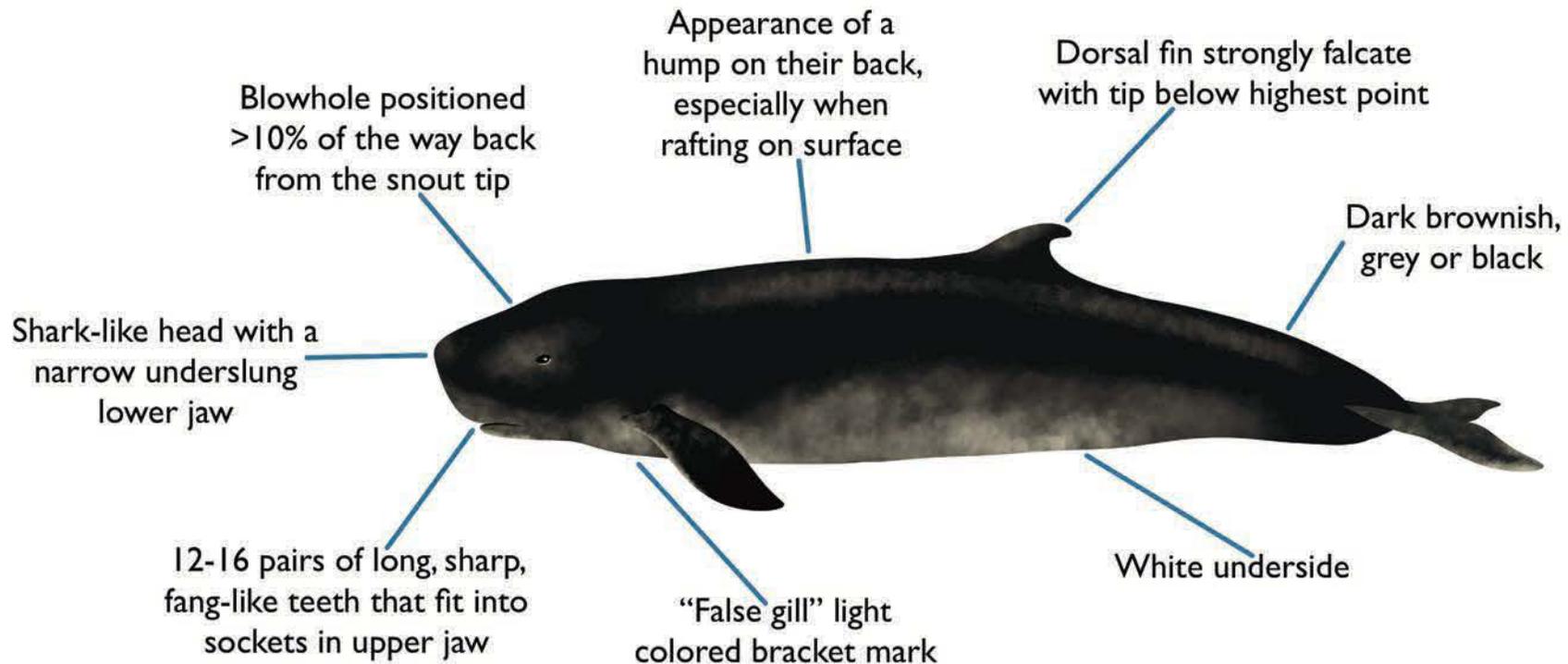
Flukes are broad and triangular with a nearly straight trailing edge



Pygmy sperm whale

(*Kogia breviceps*)

Difficult to detect except in very calm seas. Easily confused for a Dwarf sperm whale

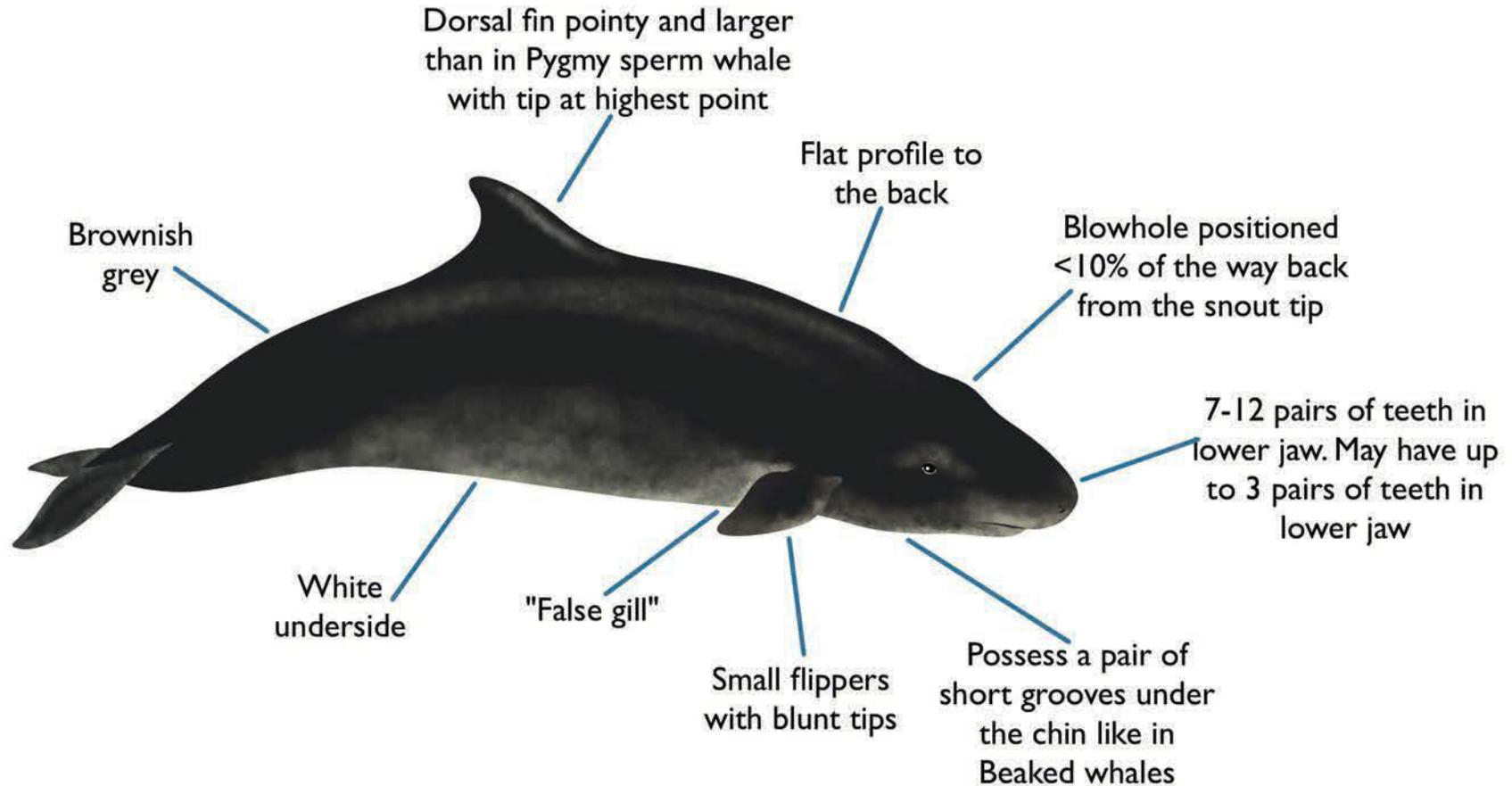


Adult length: up to 3.8m
Adult weight: up to 450kg
Newborn: 1.2m

Dwarf sperm whale

(*Kogia sima*)

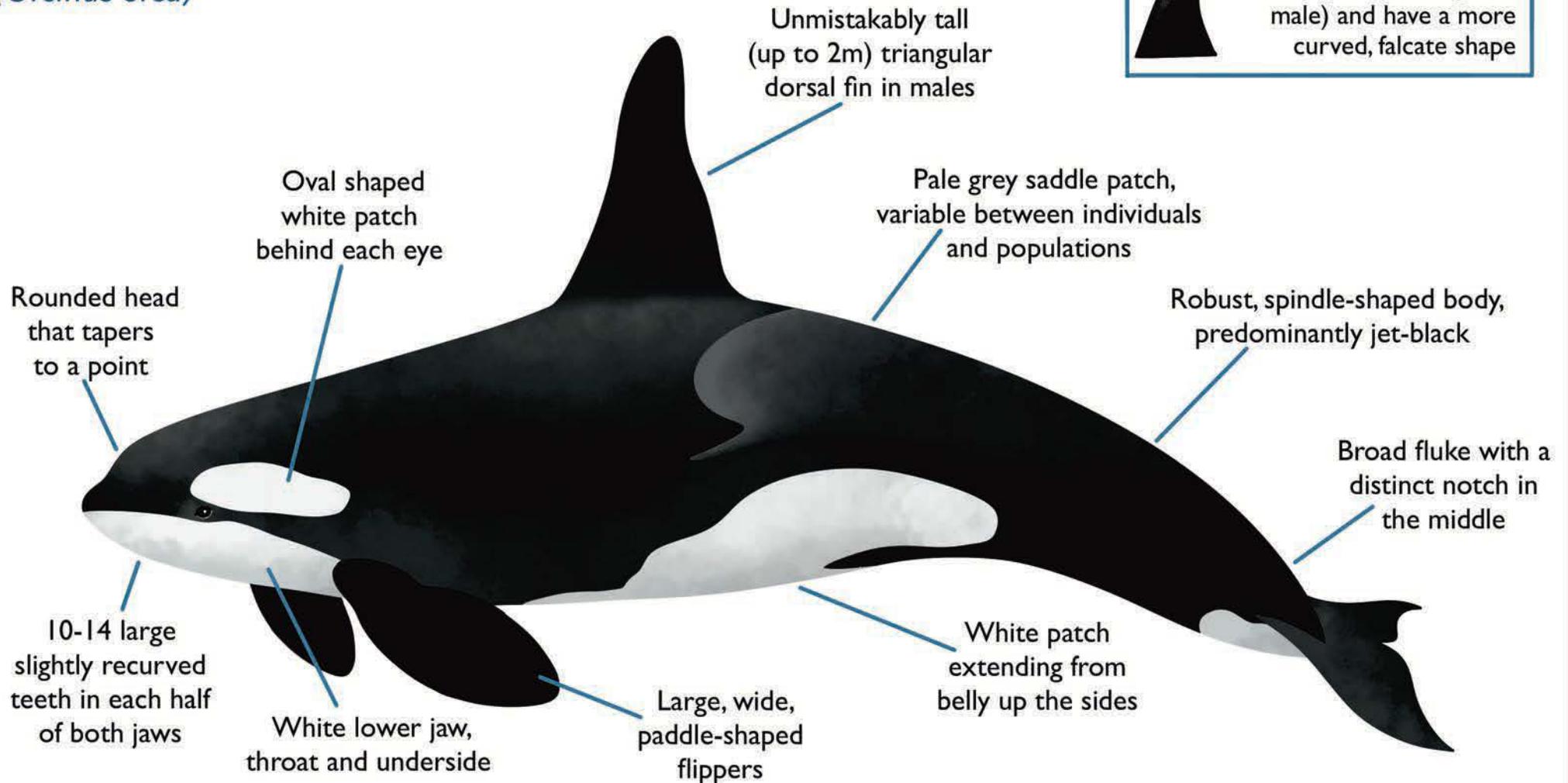
Difficult to detect except in very calm seas. Easily confused for Pygmy sperm whale



