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## Check It Out: Celebrate speed demons of the ocean

By Jan Johnston

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If you want to have a whale of a good time, and a real porpoise for reading today’s column, get ready to celebrate National Dolphin Day! Highly intelligent and social, dolphins are fascinating creatures. Did you know that an orca is not only the biggest member of the dolphin family but the fastest? In short bursts they

can reach speeds in excess of 30 miles per hour — speed demons of the ocean! Researchers have determined that dolphins can learn, teach, cooperate and even grieve. With faces that look like they're smiling all the time, and their playful behavior, it's no wonder humans feel strong connections with these marine animals.

Let's celebrate our dolphin friends with a marine-themed reading list. In many ways, I think dolphins are smarter than people, and we could certainly learn a thing or two from them. I'd attend dolphin school any day.

- “Becoming a Marine Biologist” by Virginia Morell.

If you or someone you know is interested in a career as a marine biologist, Virginia Morell's book offers a look into the field through the work of Robin Baird, a biologist who has studied Hawaii's whales and dolphins for two decades.

- “The Blue Machine: How the Ocean Works” by Helen Czerski.

Check out this book for a fascinating dive into the ocean and its impact on the planet and humanity.



Jan Johnston is the Collection Development Coordinator for Fort Vancouver Regional Libraries. Email her at [readingforfun@fvrl.org](mailto:readingforfun@fvrl.org). [Photo](#)

- “Dolphin Confidential: Confessions of a Field Biologist” by Maddalena Bearzi.

Crazy for dolphins? Scientist Maddalena Bearzi is, too, and her compelling story about studying dolphin behavior and becoming a conservation advocate is worth reading.

- “Ocean: The Definitive Visual Guide” published by DK publishing.

The publisher Dorling Kindersley is known for its well-illustrated books covering a variety of nonfiction topics, and this visual guide to the ocean does not disappoint.

- “Voices in the Ocean: A Journey into the Wild and Haunting World of Dolphins” by Susan Casey.

Entertaining and thought-provoking, this exploration of dolphin life and behavior reveals amazing dolphin interaction with humans — saving swimmers and surfers from shark attacks — and not so amazing interactions including marine pollution and overfishing.

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