

# DOLPHINS



*The bottlenose dolphin is one of the most active mammals in the sea. Playful and powerful swimmers, they can often be seen riding wakes from ships or even waves near the shore. Their sleek and streamlined bodies allow them to swim faster than 20 miles per hour—and they can jump as high as 20 feet out of the water!*

◀ **START WITH THE PREPRINTED SKETCH!**



**Light blue**

Acrylic: 2 parts white +  
1 part ultramarine blue



**Medium blue-gray**

Acrylic: 2 parts white +  
1 part black +  
1 dot ultramarine blue



**Dark blue-gray**

Acrylic: 1 part white +  
1 part black +  
1 dot ultramarine blue



**Yellow-brown**

Acrylic: 1 part deep yellow  
+ 1 dot raw umber

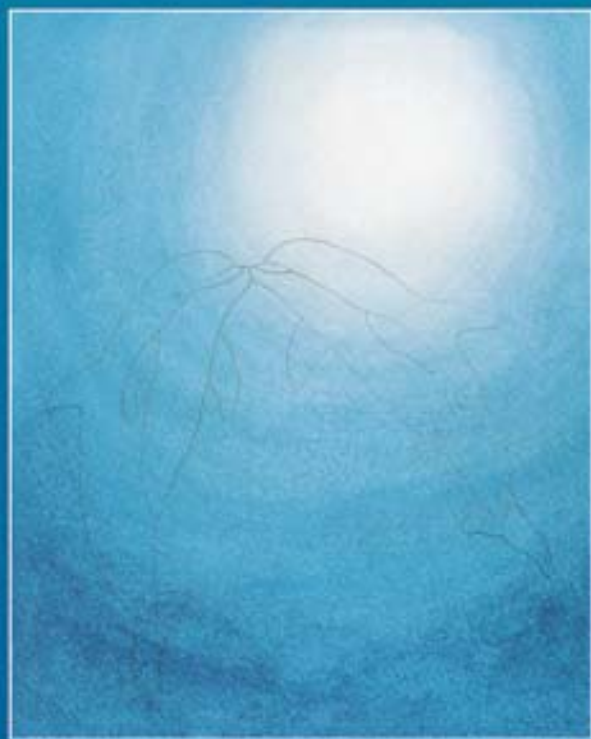


**Light gray**

Acrylic: 1 part white +  
1 dot black

### Step 1▶

First dampen the entire paper with a wash of water so that your first applications of color blend smoothly and evenly. Then make a light ultramarine blue watercolor flat wash (see page 6) and use a large flat brush to apply curved, sweeping strokes that follow the circular pattern of the sun. As you paint, remember not to stroke color over the light of the sun, instead leaving the paper white.



### ◀ Step 2

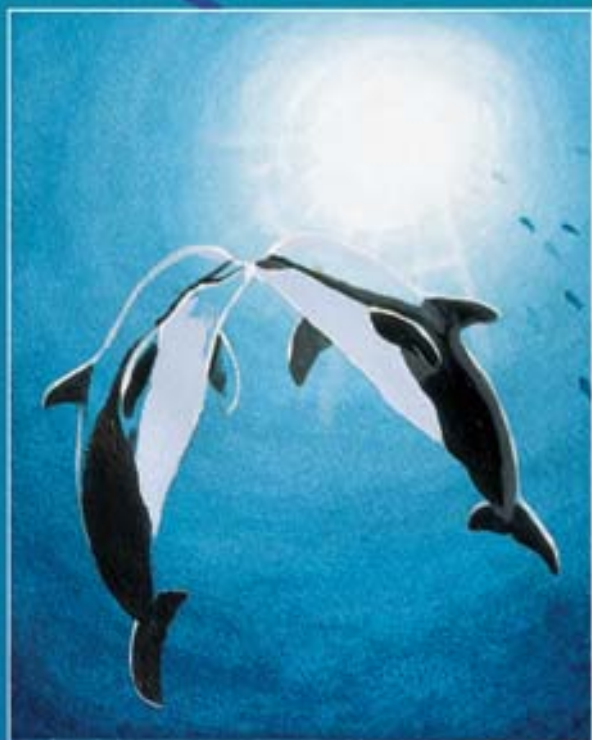
Now use a dark ultramarine blue watercolor gradated wash (see page 6) to cover the deeper areas of the ocean. Gradually lighten the wash as you move toward the sun by adding water to your brush, and keep your paper damp to prevent streaks. As you apply the wash, be sure to maintain curved strokes.



