

Marine Mammals of Puget Sound

Pinnipeds: Seals & Sea Lions

Pacific Harbor Seal

Phoca vitulina

Adults mottled tan or blue-gray with dark spots
 Male: 6'/300 lbs; Female: 5'/200 pounds
 Earless (internal ears, with externally visible hole)
 Short fur-covered flippers, nails at end
 Drags rear flippers behind body
 Vocalization: "maah" (pups only)
 Most common marine mammal in Puget Sound
 Shy, but curious. Pupping occurs June/July in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and San Juan Islands



Northern Elephant Seal

Mirounga angustirostris

Brownish-gray
 Male: 10-12'/4,000-5,000 lbs
 Female: 8-9'/900-1,000 lbs.
 Internal ears (slight hole)
 Short fur-covered flippers, nails at end
 Drags rear flippers behind body
 Vocalization: Guttural growl or belch
 Elephant seals are increasing in number in this region



California Sea Lion

Zalophus californianus

Dark brown to black
 Male: 8'/800 lbs; Female: 6'/250 lbs.
 Extended, rolled flap ears
 Long leathery flippers, nails mid-flipper
 Walks on all four flippers; doglike bark
 Mainly male California sea lions are seen from fall to spring in the Puget Sound region



Steller Sea Lion

Eumetopias jubatus

Light to golden brown
 Male: 9-12'/1500 - 2000 lbs;
 Female: 6-7'/600 - 700 lbs.
 Extended, rolled flap ears
 Long leathery flippers with some fur on top, nails mid-flipper
 Walks on all four flippers; deep lion-like roar
 Found mostly in northern waters in our region
 Listed under the Endangered Species Act



Cetaceans:

Whales, Dolphins & Porpoise

Seal Pups



If you see a seal pup alone on the beach
DO NOT DISTURB - it's the law!

Human encroachment can stress the pup and scare the mother away.
 For your safety and the health of the pup, leave the pup alone. Do not touch!

Orca

(or Killer Whale)

Orcinus orca

Black body with white chin, belly, and eyepatch
 Average 23 - 26' / 4 - 8 tons
 Southern Resident orcas (salmon-eating) are Endangered, travel in larger pods
 Transient (marine mammal -eating) orcas travel in smaller pods
 Orcas are most often observed in inland waters fall - spring; off San Juan Islands in summer



Harbor Porpoise

Phocoena phocoena

Dark gray or black with lighter sides and belly
 Average 5- 6' / 120 lbs.
 Travels alone or groups of 2 - 10



Dall's Porpoise

Phocoenoides dalli

Black body/white belly and sides
 White on dorsal fin trailing edge
 Average 6 - 7' / 300 lbs.
 Travels alone or in groups of 2 - 20 or more
 Creates "rooster tail" spray,
 Likes to bow-ride



Gray Whale

Eschrichtius robustus

Gray with white mottling/barnacles
 No dorsal fin, has "knuckles" or knobs on back
 Average 40 - 50' / 33 tons
 Heart-shaped blow, small resident population
 feeds in Saratoga Passage and Puget Sound
 March - May, stragglers year-round

Minke Whale

Balaenoptera acutorostrata

Black/dark gray, light undersides, white patch on flippers.
 Small, sleek body, pointed head
 Average 26-28' / 6-8 tons
 Short curved dorsal fin
 Travels alone or in small groups



Illustrations by Uko Gorter

GOT WHALES?

Call 1-866-ORCANET(672-2638)

To Report Whale Sightings

REPORT DEAD OR STRANDED MARINE MAMMALS TO:

1-866-ORCANET (672-2638)

or

360-678-3765

Whidbey and Camano Islands,
 Skagit and North Snohomish Counties
 (All other areas call 206-526-6733)



www.orcanetwork.org

www.orcanetwork.org/strandings.html

