



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NOAA encourages calls to report and monitor entangled, diseased dolphin in southwest Florida

Public is asked not to intervene but call a toll free hotline if they spot the dolphin

Biologists with NOAA Fisheries and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are continuing to monitor an entangled dolphin in southwest Florida suffering from a chronic skin disease known as lacaziosis.

The dolphin is often spotted in canals between the areas of Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda. The dolphin was last seen with fishing line wrapped around the top of the dorsal fin and the outer edge of the tail. These current entanglements are not life threatening. However, biologists are monitoring this dolphin closely in case it becomes further entangled or its health condition declines.

Lacaziosis is a fungal infection of the skin that can affect humans in tropical climates and can be transmitted through direct contact. Therefore, if the dolphin is seen, the public is asked to report the sighting, not intervene, and allow trained experts to respond.

Sightings should be reported using the marine mammal hotline, 1-877-WHALE-HELP (877-942-5343). Officials will continue to monitor the entanglement and determine if intervention is needed.

Photo opportunity: photos of the dolphin are available. Please email Allison.Garrett@noaa.gov. Embedded photos: courtesy FWC

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources.

On the web:

NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>

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