Adult length: up to 2.7m
Adult weight: up to 272kg
Newborn: 1m

Killer whale

(*Orcinus orca*)



Adult length: up to 9.8m (male)/ 8.5m (female)

Adult weight: up to 10,000kg

Newborn: 2.1-2.6m/160-180kg

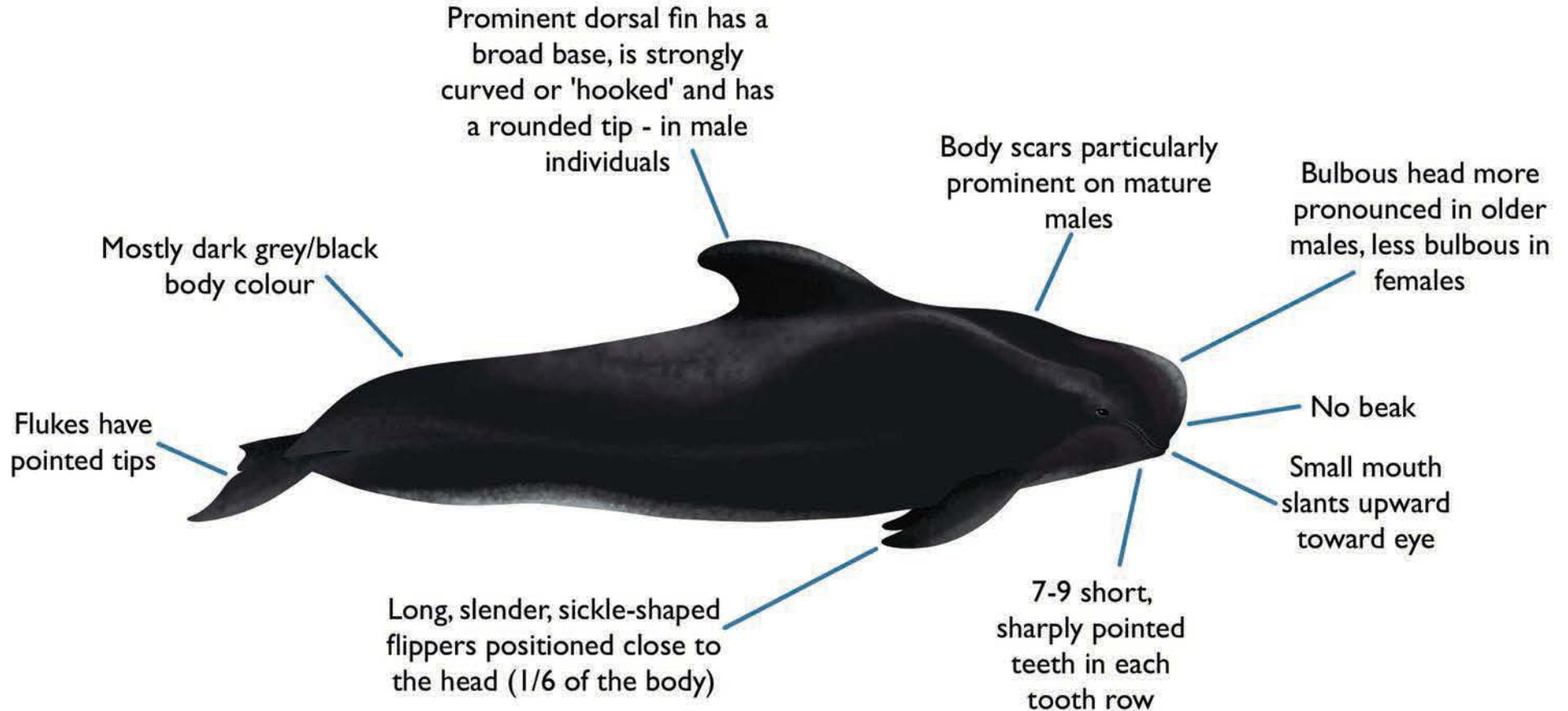
Short-finned pilot whale

(Globicephala macrorhynchus)

Highly social species, globally known to strand



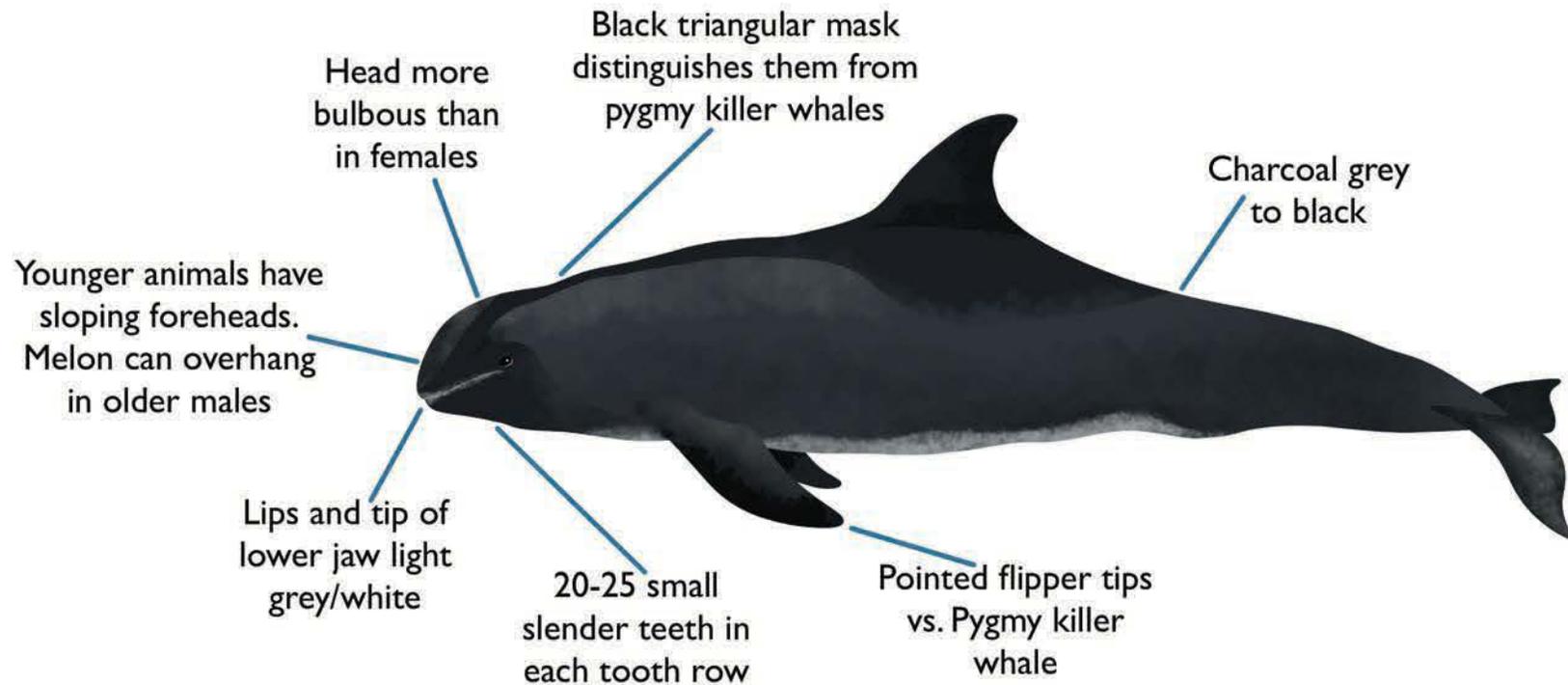
Female dorsals are more pointy and less lobed



Adult length: up to 7.2m
Adult weight: up to 3,600kg
Newborn: 1.4-1.9m/ up to 60kg

