



Vimeo: Dolphin Slaughters in Taiji

Instructor Guide

THE DRIVE

- Dolphin pods are forcibly herded from the ocean by a fleet of boats with “banger poles”, these boats create a wall of sound by using a hammer to bang on poles that have been lowered into the water
- The acoustically sensitive dolphins flee from the sound
- The dolphins are guided towards the shore and to a small cove
- We suspect there are casualties during the drive due to the stress with elders and young calves being most susceptible but there is no way to document this
- Pods with young dolphins that need to surface more often to breathe are more easily driven in as the hunters will see the pod surfacing often
- Dolphin Project Cove Monitors have witnessed drive hunts lasting anywhere from 30 minutes to 8 hours, it depends on where the pod is located - how far offshore- the species and their ability to fight to stay out in the open ocean

IN THE COVE

- In order to hide the killing from any observers, the dolphins are forced onto a rocky beach with tarps drawn across the top so that observers looking down at the cove cannot see the actual killing
- Getting the dolphins under the tarps is difficult as the dolphins fight for their lives
- Boats are used to force the dolphins closer to the shore, frightening the dolphins with the noise and the propwash from their engines
- Divers jump in the water to help force the dolphins towards the shore
- Ropes are used to tied dolphins by their flukes (tails) and drag them under the tarps
- Dolphins are used to living in the open ocean panic when forced close to the shore
- Panicked dolphins throw themselves onto the rocks in desperate attempts to escape
- Dolphins get trapped in nets, they are sometimes untangled by the divers, sometimes they find their own way out but sometimes they drown
- Once under the tarps, dolphins are tied by their flukes to stakes that have been placed in the shoreline, lined up next to each other
- The dolphin hunters will make their way down the line of dolphins, slaughtering family members right next to each other
- Dolphins have incredibly strong social bonds with their family members and are intelligent enough to know exactly what is happening



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- Given the tight social structure of dolphin pods, it is thought that losing family members must have a very negative effect on the pod
- The meat from slaughtered dolphins in Taiji has been tested for mercury and consistently shows that the amount of mercury present in the meat is above healthy levels
- The slaughters defy all guidelines for humane slaughter but marine animals are not protected by any animal welfare laws in Japan
- Dolphin Project Cove Monitors have documented panic and chaos during the slaughter process
- Dolphin Project Cove Monitors have also documented young calves being taken back out to sea and dumped back into the open ocean with no family members
- Dolphin Project Cove Monitors have also witness surviving family members being driven out to sea and repeatedly attempt to make their way back to the cove where they last saw their family members