

## **2013 Alaska Region Marine Mammal Stranding Summary**

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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 2013 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 186 events are recorded, involving 192 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 2013 there were three separate events involving more than one animal. In February, five Dalls' porpoise were found dead ashore within proximity to each other, two northern fur seals carcasses were found together in August and the in September, two Stejnegers' beaked whales, a cow and calf, were observed live ashore before being found later dead.

In 2011, an Unusual Mortality Event (UME) was declared in Alaska for ice seals and walrus. The investigation continued into 2012 and 2013, although there were substantially fewer reports. Most reports in 2012 and 2013 involved subsistence harvested animals, which are not captured in this data. Cause of the described illness is currently unknown but you can follow the investigation at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seals/ice/diseased/default.htm>.

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

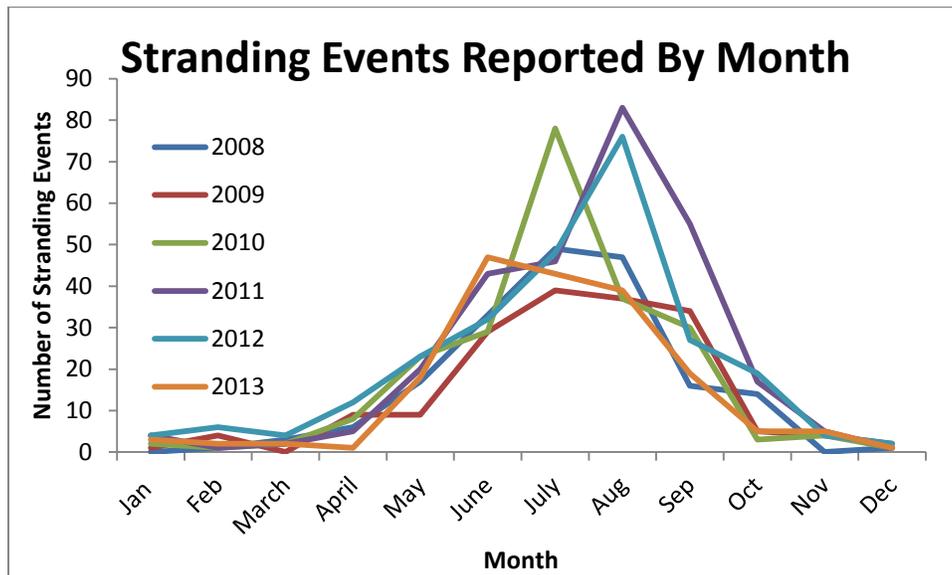
### **Acknowledgements**

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.