### Step 3▶

Use a small round brush and dark ultramarine blue watercolor washes to paint the school of fish, using a lighter blue wash to indicate the fish furthest away.

Now rinse your brush, load it with white acrylic paint, and add a few rays of light radiating from the center of the sun. Then use white acrylic paint to outline the dolphins' bodies, as shown. This will help you see the figures against the dark background.

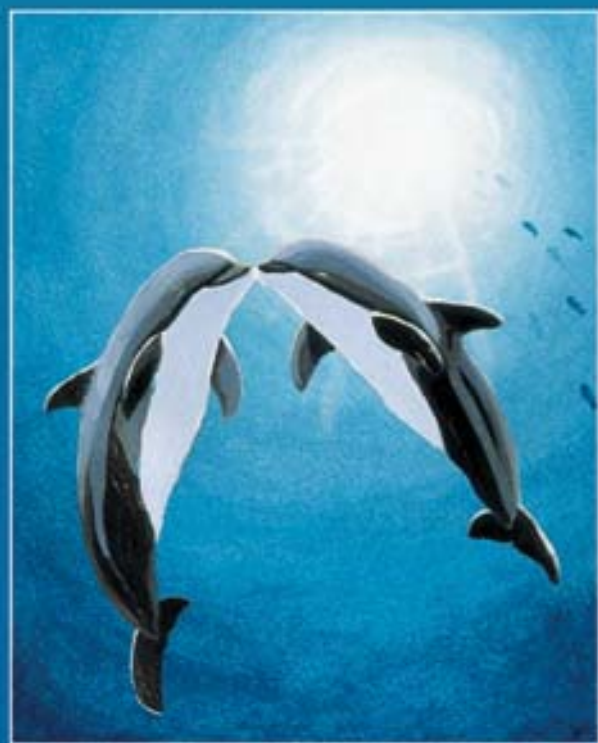


#### ◀ Step 4

Use a flat paintbrush and acrylic paints to block in the darks and lights of the dolphins. Use a light blue mix (see page 8) to paint their bellies and the tops of their heads. Then use a dark blue-gray mix (see page 8) to fill in the darks, carefully staying within the white outlines. Leave the rest of their heads and backs unpainted, as shown.

