

## DEVELOPMENT OF CAPTIVE-BORN BOTTLENOSE DOLPHINS *TURSIOPS TRUNCATUS PONTICUS*

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**Summary.** Feeding, respiration and behaviour of dolphin calves as well as the behavioural the relationship of females and calves during the first two months after calving in the delphinarium of the Lithuanian Sea Museum were examined. The calf of Glorija breathed every 19 seconds ( $M \pm SEM = 18,72 \pm 0,172$ ;  $n = 63$ ) and the calf of Gabija breathed every 20 seconds ( $M \pm SEM = 19,93 \pm 0,186$ ;  $n = 61$ ). The respiration rates slightly decreased with the age of animals ( $p > 0,05$ ) and were significantly different for the two calves ( $p < 0,05$ ). The calves were active both during the day and the night. They could co-ordinate their movements perfectly in two weeks after the calving. At the age of one month the calves became more independent. The number of synchronic inspirations of mother and calf was decreasing with age. Glorija was suckling the calf about 26 times ( $M \pm SEM = 25,84 \pm 1,131$ ;  $n=31$ ) in twenty-four hours or every 56 minutes ( $M \pm SEM = 56,07 \pm 2,924$ ;  $n=31$ ) and Gabija was suckling the calf about 33 times ( $M \pm SEM = 33,38 \pm 2,165$ ;  $n = 29$ ) in twenty-four hours or every 45 minutes ( $M \pm SEM = 45,00 \pm 2,708$ ;  $n = 30$ ). The number of feeding periods between the animals was significantly different ( $p < 0,05$ ). The time between feeding periods was increasing with the age of the animals ( $p < 0,05$ ).

**Keywords:** dolphins *Tursiops truncatus ponticus*, development and adaptation dining postnatal period