

Abstract

In recent years there has been an increased interest in measuring animal personality. It is argued that personality in animals is expressed through the behaviours they display. In this study personality has been investigated in a group of eight captive bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*). Data from focal samplings were analyzed by using behavioural codings and the Five-factor model consisting of Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. The results revealed that the dolphins display both distinct personality differences as well as similarities in these factors. By calculating coefficients of association it was found that the dolphins also prefer the company of certain individuals over others. Knowledge of individual personality differences and its implications can prove helpful in aspects such as management and reintroduction programs, evolution and genetics and in providing a more comprehensive knowledge to explain other behavioural and cognitive studies.

Key words: behavior, bottlenose dolphin, five-factor model, individual differences, personality, *Tursiops truncatus*