

## General facts about seals and sea lions in the presence of humans and dogs:

- ◆ They are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act
- ◆ Anything you do that causes a change in behavior of a marine mammal can be considered harassment
- ◆ They spend up to 50% of their time out of the water to rest, regulate temperature and nurse pups
- ◆ While they are graceful and quick in the water, they are slow and vulnerable on land
- ◆ They are easily disturbed by the presence of humans and/or dogs
- ◆ They will dive back into the water to avoid perceived danger on land
- ◆ If panicked, they sometimes injure themselves trying to return to the water
- ◆ Panic may cause them to abandon or trample pups in their attempt to escape
- ◆ Repeated disruptions by humans and dogs increases stress, which makes them more susceptible to diseases

## What you can do:

- Be aware of your surroundings while walking on the beach or tide-pooling
- Keep your dog on a leash at all times
- Give seals and sea lions space and do not approach them
- If they notice you, slowly leave the area
- Report harassment



**REPORT HARASSMENT TO:**

**1 888 334-CALTIP**

**(888 334-2258)**

# Marine Mammal Safety Guide



**Keep your distance  
Stay at least 300 feet away**



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## Marine Mammal Protection Act (1972)

The Marine Mammal Protection Act prohibits the **TAKE** of all marine mammal species in U.S. waters. Take means "to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill." Harassment means "any act of pursuit, torment, or annoyance which has the potential to injure a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild; or has the potential to disturb a marine mammal or marine mammal stock in the wild by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, including, but not limited to migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, sheltering."

Think about your actions while at the beach. Anything you do that causes a change in behavior of a marine mammal can be considered harassment and could be punishable by:

- Civil penalties up to \$11,000
- Up to 1 year in prison plus criminal fines

The Pacific Harbor Seal (*Phoca vitulina*) has a spotted coat that can vary from silver to dark brown or even black. On the west coast they can be found from Alaska to Baja. They are true seals, meaning they do not have ear flaps and have small flippers. Males tend to be larger than females but are not easily distinguished. They can be spotted bobbing in the water or hauled out on the rocks alone or in groups. They are curious but very shy and will dive quickly into the water if approached by humans or dogs, sometimes abandoning or trampling pups in the process.



California Sea Lion (*Zalophus californianus*) tend to be a chocolate to golden brown in color. They have visible ear flaps and large flippers on which they can "walk." Males are significantly larger than the females and display a bony bump on their head. Males will aggressively defend their beach and all the females on it.



Steller Sea Lion (*Eumetopius jubatus*) are the largest member of the sea lion family. They are light tan to reddish-brown in color and adult males have a large mane. They are found in the north Pacific Ocean from California to Japan.

This species was delisted from the United States Endangered Species Act in November, 2013.



**Do not approach wildlife**

**Stay 300 feet away**