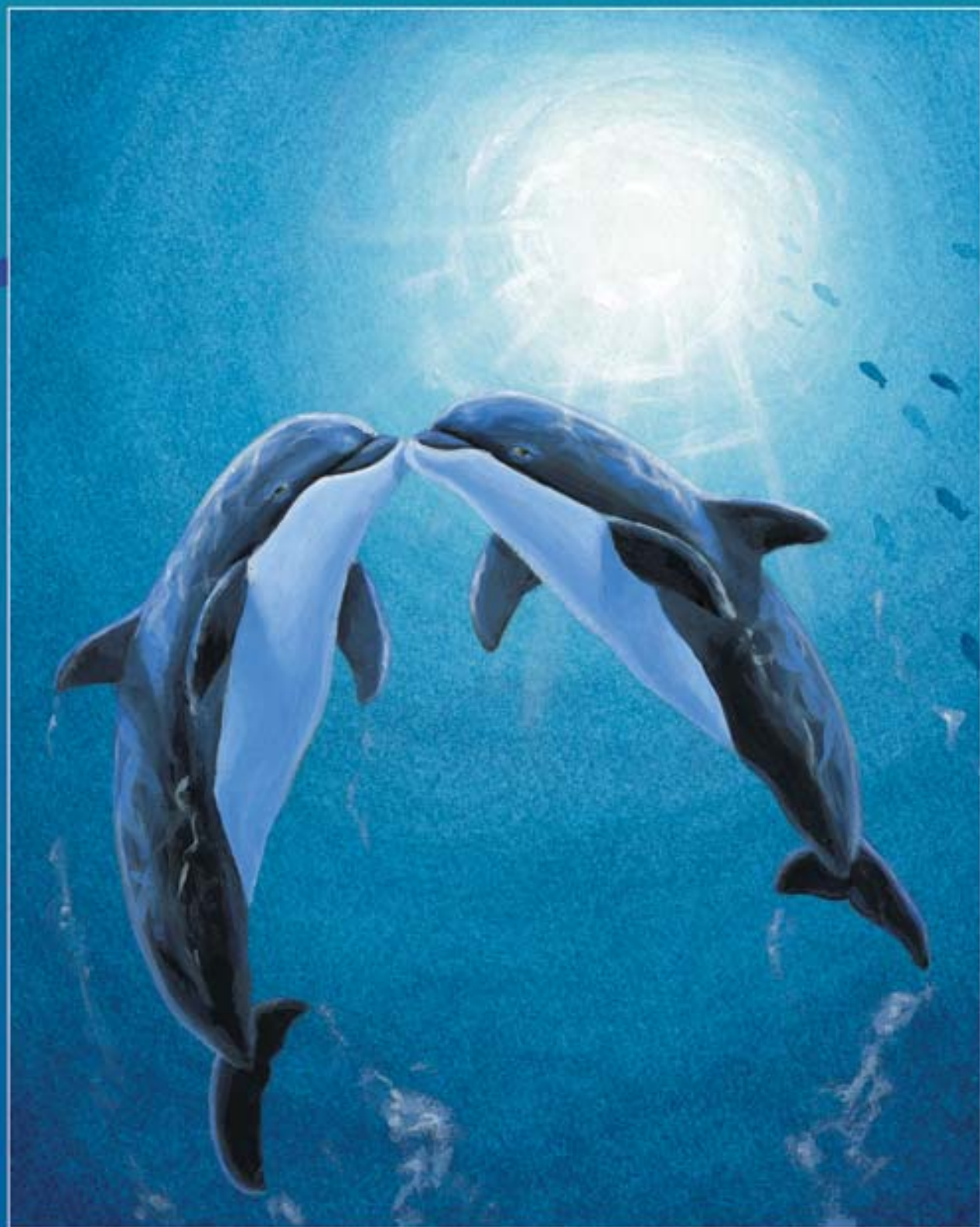
#### Step 5 ▶

Using a small round brush, apply strokes of a medium blue-gray mix (see page 8) to the dolphins' heads and backs. Blend from light to dark as you move toward the belly to create a sense of roundness. Now that you've filled in the dolphins, you have a clear "map" of their forms, providing a foundation for rendering the details.



#### ◀ Step 6

Next add shadows to the belly of each dolphin, using the light blue mix plus a dot of ultramarine blue acrylic. Keep the direction of the light source in mind when adding the shadows, noting the straight edges created by the jutting fins. Then use a small round brush and alternate between the light blue mix and the light gray mix (see page 8) to add wispy reflections of light on the heads and backs of the dolphins. These curvy, crisscrossing strokes will suggest movement in the surrounding water.



▲ Step 7

*To give the illusion of movement, use the light gray mix to scumble in flurries of bubbles near the dolphins' tails and fins. (See page 7 for more on scumbling.) Now use a small round brush to paint the eyes, starting with two light gray, half-circle highlights for the eyelids. Then add the whites of the eyes with pure white acrylic and the irises with the dark blue-gray mix. To give the eyes a splash of color, sweep the yellow-brown mix (see page 8) across the bottom of the iris. Finish the eyes with black dots for pupils.*