Melon-headed whale

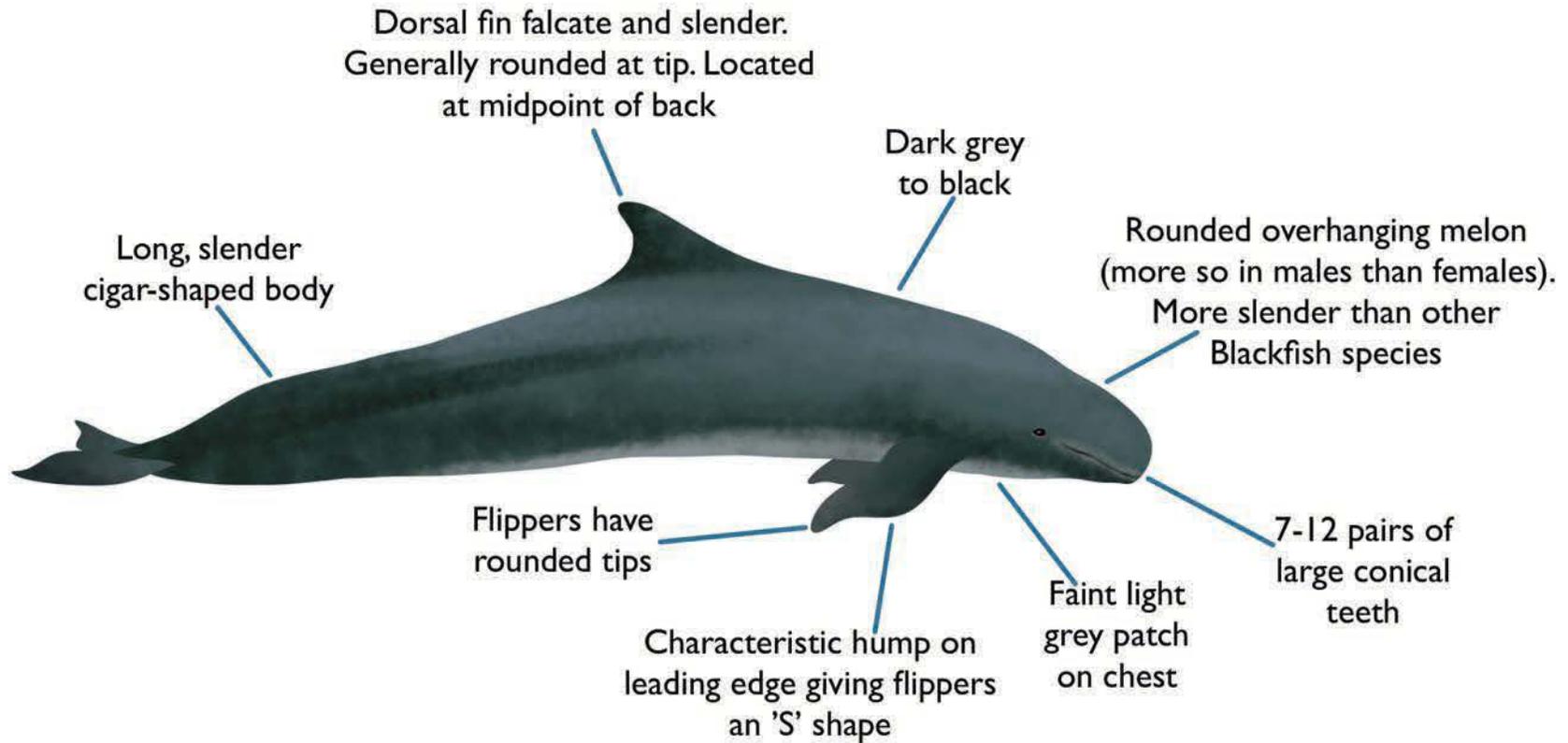
(Peponocephala electra)



Adult length: up to 2.78m
Adult weight: up to 275kg
Newborn: ~1m

False killer whale

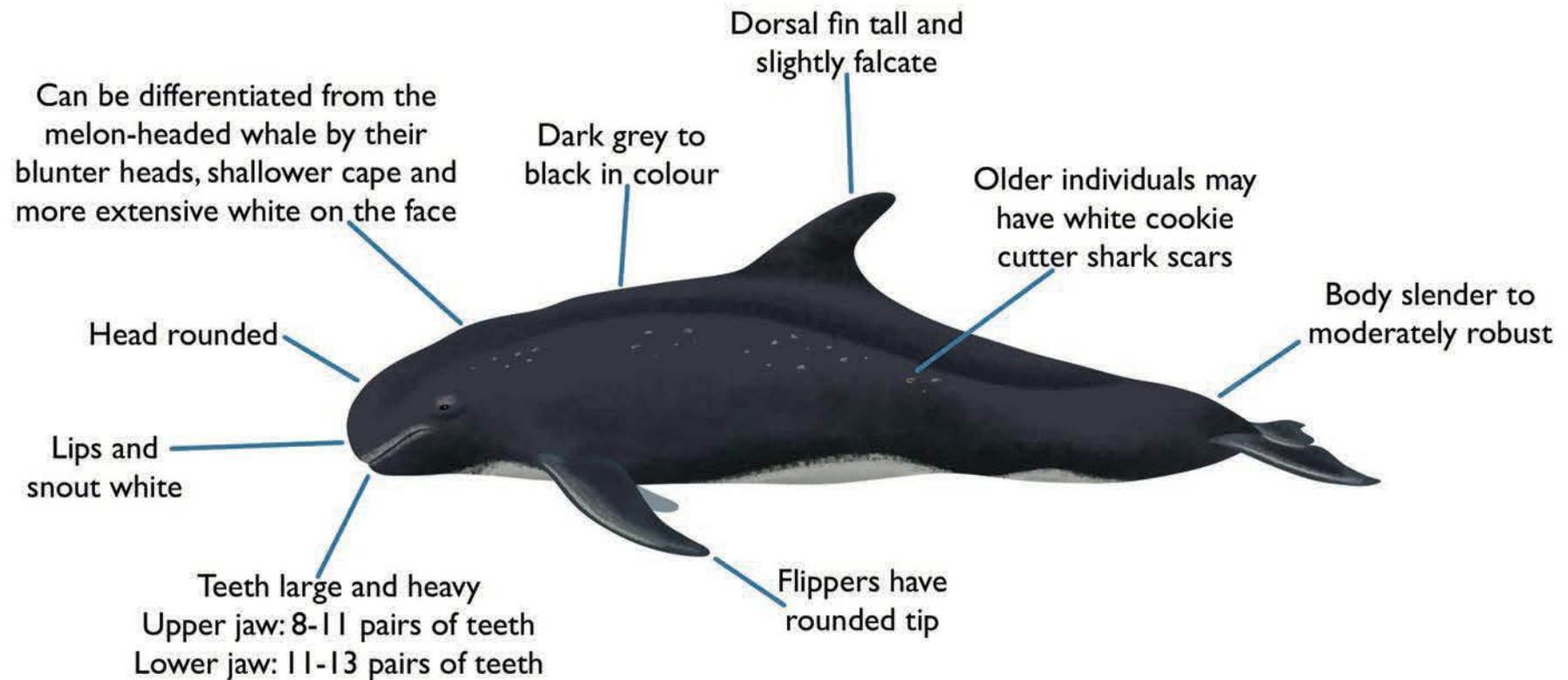
(Pseudorca crassidens)



Adult length: up to 6m
Adult weight: up to 2,000kg
Newborn: 1.5-2.1m

Pygmy killer whale

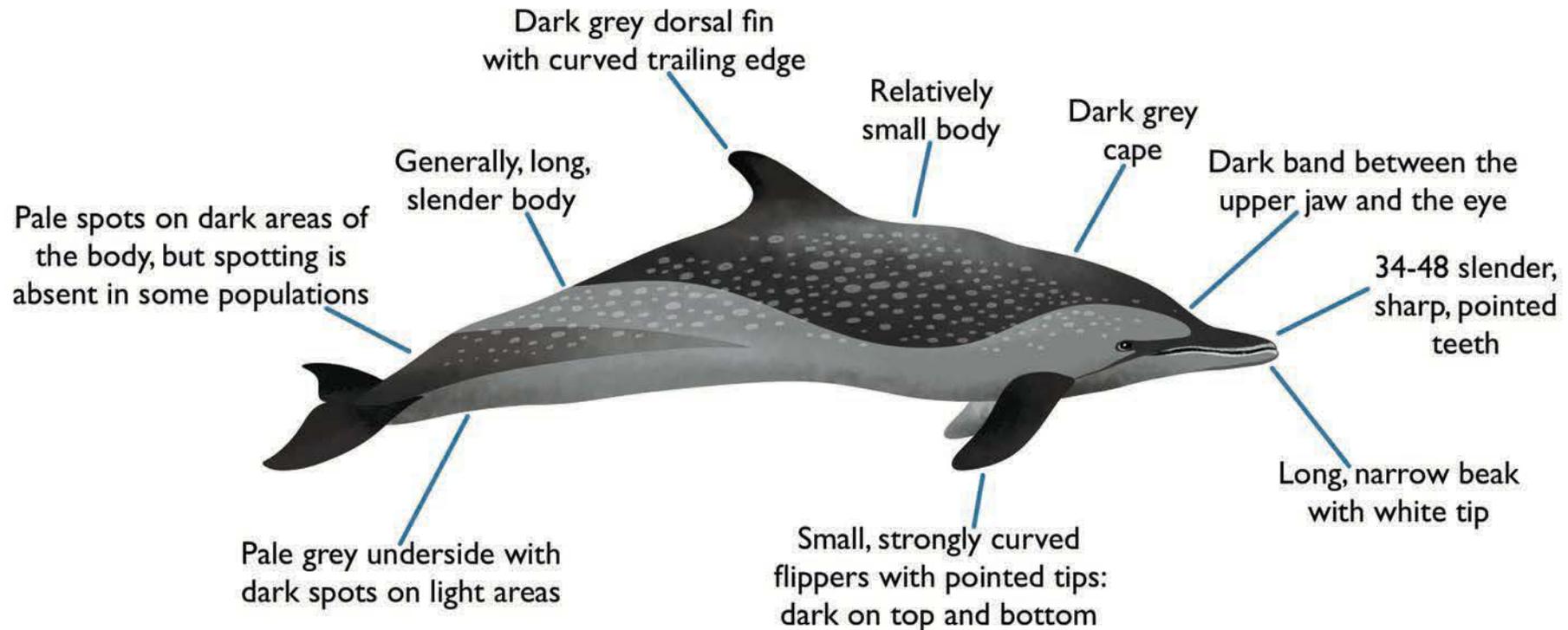
(*Feresa attenuata*)



