

## **2010 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Stranding Summary**

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Kaili Jackson, National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region, Protected Resources, POB 21668,  
Juneau, Alaska 99802  
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### **Summary**

Strandings of cetaceans and pinnipeds that occurred in Alaska waters and were reported to the National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region (NMFS) in 2010 are summarized here. Polar bear, sea otter and walrus are managed under U.S. Fish and Wildlife jurisdiction and are not reported to NMFS. Currently a total of 220 events are recorded, involving 236 individual animals. These data are subject to change as more information becomes available and records are further reviewed. Both unconfirmed and confirmed reports are compiled here.

Stranding events include animals found dead (floating and beach-cast), and reports of live stranded, mass stranded, abandoned, sick or injured animals. Human interactions such as collisions, fishery interactions and entanglements are also included. Additionally, stranding events where the animal(s) could not be examined are included in the numbers below.

Known subsistence takes are not included, but suspected subsistence animals are in some cases included here (e.g., animals reported shot). Fishery observer reports are not included unless the animal was observed outside of statistical reporting protocols (and thus would not be included by the observer program as part of their watch data set).

Stranding events involving two or more individuals are generally rare in Alaska. However, in 2010 there were two separate reports of two bearded seal carcasses stranded together, two reports of cow and calf humpback whale entanglements, a report of two gray whales thrashing in the surf within a mile of each other, and two mass beluga strandings—one involving two animals and one involving 11 animals.

Further stranding information and references are available at the NMFS Alaska Region webpage:  
<http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/strandings.htm>

### **Acknowledgements**

This summary is made possible by the efforts of the Alaska Marine Mammal Stranding Network, along with partner organizations, agencies, and members of the public who have reported stranding events to NMFS.

**Table 1.** 2010 Alaska Region Stranding Reports by Initial Sighting Month, Number of Events, and Number of Animals.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Events</i>	<i>Animals</i>
<b>Jan</b>	2	2
<b>Feb</b>	1	1
<b>Mar</b>	2	2
<b>Apr</b>	8	8
<b>May</b>	23	23
<b>Jun</b>	29	31
<b>Jul</b>	78	81
<b>Aug</b>	38	49
<b>Sep</b>	31	31
<b>Oct</b>	3	3
<b>Nov</b>	4	4
<b>Dec</b>	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>236</b>

**Table 2.** 2010 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Strandings by Initial Condition, Species, and Number of Animals. (Two reports of unidentified marine mammals not included).

<i>Species</i>	<i>Initial Condition</i>		
	<i>Alive</i>	<i>Dead</i>	<i>Total</i>
Beluga	14	12	<b>26</b>
Bowhead	0	3	<b>3</b>
Fin	0	1	<b>1</b>
Gray	3	14	<b>17</b>
Humpback	19	16	<b>35</b>
Minke	0	1	<b>1</b>
Orca	0	5	<b>5</b>
Dall's Porpoise	1	0	<b>1</b>
Harbor Porpoise	1	2	<b>3</b>
Unknown Cetacean	2	15	<b>17</b>
<b><i>Cetacean Total</i></b>	<b>40</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>109</b>
Bearded seal	0	15	<b>15</b>
Elephant seal	0	1	<b>1</b>
Harbor seal	12	15	<b>27</b>
Northern fur seal	0	1	<b>1</b>
Ringed seal	2	3	<b>5</b>
Spotted seal	2	4	<b>6</b>
Steller sea lion	16	39	<b>55</b>
Unknown Pinniped	2	13	<b>15</b>
<b><i>Pinniped Total</i></b>	<b>34</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>234</b>

**Table 3.** 2010 Alaska Region Live Strandings Handled by the Alaska Sea Life Center for Rehabilitation by Species, Outcome, and Number of Animals (does not include animals that were dead on arrival).

Species	Outcome	Animals
Spotted seal	transferred	2
	<b><i>Spotted seal Total</i></b>	<b>2</b>
Harbor seal	died	1
	euthanized	2
	released	6
	<b><i>Harbor seal Total</i></b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>

**Table 4.** 2010 Alaska Region Stranding Events involving Human Interaction. These numbers should be treated as preliminary, as they include both confirmed and unconfirmed reports. Fishery interactions are separated from entanglements here by internal evidence of human interaction.

Human Interaction?	Details	Species	Animals
<b>Could not be determined</b>	pos. collision	Humpback whale	1
	pos. entanglement	Steller sea lion	3
	pos. shot	Harbor seal	1
	<b><i>Could not be determined total</i></b>		<b>5</b>
<b>Yes</b>	Collision	Fin whale	1
		Humpback whale	5
		Harbor seal	1
	C-section	Spotted seal	1
		Entanglement	Beluga
	Bowhead whale		1
	Harbor porpoise		1
	Humpback whale		16
	Unknown cetacean		1
	Harbor seal		1
	Ringed seal		1
	Steller sea lion	3	
	Fishery Interaction	Harbor Seal	1
		Steller sea lion	10
Shot	Harbor seal	1	
	Steller sea lion	2	
	<b><i>Yes total</i></b>		<b>48</b>

**Table 5.** 2010 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Strandings by Area, Species, Initial Condition, and Number of Animals.

Area	Species	Animal Initial Condition		Total
		Alive	Dead	
<i>Arctic</i>	Beluga	0	2	2
	Bowhead	0	2	2
	Gray whale	0	4	4
	Unknown cetacean	0	5	5
	Bearded seal	0	15	15
	Ringed seal	1	1	2
	Spotted seal	0	4	4
	Unknown Pinniped	1	9	10
	Unknown marine mammal	0	1	1
	<b>Arctic Total</b>	2	43	45
<i>Southcentral Alaska</i>	Beluga	14	5	19
	Gray whale	3	2	5
	Harbor porpoise	1	2	3
	Humpback	0	2	2
	Orca	0	1	1
	Unknown cetacean	0	2	2
	Harbor seal	7	4	11
	Steller sea lion	3	4	7
	Unknown Pinniped	0	1	1
	Unknown marine mammal	0	1	1
	<b>Southcentral Total</b>	28	24	52
<i>Southeast Alaska</i>	Dalls Porpoise	1	0	1
	Gray whale	0	2	2
	Harbor porpoise	1	0	1
	Humpback	18	7	25
	Unknown cetacean	2	3	5
	Harbor seal	4	11	15
	Steller sea lion	13	32	45
	<b>Southeast Total</b>	39	55	94
<i>Western Alaska</i>	Beluga	0	5	5
	Bowhead	0	1	1
	Gray whale	0	2	2
	Humpback	0	2	2
	Minke	0	1	1
	Orca	0	4	4
	Unknown cetacean	0	1	1
	Elephant seal	0	1	1
	Harbor seal	1	0	1
	Northern fur seal	0	1	1
	Ringed seal	1	2	3
	Spotted seal	2	0	2
	Steller sea lion	0	1	1
Unknown Pinniped	1	3	4	
	<b>Western Total</b>	5	24	29
<i>Kodiak</i>	Fin whale	0	1	1
	Gray whale	0	4	4
	Humpback	0	5	5
	Unknown cetacean	0	4	4
	Steller sea lion	0	2	2
	<b>Kodiak Total</b>	0	16	16
<b>Total</b>		74	162	236