2013 NMFS Alaska Region Stranding Summary

**Table 1.** 2013 Alaska Region stranding reports by initial sighting month, number of events, and number of animals.

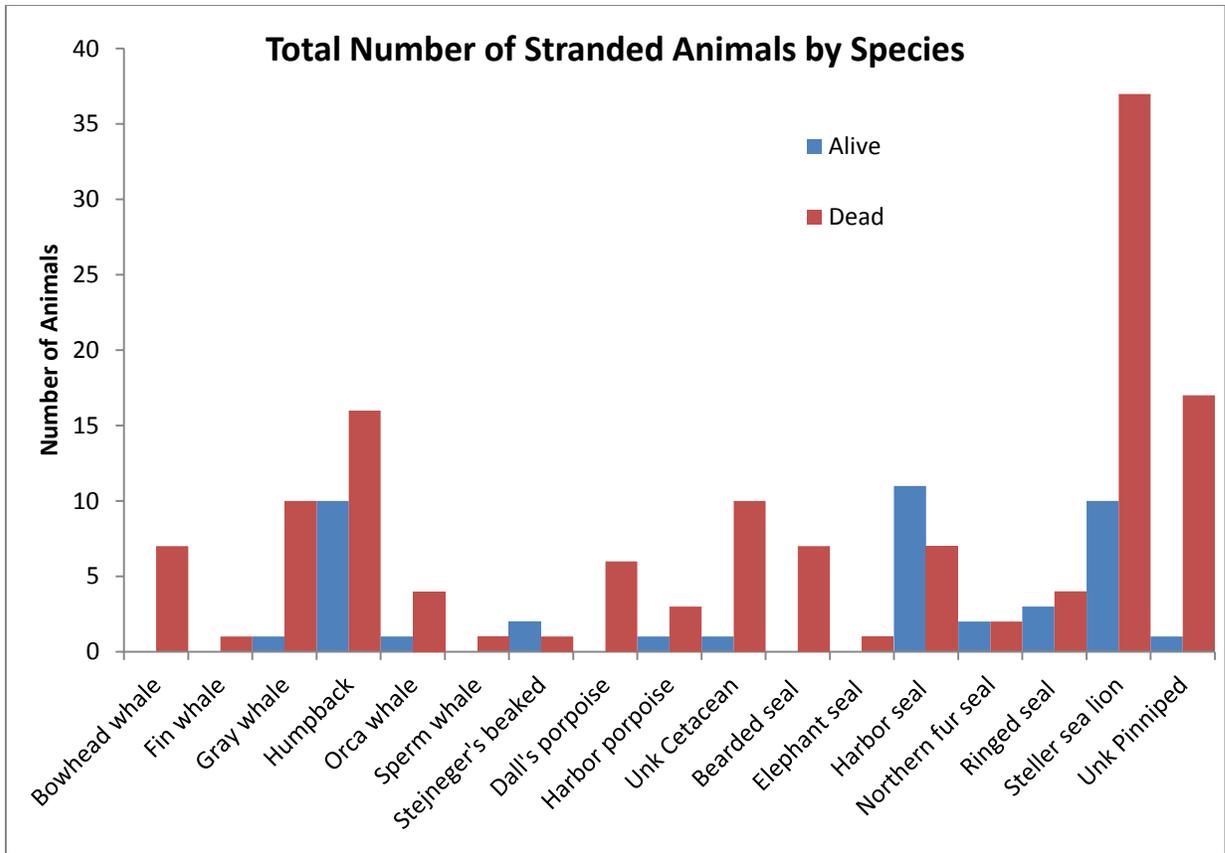
<i>Month</i>	<i>Events</i>	<i>Animals</i>
<b>Jan</b>	3	3
<b>Feb</b>	2	6
<b>Mar</b>	2	2
<b>Apr</b>	1	1
<b>May</b>	18	18
<b>Jun</b>	47	47
<b>Jul</b>	43	43
<b>Aug</b>	40	41
<b>Sep</b>	19	20
<b>Oct</b>	5	5
<b>Nov</b>	5	5
<b>Dec</b>	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>192</b>



**Figure 1.** 2008-2013 Alaska Region stranding reports by number of animals over time.

**Table 2.** 2013 Alaska Region Marine Mammal strandings by initial condition, species, and number of animals. (Two reports of dead unknown marine mammals are not included here).

<b>Initial Condition</b>			
<b>Species</b>	<b>Alive</b>	<b>Dead</b>	<b>Total</b>
Beluga	1	12	<b>13</b>
Bowhead	0	7	<b>7</b>
Fin	0	1	<b>1</b>
Gray	1	10	<b>11</b>
Humpback	10	16	<b>26</b>
Orca	1	4	<b>5</b>
Sperm	0	1	<b>1</b>
Stejneger's beaked whale	2	1	<b>3</b>
Dalls' porpoise	0	6	<b>6</b>
Harbor porpoise	1	3	<b>4</b>
Unknown Cetacean	1	10	<b>11</b>
<b><i>Cetacean Total</i></b>	<b>17</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>88</b>
Bearded seal	0	7	<b>7</b>
Elephant seal	0	1	<b>1</b>
Harbor seal	11	7	<b>18</b>
Northern fur seal	2	2	<b>4</b>
Ringed seal	3	4	<b>7</b>
Steller sea lion	10	37	<b>47</b>
Unknown Pinniped	1	17	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Pinniped Total</i></b>	<b>27</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>190</b>



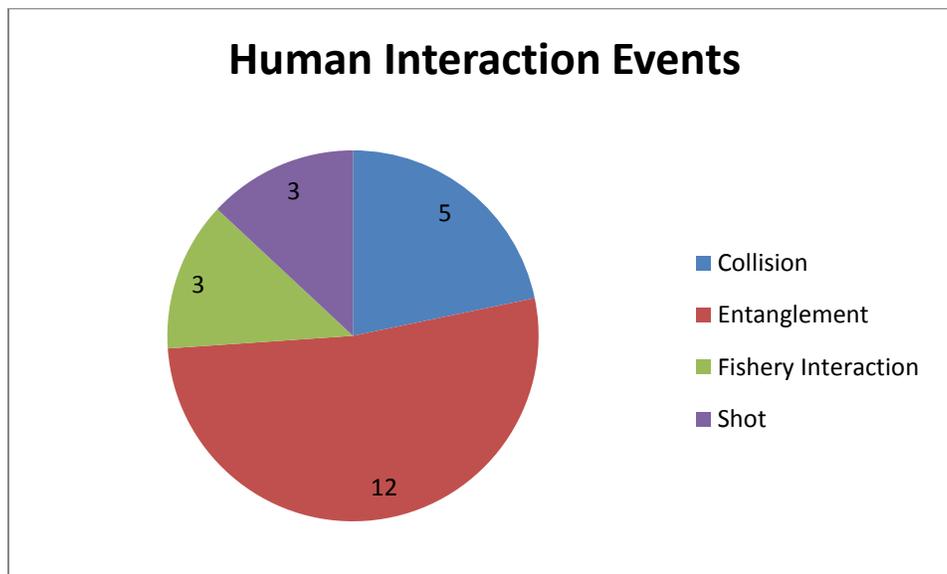
**Figure 2.** 2013 Alaska Region Marine Mammal strandings by initial condition, species, and number of animals.

