

2010

**Perrin, W. F., Würsig, B., and Thewissen, J. G. M. (Eds.). (2009).  
Encyclopedia of marine mammals. London: Elsevier [book review]**

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### Recommended Citation

McDonough, K. (2010). [Review of the book *Encyclopedia of marine mammals*, by W. F. Perrin, B. Würsig, and J. G. M. Thewissen]. *Choice*, July, 47-5996.

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47-5996

Internet Resource

Encyclopedia of Marine Mammals. 2nd ed., 2009, ed. by William F. Perrin, Bernd Würsig, and J. G. M. Thewissen. Elsevier.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/book/9780123735539> (reviewed in CHOICE July 2010).

This revision of the well-received first edition (CH, Oct'02, 40-0656) adds several new chapters in areas of marine mammal science that have changed significantly, e.g., climate change and the "interface of ecology and conservation." Somewhat fragmented topics are now combined into more comprehensive ones. Additionally, almost all entries are updated, and color photographs appear throughout. Each of the 260 chapters is authored by an acclaimed contributor and covers species and topics relating to anatomy, physiology, behavior, conservation, ecology, and more. In ScienceDirect (CH, Sep'06, 44-0034), articles appear alphabetically by chapter in the default view. Each entry has a preview link that opens a small window for quick access to the chapter outline, figures/tables, and references. Also included are links to the PDF version (identical to the print version) and to related articles in the database. Users who click on an entry will see the HTML version; like preview mode, it supplies a chapter outline with each section hot-linked to the full text below. Tabs allow a quick view of figures or references separate from the main text. Species accounts are arranged in the following categories: Characteristics and Taxonomy, Distribution and Abundance, Ecology, Behavior and Physiology, Life History, and Interactions with Humans. However, if not much is known about a species, not all categories appear. Each topic ranges from 1 page (Dialects) to 15 pages (Conservation Efforts), with most entries covering 4-6 pages. References for entries vary from as few as 5 to 90-plus. Those checked by this reviewer all had been updated since the first edition.

The online interface does have some issues. Accents at the beginning of authors' names are sometimes misrepresented. Some of the topics or species accounts listed under see also reference are hot-linked, while others are not, even though they are present in the Encyclopedia. The entry display page leaves one-third of the space blank, supposedly reserved to show related articles in ScienceDirect. Thumbnail images fail to open to full size when clicked (a known bug, accommodated by viewing the PDF or HTML version in Full-size Image mode). Finally, the species list at the end of the volume, organized by family, does not provide hot links to corresponding entries. Overall, this encyclopedia's content serves as an important reference source for marine mammals. Unfortunately, editorial control for some online features is lacking. Summing Up: Recommended. All academic/public libraries; all levels.

--K. P. McDonough, Northern Michigan University

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