Florida's Wildlife Tourists Get Dolphin Smart

A new program, called Dolphin SMART, has been introduced in Florida to allow tourists to choose a responsible wildlife tour operator, and to protect wild bottlenosed dolphins in the Florida Keys. The Dolphin SMART scheme lets visitors to the Florida Keys check if tour boat operators behave responsibly around the marine mammals when choosing which company to use.

The acronym SMART stands for:

1. **Skinny Stomach Rule:** I shed 42 lbs of body fat by following this 1 rule.

   - **Acai Berry Diet Plan**

     - **Before**
     - **After**

   Results May Vary

   - [mariedietblog.com](http://mariedietblog.com)

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- [www.garyheyes.com](http://www.garyheyes.com)

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**WDCS Dolphin SMART Programme**

WDCS Dolphin SMART Programme officer, Courtney Yail said, "The Dolphin SMART programme will hopefully prove an incredible success for everyone working to protect Florida’s unique wild bottlenosed dolphins. Responsible dolphin watching is a ‘win-win’ situation which means that both boat operators and tourists can benefit from incredible encounters with wild dolphins in their natural habitat, for years to come!"

Operators certified as Dolphin SMART under the scheme have demonstrated a commitment to the protection of Florida’s wild dolphins and to educating the public about the animals. One of the key messages of the scheme is to remind tourists not to try to ‘swim with’, touch or feed the animals.

Courtney continued, “Interacting too closely with these wild animals can disturb them to the point where they no longer carry out natural behaviours like nursing, breeding and resting, and may even drive the whole group away from critical habitats, like the Florida Keys.”

Tourists visiting the Florida Keys and wanting to see the wild dolphins can be sure the operator they choose is Dolphin SMART by looking for a current year flag or sticker.

The programme also includes vital research into the effects of tour boats on the dolphin residents. Researchers with the Dolphin Ecology Project collect information on individual dolphin identification, population numbers and animal behavior around tour boats. It is hoped that the research will help to assess the success of Dolphin SMART and to ensure that Key West’s wild dolphins continue to thrive.

Wild dolphin watching has become hugely popular with tourists throughout the world where responsible tour operators provide their passengers with an opportunity to learn about dolphins by viewing them in their natural environment. The clear, shallow waters of Key West, Florida, where a handful of the resident bottlenose dolphins frequent a small area of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, has become a prime location for dolphin watching in the United States.

Source: [Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (North America)](http://www.wdcs.org)

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