Adult length: up to 2.6m
Adult weight: up to 220kg
Newborn: 80cm

Pantropical spotted dolphin

(Stenella attenuata)



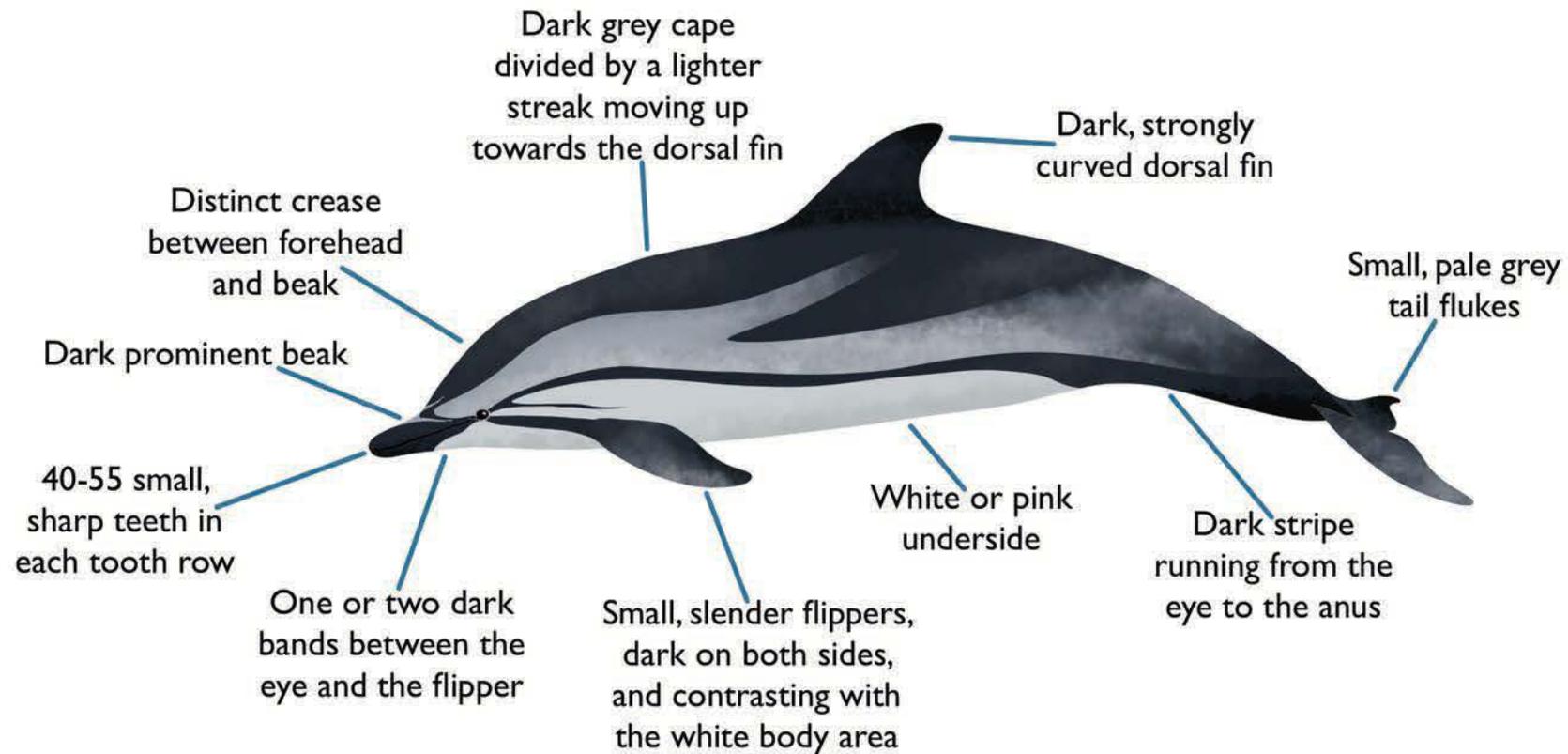
Adult length: up to 2.6m

Adult weight: up to 119kg

Newborn: 85cm/ weight unknown

Striped dolphin

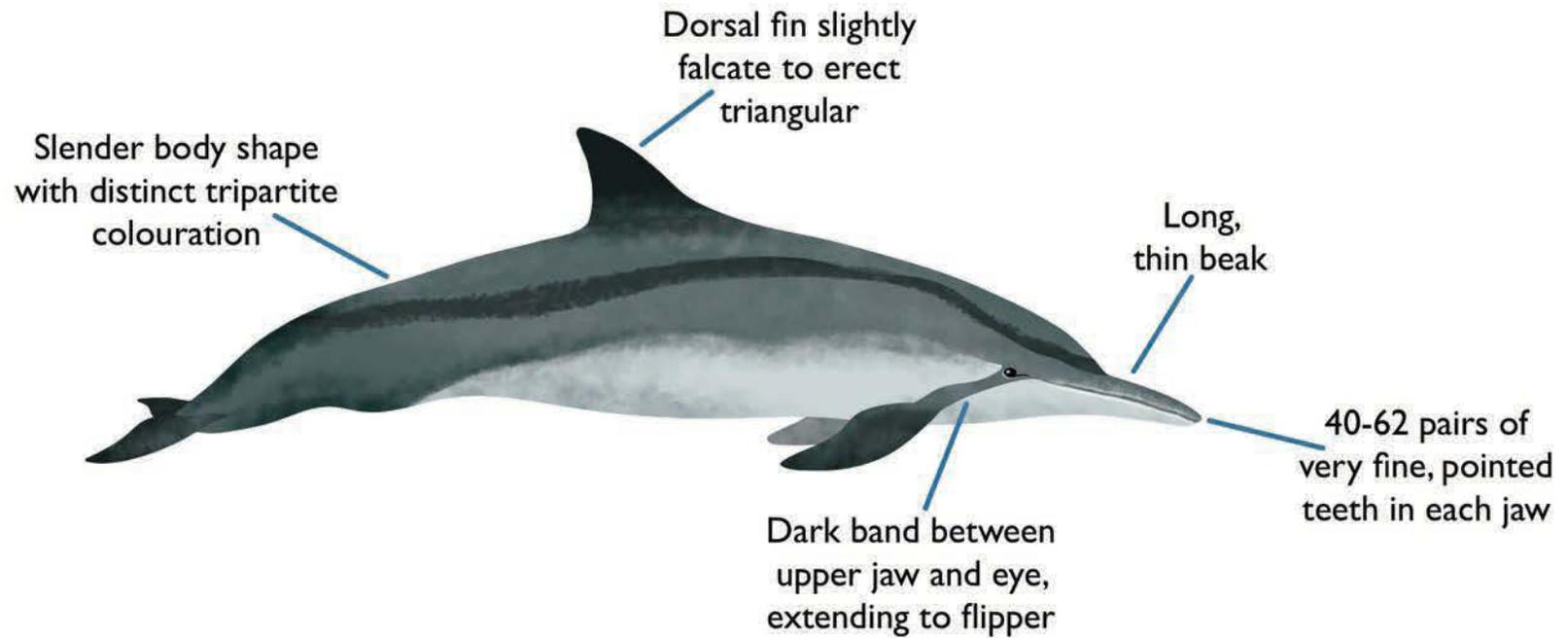
(Stenella coeruleoalba)



Adult length: up to 2.6 m
Adult weight: up to 160kg
Newborn: up to 1m and ~10kg

Long-snouted spinner dolphin

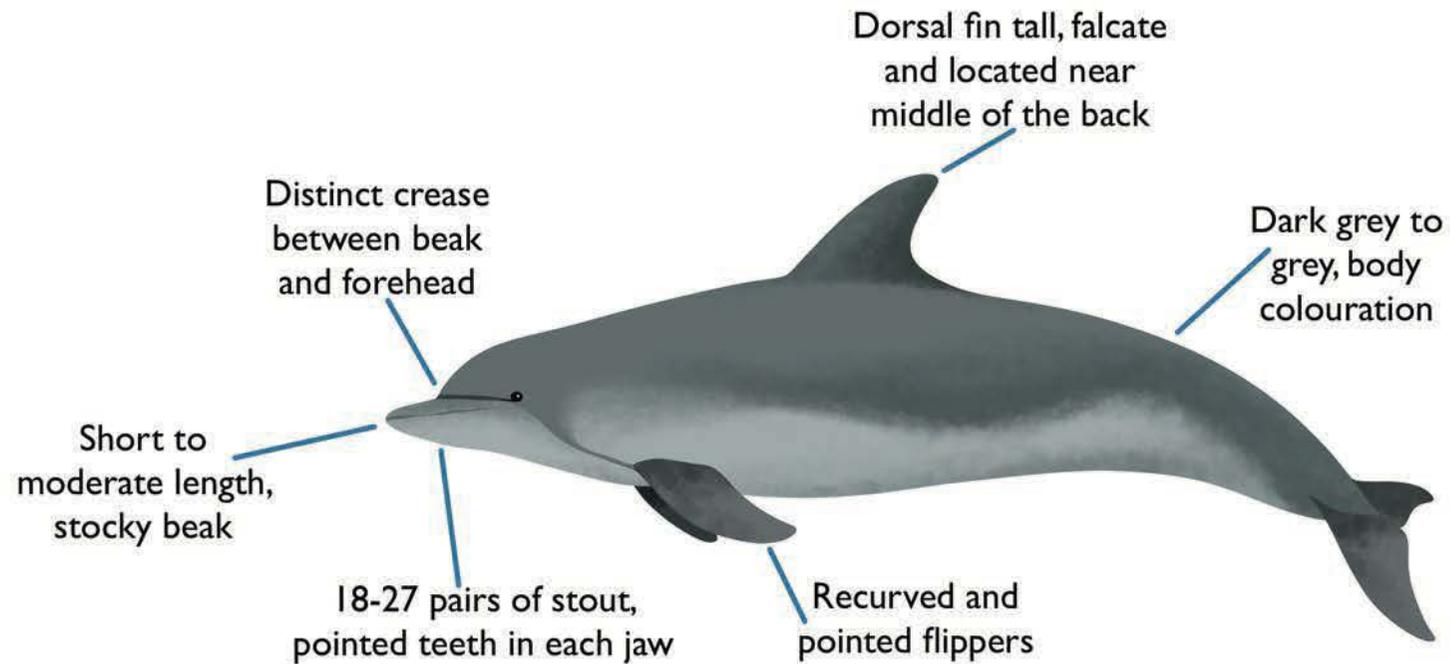
(Stenella longirostris)



