



BC Marine Mammal Response Network

Helping animals in distress and learning from the dead ones

The British Columbia Marine Mammal Response Network (BCMMRN) works toward the conservation and protection of marine mammals and sea turtles in BC waters. There are 31 species of marine mammals that occur in British Columbian waters of which 13 are listed under the *Species at Risk Act* as Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern. In many cases, little is known about the environmental and human factors impacting marine mammals. To help recover these populations, a better understanding of the threats they face in our waters is needed. We respond to reports of marine mammals in distress and keep track of threats such as disease outbreaks, inappropriate or illegal human activity, contamination, disturbance, vessel strikes, and entanglements.

Although Fisheries & Oceans Canada (DFO) is the governing agency with the authority for the protection and management of marine mammals and sea turtles in Canada, the BCMMRN is a collaborative program between government agencies, research, conservation and outreach groups, wildlife rescue organizations and BC citizens. Together we respond to reports of dead, injured, sick, and harassed marine mammals.

As a fairly new program, BCMMRN is looking for members and primary responders who are willing to assist in response efforts in their local communities. These efforts may include simply taking and submitting photos of a dead carcass, or perhaps even helping a live animal in distress. In this way, local communities will be helping to collect valuable data that will directly assist individual animals and their populations. If you, or your organization, are interested in becoming a member and primary responder in the British Columbia Marine Mammal Response Network, please contact Lisa Spaven, Marine Mammal Response Coordinator for more information.

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Because, like all wild animals, marine mammals can carry a variety of diseases, responders need to be fully aware of the risks and safety precautions prior to taking any actions.

Please report all marine mammals found dead or in distress. A toll-free reporting hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-465-4336.

Please note that sightings of normal, healthy cetaceans and sea turtles should continue to be submitted to the B.C. Cetacean Sightings Network (www.wildwhales.org; 1-866-1 SAW ONE).

