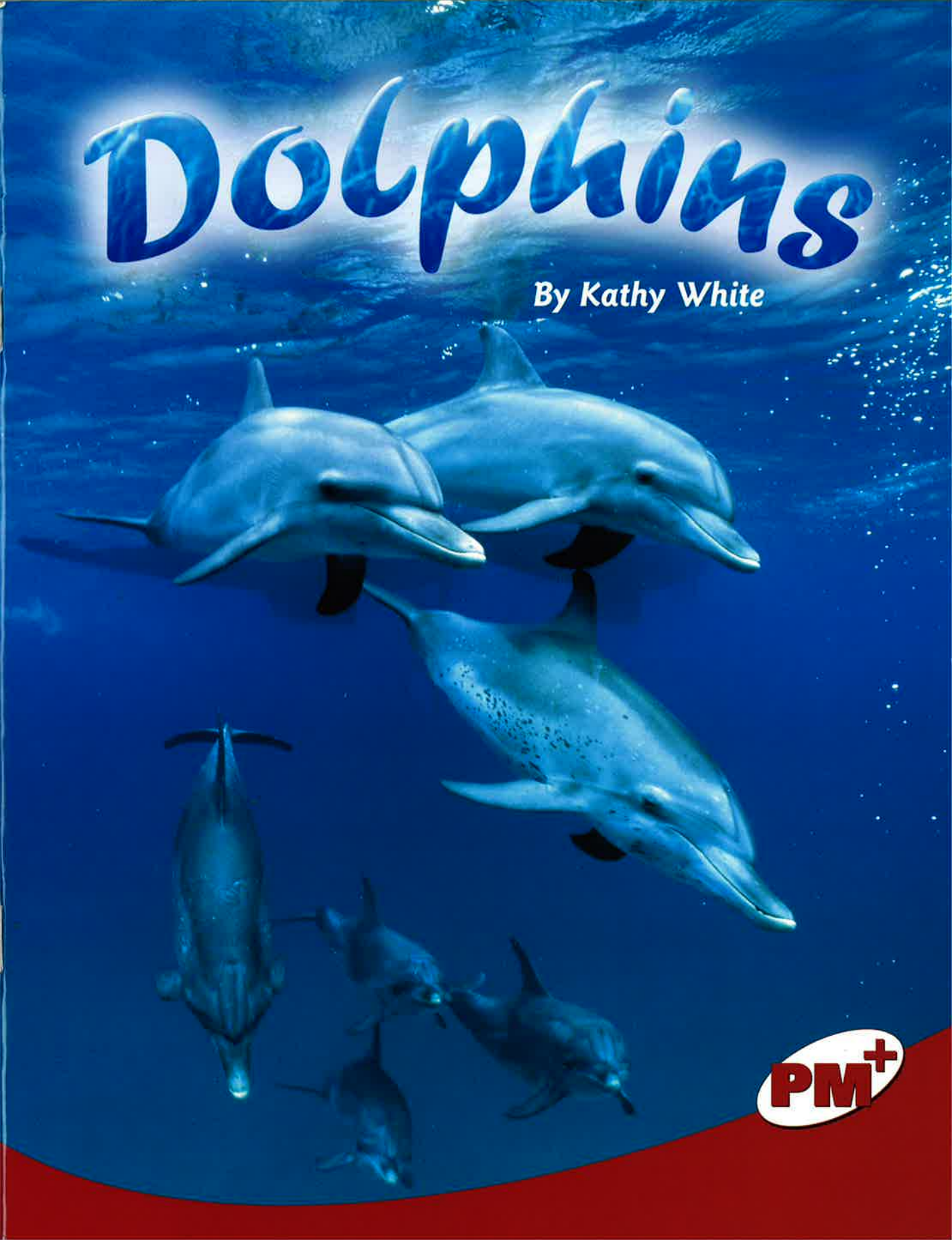
Dolphins

By Kathy White



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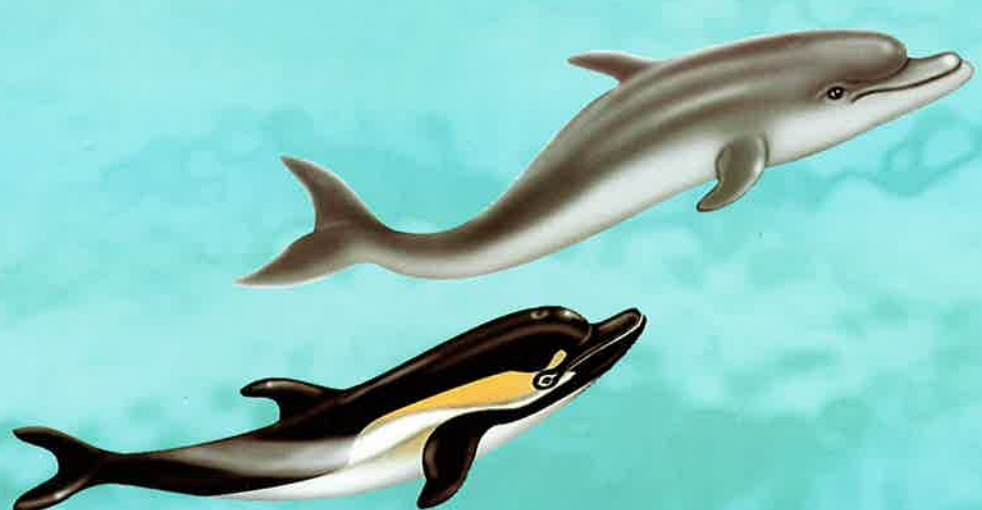
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Introduction

In many ways, dolphins are more like humans than fish. This may be why they have interested people for thousands of years. Like people, dolphins live in groups and communicate with each other. They cooperate to find food and when giving birth.

But sometimes people change the dolphins' environment. Fishing methods and boat traffic have made the oceans, seas and rivers a more dangerous place for dolphins. Rubbish and chemicals are causing water pollution, which destroys the dolphins' habitat. Some kinds of dolphins have become **endangered**.

Today many people know about these problems and they are trying to protect dolphins. The more we learn about dolphins and their environment, the more we can help them.



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Chapter 1

What Are Dolphins?