Adult length: up to 2m
Adult weight: up to 82kg
Newborn: 75-80cm

Bottlenose dolphin

(Tursiops truncatus)



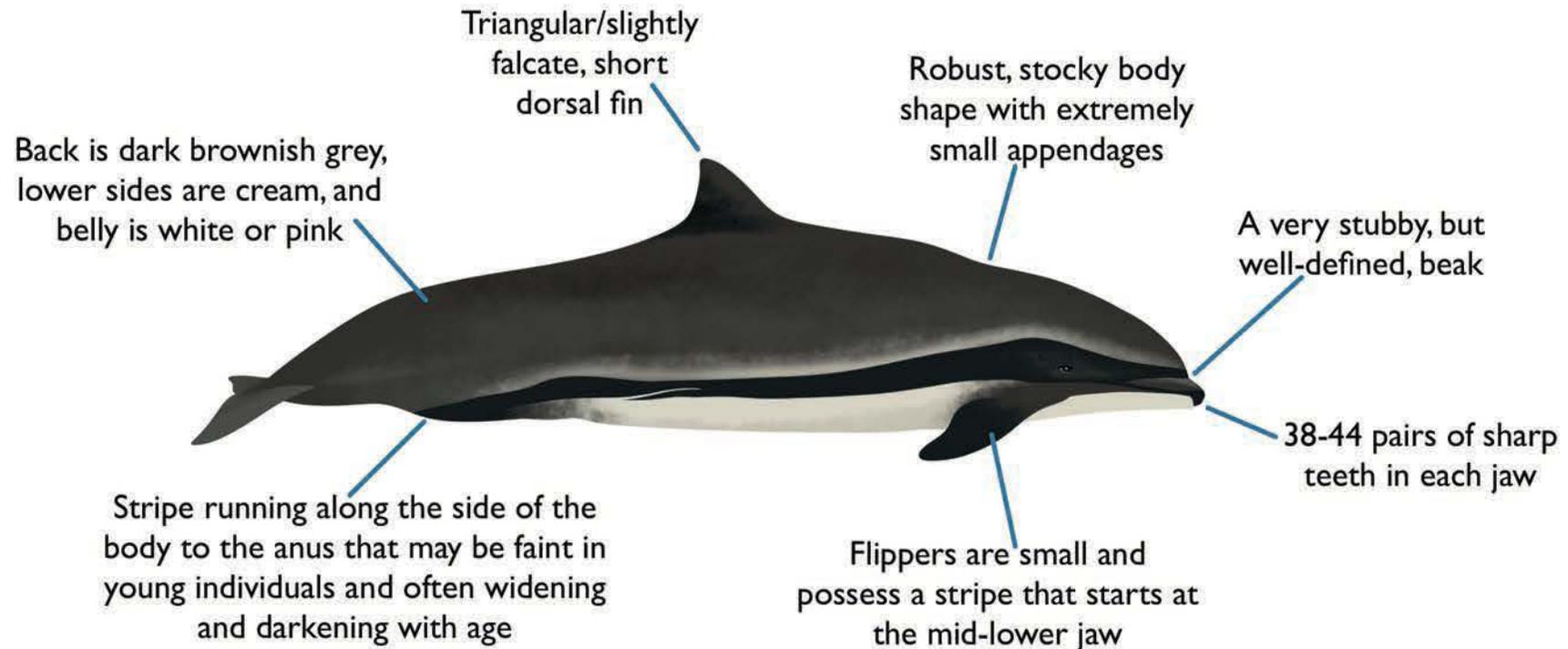
Adult length: up to 1.9-3.8m

Adult weight: up to 650kg

Newborn: 1-1.3m

Fraser's dolphin

(Lagenodelphis hosei)



Adult length: up to 2.7m

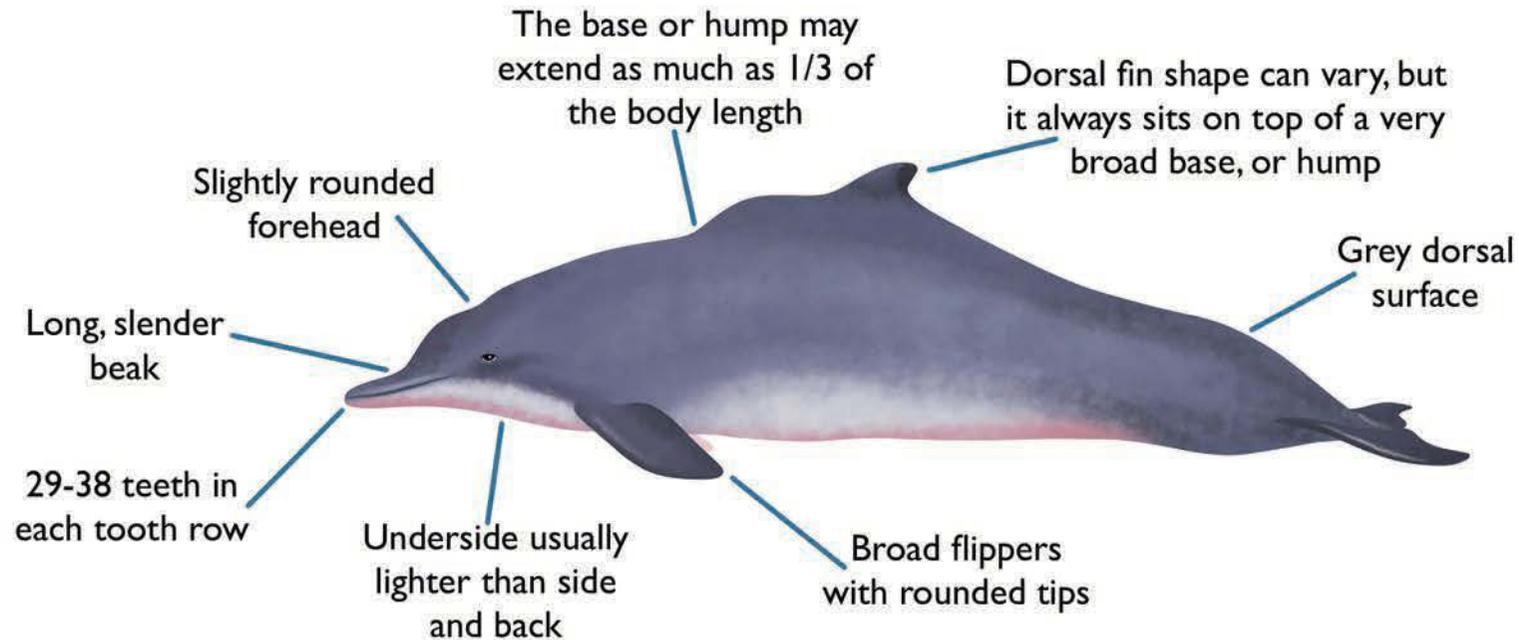
Adult weight: Over 210kg

Newborn: <1m and 20kg

Indo-pacific humpback dolphin

(Sousa plumbea)

