

Media Release

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Tiny dolphin calf new addition to Tangalooma family

Tangalooma's internationally renowned wild dolphin family welcomed a new calf last night with proud mum Tangles introducing her first offspring to a crowd of delighted onlookers.

Dolphin Care team manager, Susan Hassard said Tangles, a regular to the provisional feeding program, was showing all the signs of being a wonderful mother, choosing to stay out of the feeding fray to protect her newborn, who was less than 24-hours old.

"We are so excited to see this new baby appear, we've been waiting on its arrival for a few weeks now," Mrs Hassard said.

"The calf is surprisingly small – only about 70 to 80 centimetres in length and weighing an estimated 15 to 20 kilos, and mum is keeping a very tight reign on things for the moment.

"Tangles stayed well back from the shore and took only a few fish from one of the dolphin care team before taking off with her calf in tow.

"We are always very cautious with newborns when they come in and try to avoid interfering with that all-important bonding time that happens during the first few weeks.

"But Tangles is showing all the signs of being an excellent mother and this will give her little one a great chance of survival."

Mrs Hassard said research indicates that first-born calves have up to a 50 per cent the mortality rate.

"However, Tangles has been raised with the dolphin program," Mrs Hassard said.

"Over the past 10 years, as she's matured, she has watched how the other calves - Storm, Phoenix and Silhouette - were raised, so her instincts are well honed.

"Tangalooma's dolphins are very successful at raising strong and healthy offspring with an incredible 100 per cent survival rate to date.

"Mum and bub will stick like glue for the first two months and then we'll see a separation of about one metre occur between the two as the calf begins to build confidence and some of the basic skills.

"Because the dolphins are wild, it may be some months before we are able to identify the sex of the calf.

"In the meantime, we'll be able to see how his or her personality develops and that will help give us some clues for an appropriate name."

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