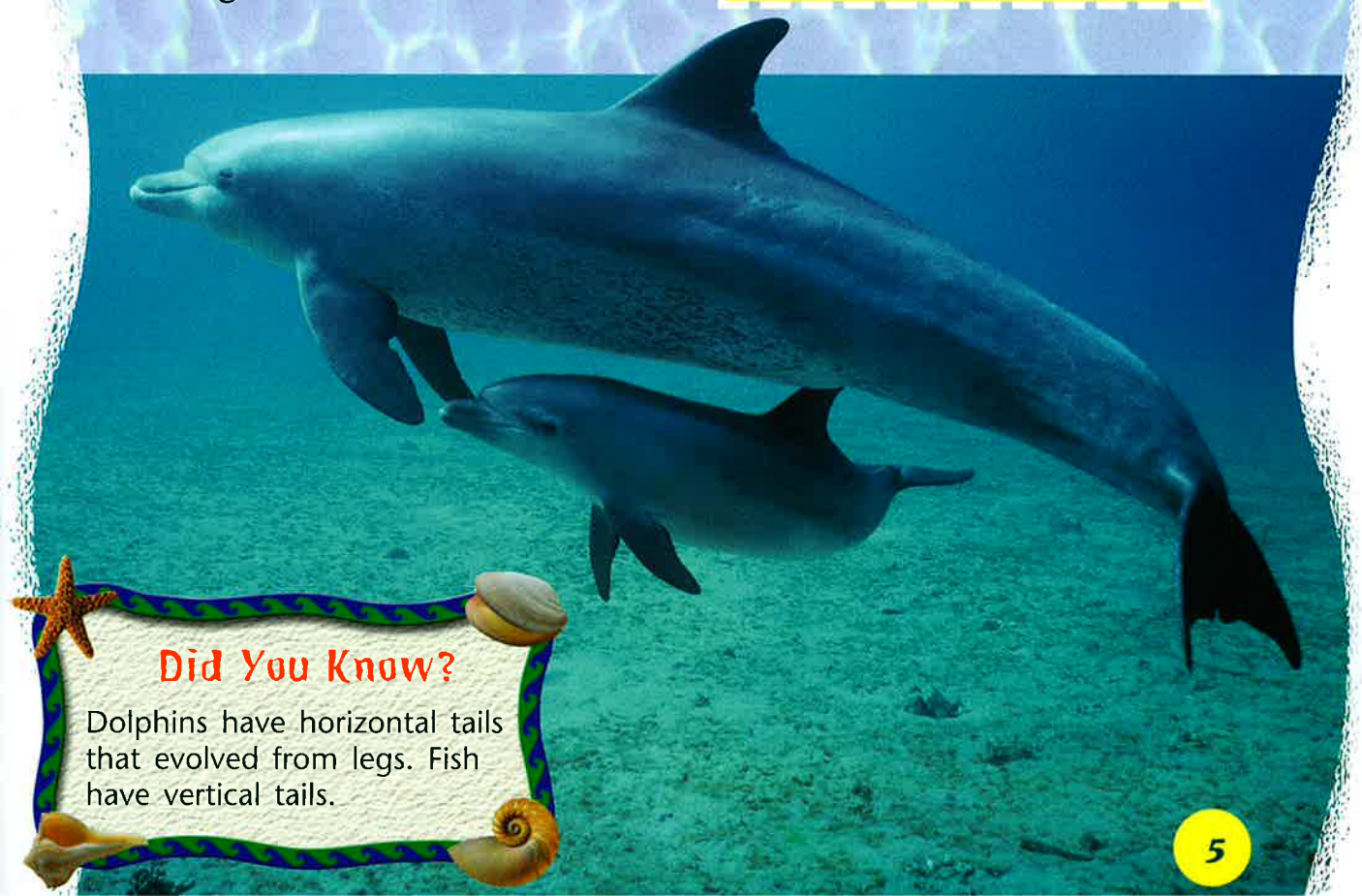
Dolphins are members of the whale family. There are many different kinds of dolphins. Some live in oceans and seas, while others live in rivers.

All dolphins are mammals. Most mammals, such as humans, dogs, cats and cattle, **evolved** to live on land. But dolphins evolved to live in the sea. Where we have arms and legs, they have fins and a tail that propel them through the water.

What are mammals?

Mammals are animals that:

- have strong backbones
- have lungs to breathe air
- give birth to live young
- suckle their mother's milk
- are warm-blooded.