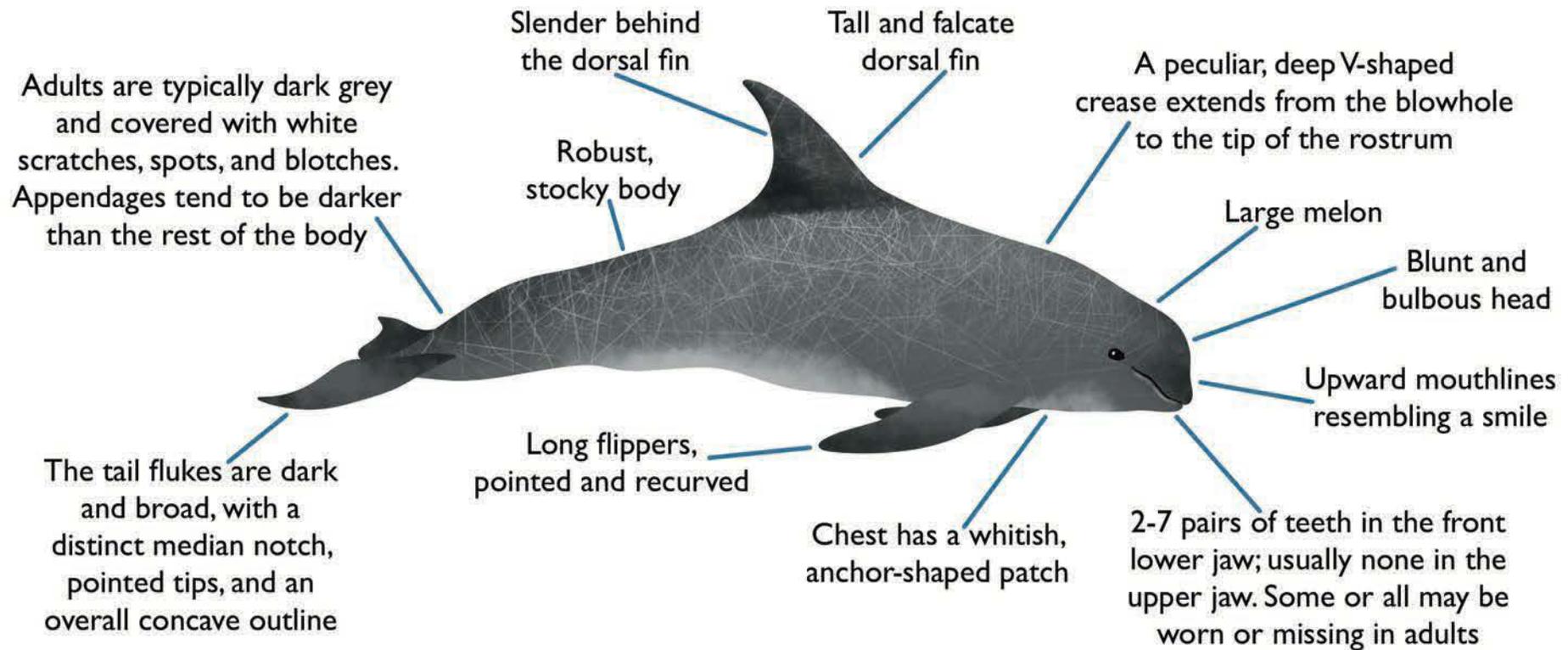
The only brackish water species in Sri Lanka



Adult length: up to 2.7m
Adult weight: up to 280kg
Newborn: 100cm / 14kg

Risso's dolphin

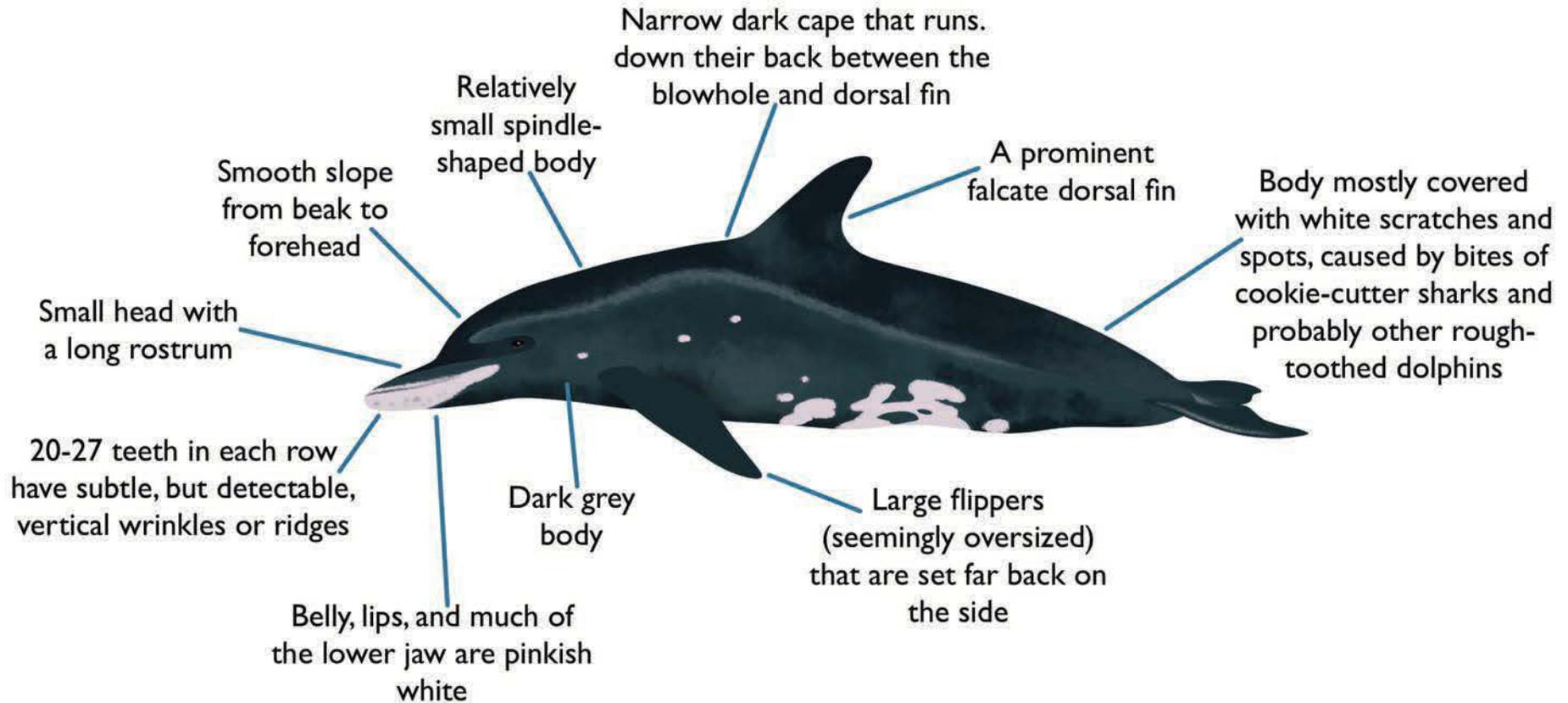
(*Grampus griseus*)



Adult length: up to 3.7m
Adult weight: up to 500kg
Newborn: 1.2-1.5m

Rough-toothed dolphin

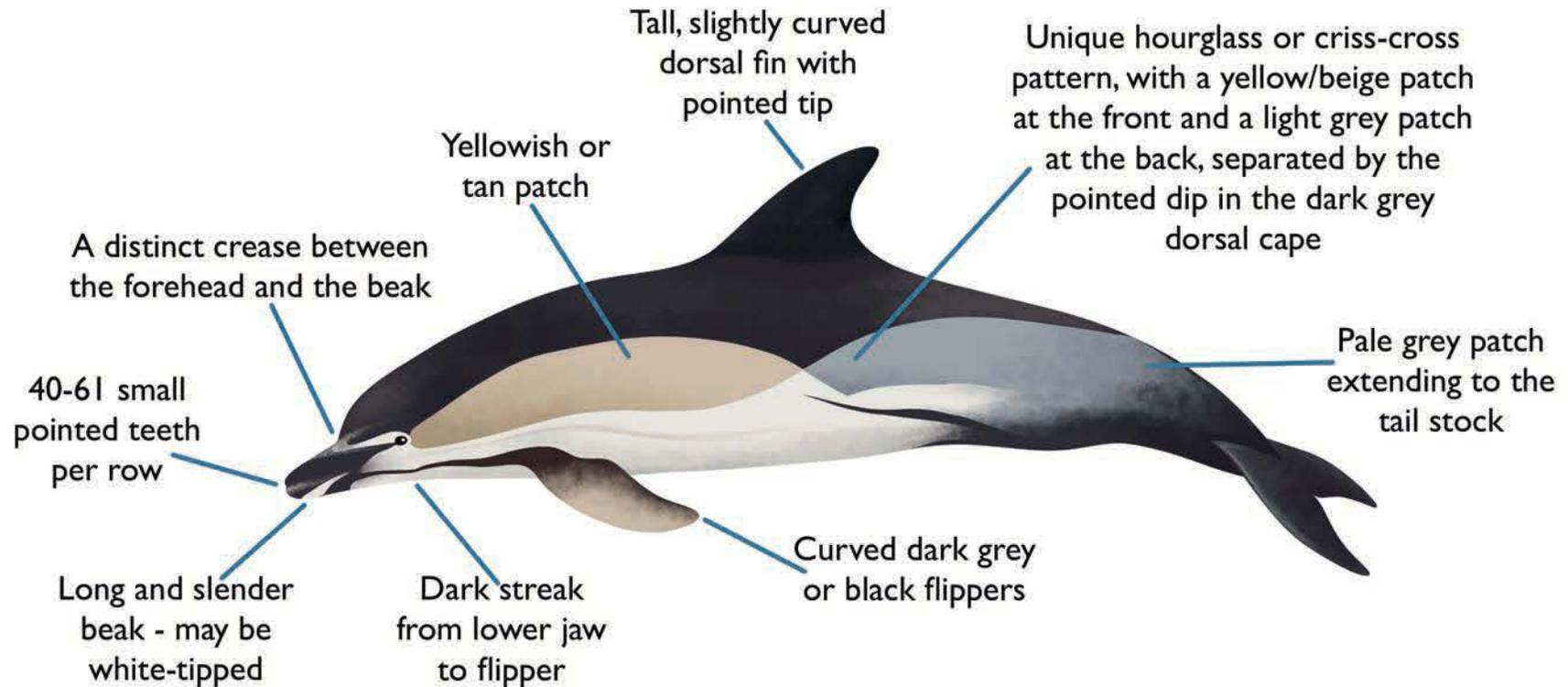
(*Steno bredanensis*)



