

Hector's Dolphin Activity

An education activity from the NZ Marine Studies Centre

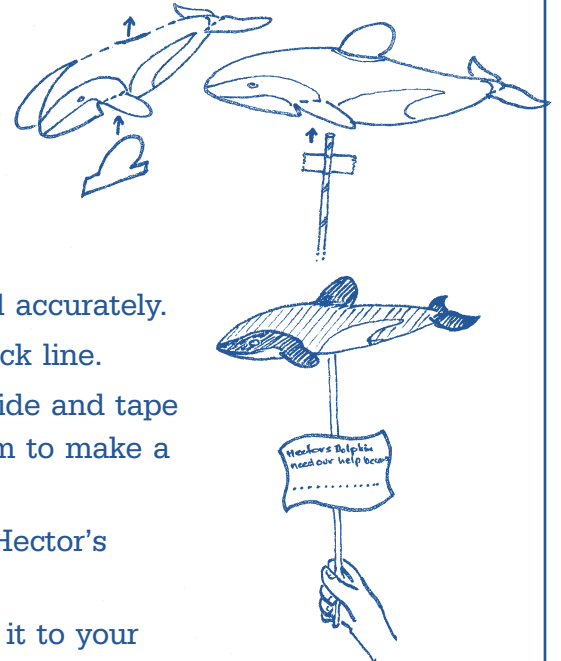
Hector's Dolphin Puppet

Materials :

- drinking straws, • scissors • sticky tape
- coloured pencils, crayons or felt pens

Dolphin puppet

1. Look at photos of Hector's dolphins to colour your model accurately.
2. Cut the Hector's dolphin puppet out along the heavy black line.
3. Fold in half and push the dorsal fin through from the inside and tape in place. Tape a drinking straw as shown in the diagram to make a handle.
4. Do some research on Hector's dolphins to find out why Hector's dolphins need our help.
5. Complete the sentence on the flag, cut it out and attach it to your puppet. Use your puppet to spread your message.



Did you know?

- Hector's dolphins are found only in New Zealand and mostly in the South Island. Marlborough Sounds, Kaikoura and Banks Peninsula are good places for watching them.
- With only an estimated 3,000–4,000 left, they are also one of the rarest dolphins in the world. They are regarded as a being a "threatened" species.
- These rare dolphins are the smallest members of the Dolphin (Delphinidae) family and are usually found in shallow water close to the shore.
- Dolphins communicate by making very short, high-frequency clicking sounds that are about six times higher than sounds that we can hear.
- People have only recently begun to understand more about these beautiful mammals through research and fieldwork. We now know that we need to work hard to protect this species from extinction.

Hector's Dolphin Drama

Use the puppets you've made to act out this story.

Hector's Dolphins like to swim in small groups called pods. They like to live in shallow water near the shore. Like other marine mammals they come to the surface to breathe air through their blowhole.

Often Hector's Dolphins will play tag using bits of seaweed, or slap the water with their tails for fun. Hector's are very friendly dolphins and often swim with boats.

In murky water they use sound (sonar) to find fish to eat. This sound system is great for finding fish but is unable to detect the fine mesh line used in set nets. A struggling fish caught in an unseen net seems like an easy meal. But the dolphin risks getting tangled up and if it can't get to the surface to breathe it will drown.

Sensing that the trapped dolphin is in danger the others in the pod may nudge the dolphin to help it out of the net.

They all swim away to have another game of seaweed tag. . .

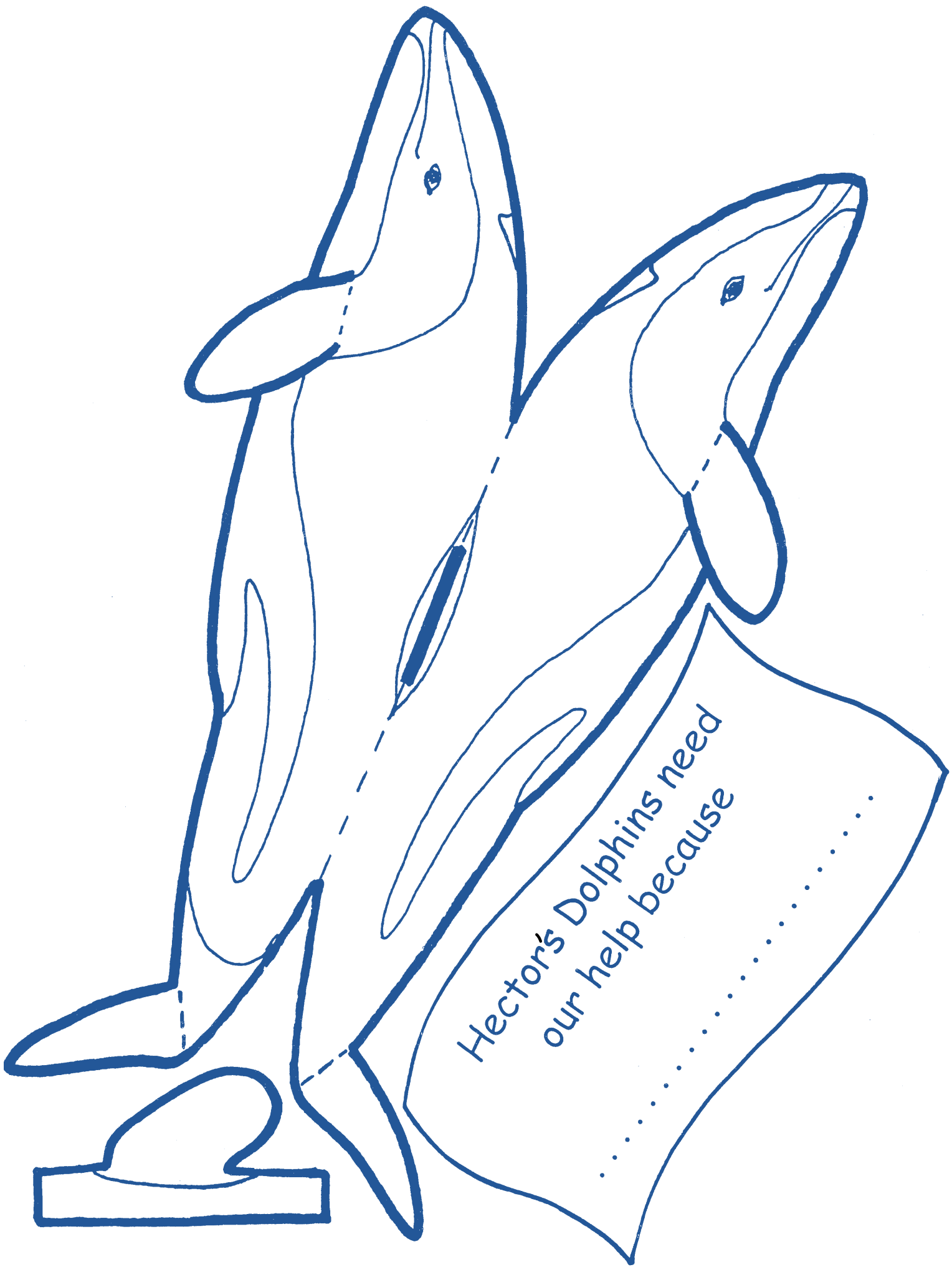
You might like to extend the story, write your own story, poem or song to act out with your puppets.



"Where to from here - What can I do?"

Seaweed 2000

March 11 - 19



Hector's Dolphins need
our help because

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