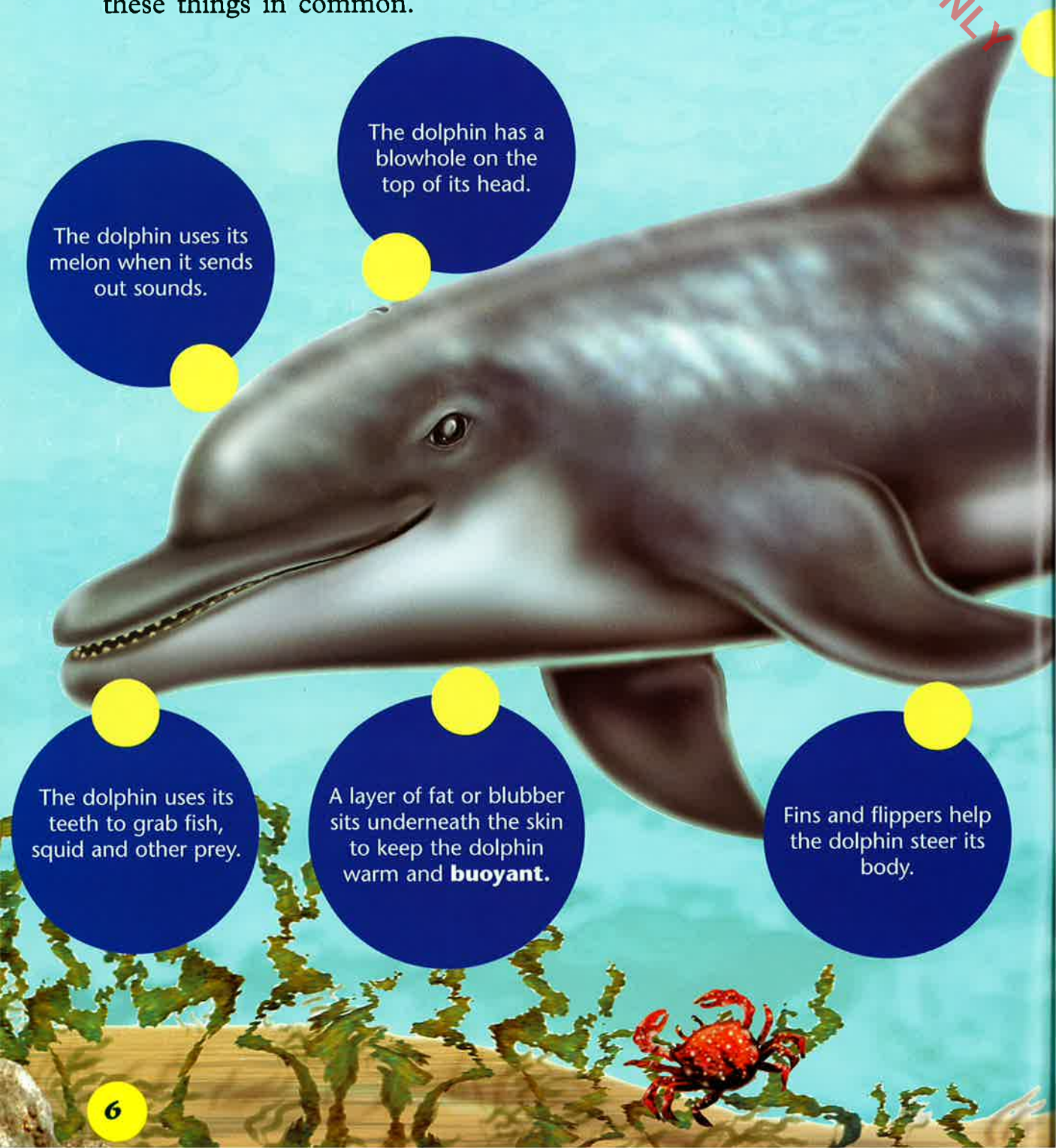
Did You Know?

Dolphins have horizontal tails that evolved from legs. Fish have vertical tails.

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What do dolphins look like?

There are differences between dolphins, but most dolphins have these things in common.



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The dorsal fin helps the dolphin stay balanced and upright in the water.

The dolphin has a long, strong backbone.

The tail **flukes** move up and down very fast to move the dolphin through the water.

The dolphin is covered in smooth, slippery skin that helps it glide through the water.



Bottlenose Dolphin



Hector's Dolphin

The Bottlenose Dolphin is long and streamlined. Hector's Dolphin is short and stocky. Most dolphins have a sickle-shaped dorsal fin, but others have a rounded dorsal fin.

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Kinds of dolphins

Most kinds of dolphins live in the ocean; some prefer deep waters, and others like shallow coastal areas and harbours. A few kinds of dolphins live in rivers and mangrove swamps.



Pacific White-sided Dolphins live in deep water.



Amazon River Dolphins live in mangrove swamps in Brazil.