Adult length: up to 2.8m
Adult weight: up to 155kg
Newborn: 1m

Common dolphin

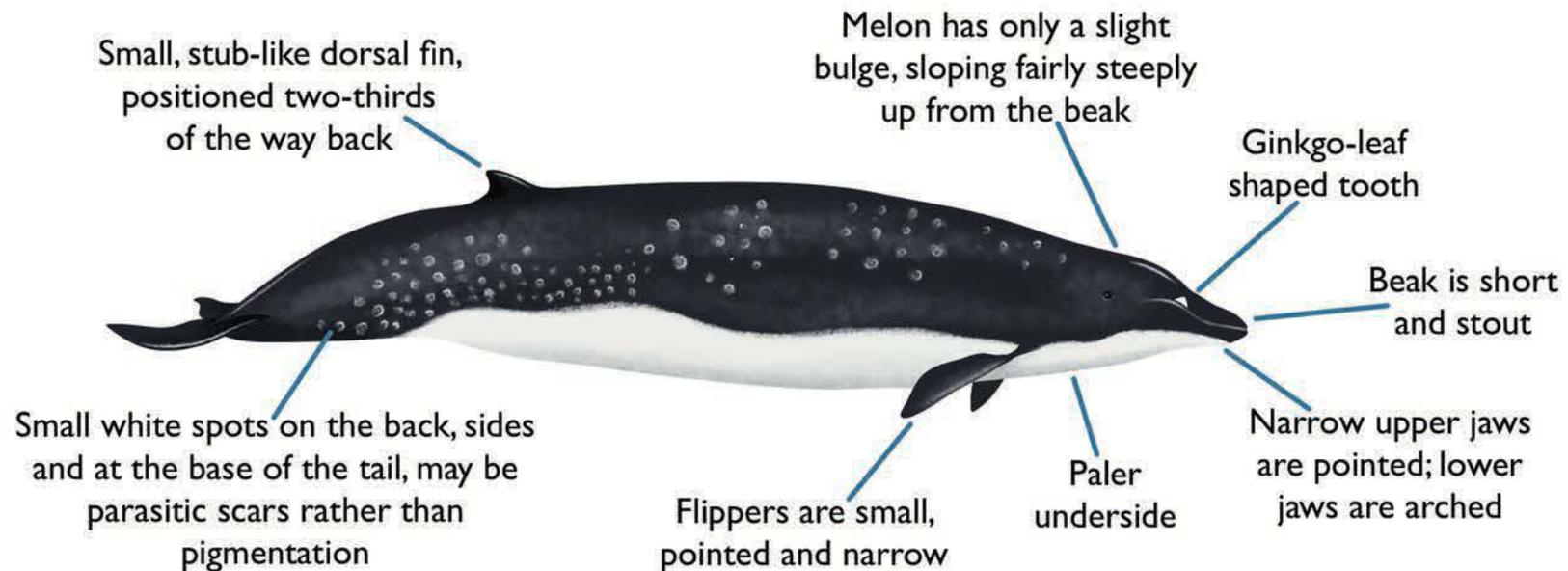
(Delphinus delphis)



Adult length: up to 2.7m
Adult weight: up to 200kg
Newborn: 80-93cm

Ginkgo-toothed beaked whale

(Mesoplodon ginkgodens)



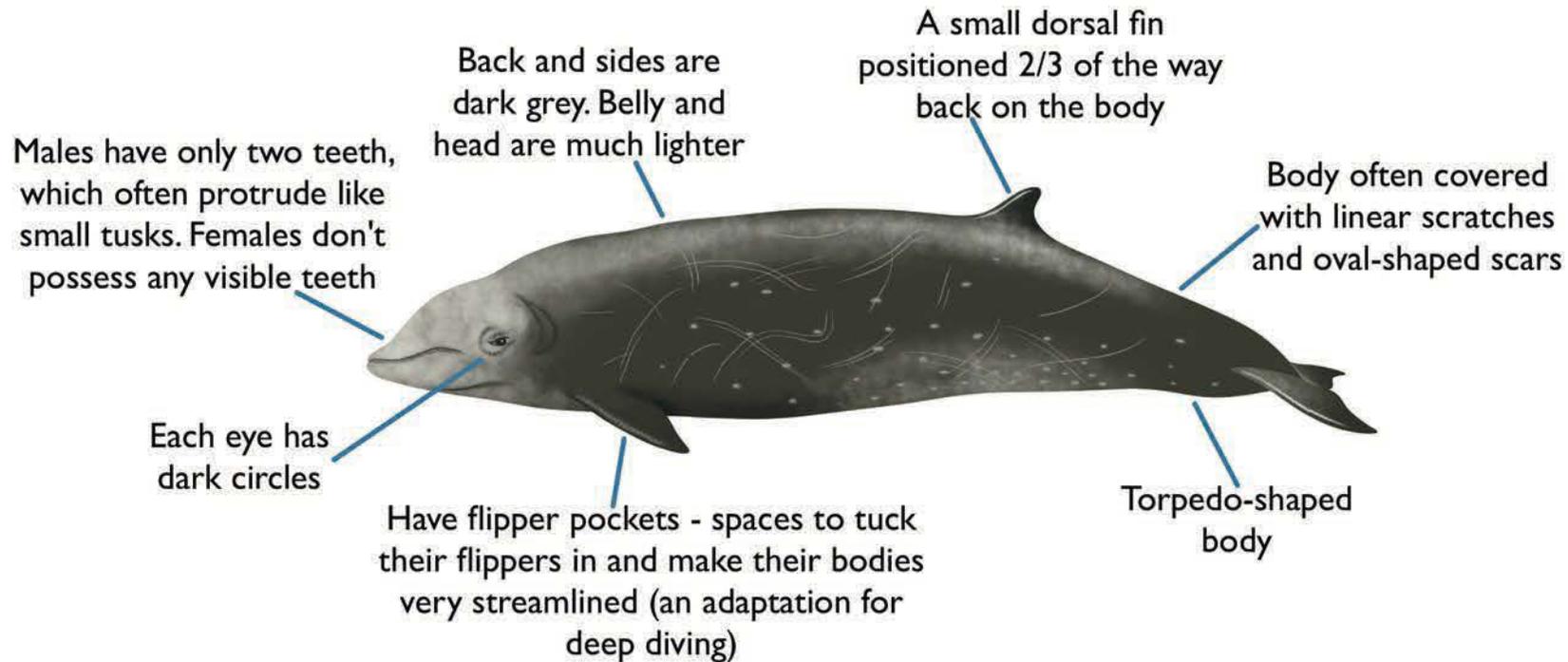
Adult length: up to 5.3m

Adult weight: up to 1,840kg

Newborn: ~2m/ weight unknown

Cuvier's beaked whale

(*Ziphius cavirostris*)



Adult length: up to 4-8m

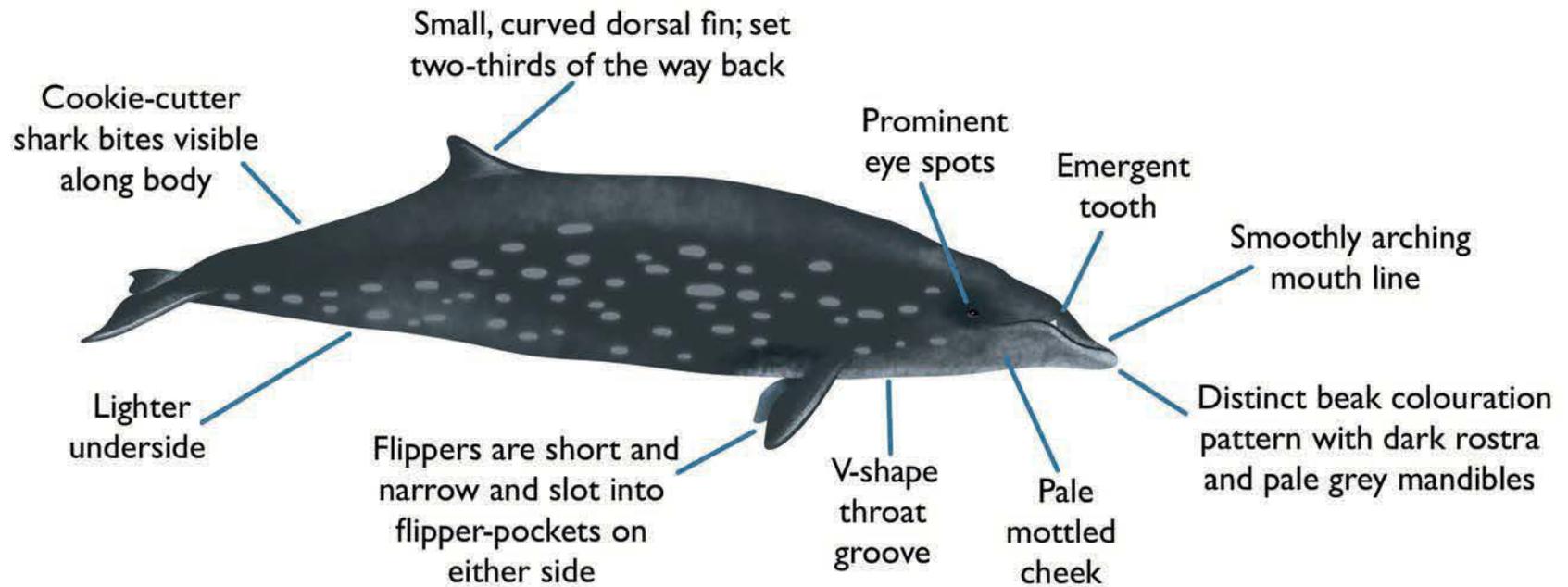
Adult weight: up to 1,800-3,000kg

Newborn: 2-3m/250-300kg

Deraniyagala's beaked whale

(*Mesoplodon hotaula*)

Discovered by P.E.P. Deraniyagala,
Director of National Museums
(1939-1963)



