

Marine Mammal in Distress—Report and Response

How you can help distressed marine mammals

Please report injured, entangled, stranded, ship-struck, and other marine mammal health concerns to the [NOAA Fisheries' 24/7 hotline at \(888\) 256-9840](tel:8882569840), hail the USCG on VHF CH-16, or call local police. Prompt reporting is the best way to help distressed animals. The information provided may help reduce the incidents of these events in the future.

Safety first! Rescue attempts can be dangerous for would-be rescuers and animals. Do not assist distressed marine mammals without guidance from authorities. Don't move, touch, feed, pursue, disturb, or disentangle marine mammals unless authorized to do so. Don't encourage or drive stranded or hauled out animals back into the water. Stay a safe distance away—for humpback whales 100 yards, other marine mammals 50 yards. Hawaiian monk seals hauled out on the shore are sensitive to human presence. Viewing too closely may unintentionally disturb the animals or change their behavior.



What will happen?

The hotline operator, USCG, or police will relay the report to the appropriate responder(s). NOAA Fisheries, the Sanctuary, DLNR, and other state and federal agencies will coordinate an appropriate response under the authorization of NOAA Fisheries' Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (permit #932-1489).

- For strandings, rehabilitation, and subsequent release may be possible. However, in some cases such as severe injury, the animals may have to be humanely euthanized.
- For ship-struck animals, the animals may be monitored and assessed.
- For entangled animals, the response network may attempt to free the animals.

Please be aware that it is sometimes not possible or appropriate to respond to every entangled, stranded, ship-struck, or otherwise distressed marine mammal.

Marine Mammal in Distress Reporting Card

Report injured, entangled, stranded, ship-struck, and other marine mammal health concerns as soon as possible. Reports will be relayed to appropriate responders. Authorized personnel will guide you as to what to do next. Prompt reporting is the best way to help distressed animals. The following information will aid responders in mounting an appropriate response.

DATE: _____ TIME: _____

YOUR NAME: _____

VESSEL NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

GENERAL LOCATION (LANDMARKS): _____

SPECIFIC LOCATION: _____°N _____°W

SPECIES (IF KNOWN; USE A GUIDE): _____

APPROXIMATE SIZE: _____

NATURE OF THE DISTRESS: _____

GENERAL CONDITION OF THE ANIMAL: _____

IS THE ANIMAL MOVING? Y / N SPEED _____ HEADING _____

CAN YOU STAND BY? Y / N PHOTOS? _____ VIDEO? _____



Report humpback whale 100-yard approach rule violations and incidents of other marine mammal harassment or disturbance to NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement at (800) 853-1964. Report injured or stranded sea turtles to the NOAA Fisheries' Marine Turtle Research Program hotline at (808) 983-5730.

