

Scientists say dolphins have a seventh sense

7th December 2023



It is common knowledge that we have five senses. Some people believe they have six senses. They say their sixth sense is the ability to know something without using the ordinary five senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and

taste. Scientists have just discovered that some dolphins have seven senses. Researchers in Germany say bottlenose dolphins can sense electricity produced by their prey. The dolphins can detect the electric pulses produced by the heart beats of other sea creatures. This could help dolphins to find their next meal. Dolphins also use their excellent eyesight and sonar to sense what is around them. This seventh sense may also help them to navigate using Earth's magnetic field.

The researchers conducted a study on two dolphins named Dolly and Donna. Experiments tested what kinds of electricity the dolphins could detect. Dolly and Donna could sense both kinds of electricity - direct current and alternating current. They were a lot better at picking up direct current. All organisms produce direct current electricity in water. The researchers say being able to detect this means dolphins may be able to sense the location of most kinds of fish that are near them. The dolphins could use their seventh sense to hunt, even if they cannot see or hear well, or if they cannot use their other senses. The study has been published in the "Journal of Experimental Biology".

Sources: iflscience.com / sciencenews.org / gizmodo.com

Writing

Having seven senses would be great. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

knowledge / five senses/ sight / hearing / smell / touch / taste / electricity / sonar / study / experiment / current / water / location / fish / dolphins / journal / hunt

True / False

- 1) The article says most people know we have five senses. T / F
- 2) The dolphin's seventh sense is to generate electricity. T / F
- 3) Electricity from the hearts of fish could attract dolphins to them. T / F
- 4) Dolphins might be able to move around by using Earth's magnetic field. T / F
- 5) Researchers experimented on two dolphins called Donny and Dolla. T / F
- 6) One dolphin was better at detecting electricity than the other one. T / F
- 7) All sea creatures produce direct current electricity. T / F
- 8) The research is published in the "Journal of Dolphin Biology". T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. common | a. did |
| 2. ordinary | b. living things |
| 3. discovered | c. normal |
| 4. pulses | d. issued |
| 5. navigate | e. beats |
| 6. conducted | f. close by |
| 7. organisms | g. general |
| 8. location | h. travel across |
| 9. near | i. position |
| 10. published | j. found |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Would you like to work with dolphins?
- c) What do you know about electricity?
- d) How good are you at sensing what is near you?
- e) What sense would you like to be sharper?
- f) Would you like to read this research paper?
- g) What three adjectives best describe dolphins?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. common | a. published |
| 2. using the ordinary five | b. eyesight and sonar |
| 3. electric pulses produced | c. field |
| 4. Dolphins also use their excellent | d. most kinds of fish |
| 5. Earth's magnetic | e. senses |
| 6. what kinds of electricity the | f. to hunt |
| 7. They were a lot better at picking | g. knowledge |
| 8. sense the location of | h. up direct current |
| 9. dolphins could use their seventh sense | i. dolphins could detect |
| 10. The study has been | j. by the heart beats |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about dolphins?
- What do you think of a sixth sense in humans?
- What do you think of having seven senses?
- How intelligent are dolphins?
- How useful would it be to be able to detect electricity?
- What is your next meal going to be?
- What can we learn from dolphins?
- What new sense would you like?

Spelling

- common olwekndeg
- using the iodrrnay five senses
- detect the electric lupes
- use their excellent eisgeyht
- This seventh sense may also help them to invatgae
- using Earth's mtengaic field
- The researchers dnoutcecd a study
- both kinds of telrciicety
- direct rreucnt
- sense the coloitan of most kinds of fish
- published in the uojnarl
- experimental looibgy

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. c	3. j	4. e	5. h
6. a	7. b	8. i	9. f	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Pain

You think pain is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sense isn't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): hunger, temperature or fear.

Role B – Hunger

You think hunger is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sense isn't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): pain, temperature or fear.

Role C – Temperature

You think temperature is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sense isn't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): hunger, pain or fear.

Role D – Fear

You think fear is the most important sense. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their sense isn't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): hunger, temperature or pain.

Speaking – Other Senses

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important senses at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------|---------------|
| • Pain | • Movement |
| • Balance | • Temperature |
| • Ego | • Fear |
| • Hunger | • Love |

Answers – True False

1	T	2	F	3	T	4	T	5	F	6	F	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.