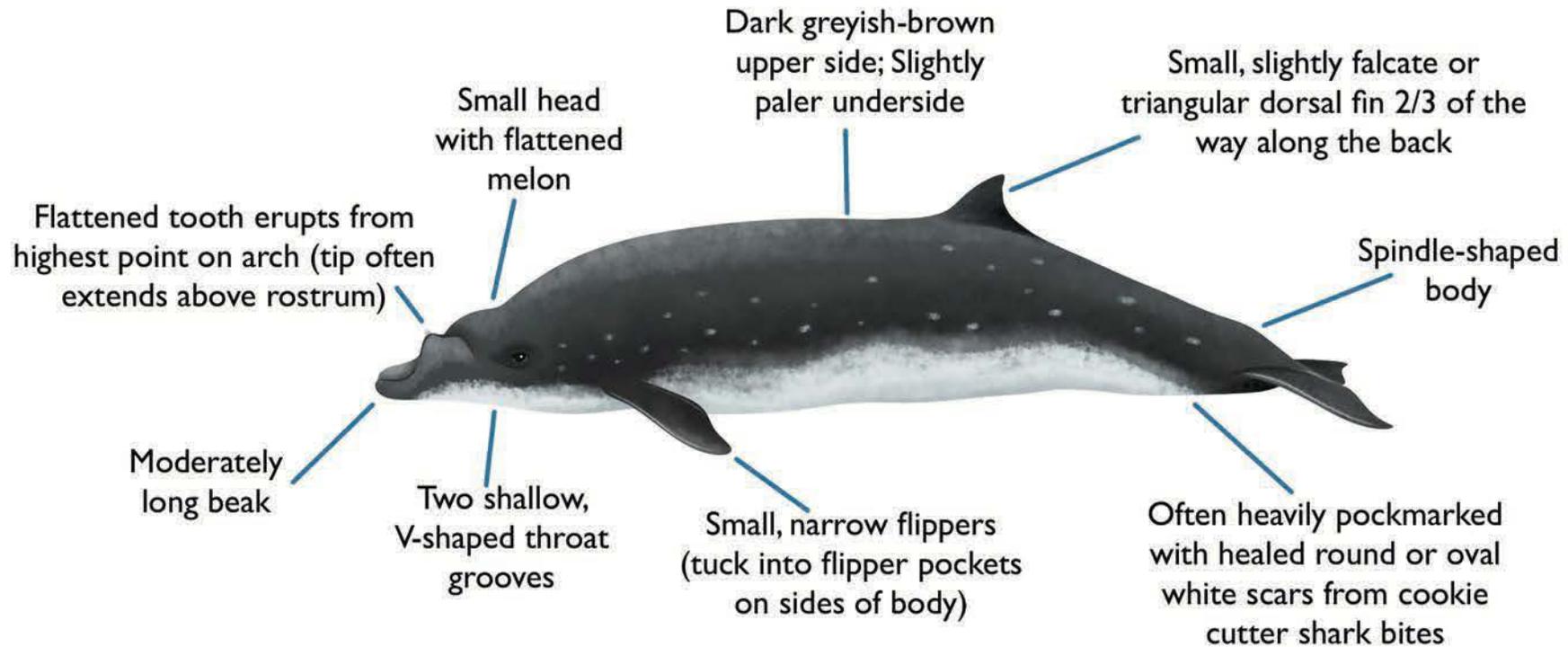
Adult length: up to 3-5m

Adult weight: Unknown

Newborn: Unknown

Blainville's beaked whale

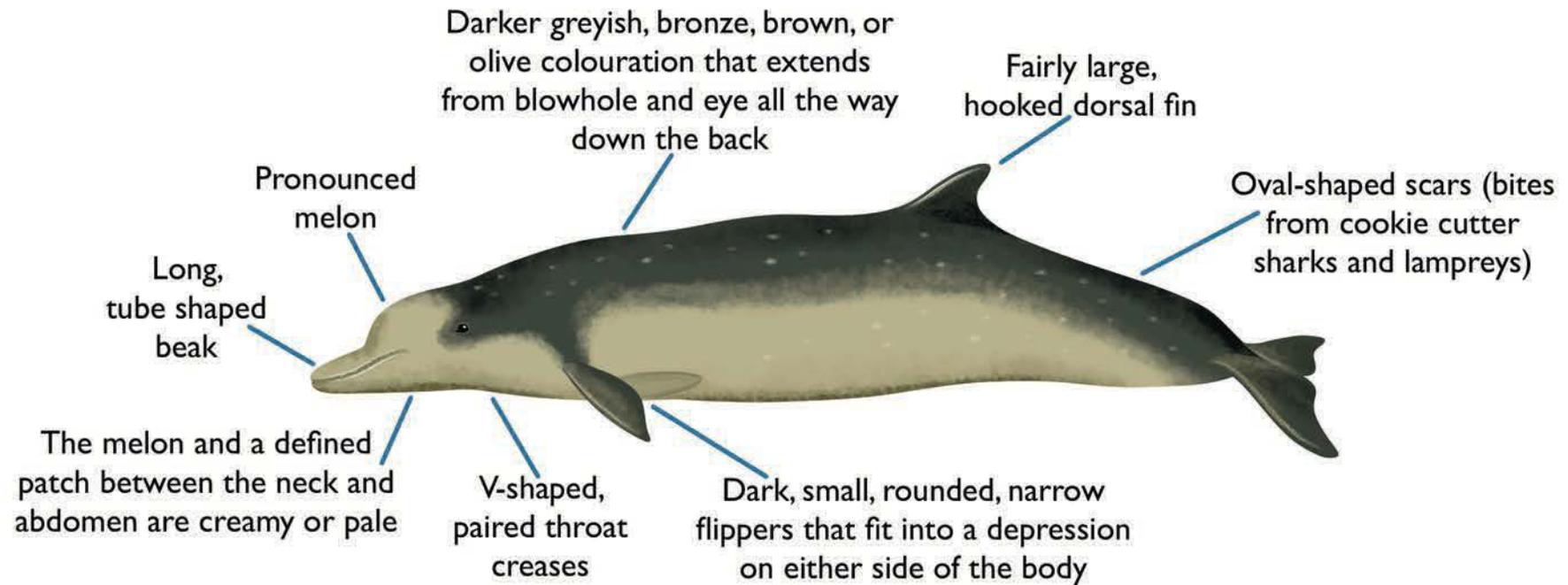
(*Mesoplodon densirostris*)



Adult length: up to 4-6m
Adult weight: up to 800-1,000kg
Newborn: 1.8-2.5m and ~60kg

Longman's beaked whale

(Indopacetus pacificus)



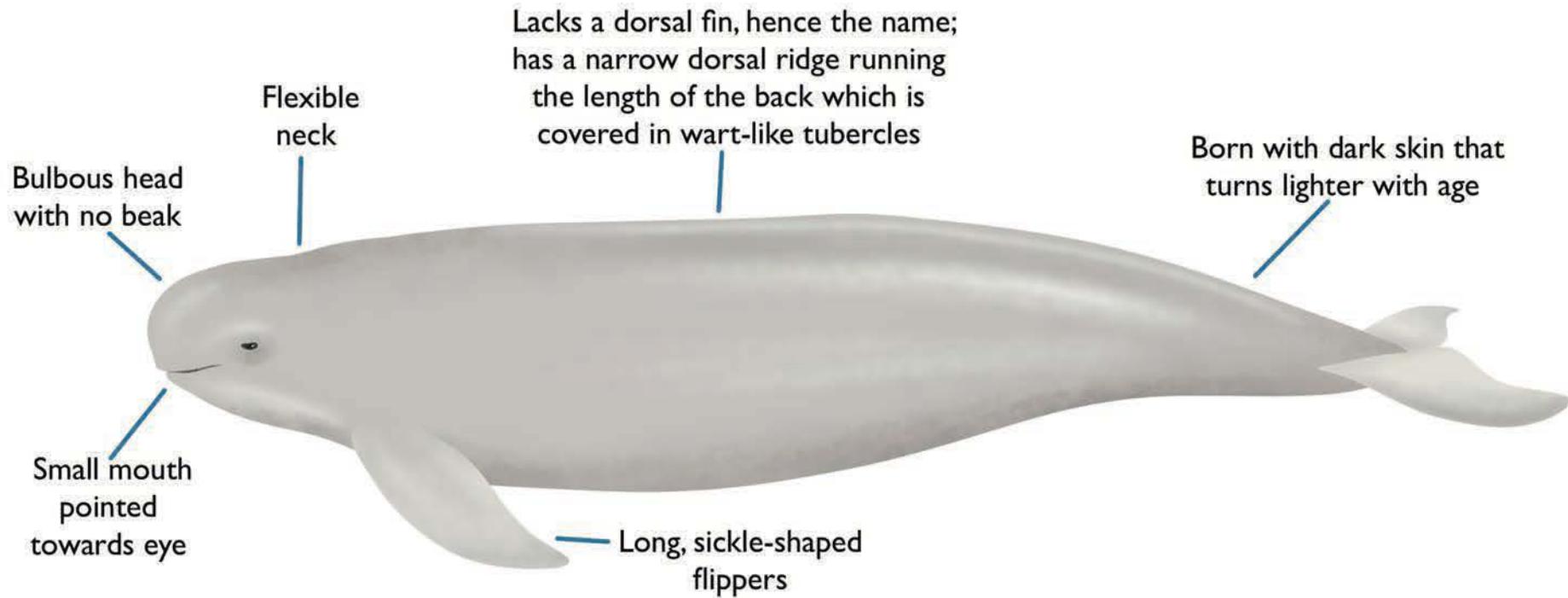
Adult length: up to 6.5m

Adult weight: unknown

Newborn: 2-3m/weight unknown

Finless porpoise

(Neophocaena phocaenoides)



Adult length: up to 2m

Adult weight: up to 100kg

Newborn: up to 0.75m/ weight unknown



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