**Table 3.** 2013 Alaska Region live strandings handled by the Alaska SeaLife Center for rehabilitation by species, outcome, and number of animals (does not include animals that were dead on arrival).

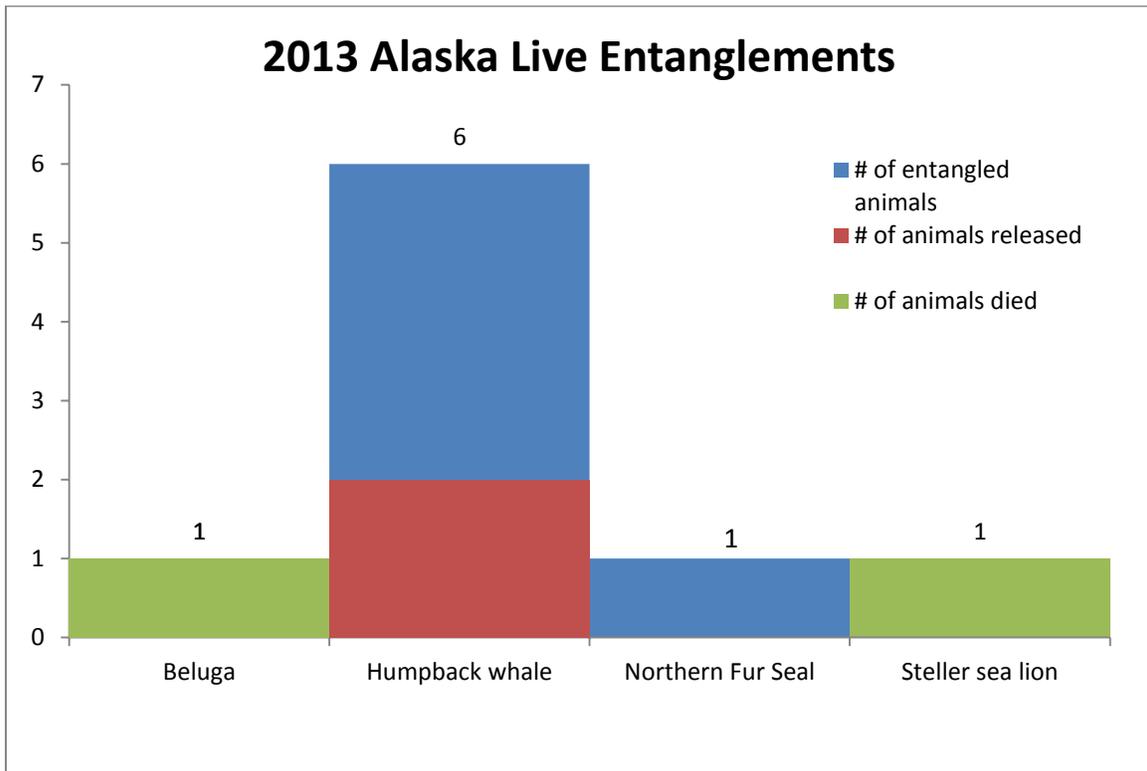
Species	Outcome	Animals
Ringed Seal	Died	1
	<b>Ringed seal Total</b>	<b>1</b>
Harbor seal	Rehab/Released	4
	Died	1
	Euthanized	1
	<b>Harbor seal Total</b>	<b>12</b>
Northern fur seal	Rehab/Transferred	1
	<b>Northern fur seal Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>

**Table 4.** 2013 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.

<b>Human Interaction</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Animals</b>
<b>Confirmed</b>	Collision	Humpback whale	4
		Unknown whale	1
	Entanglement	Beluga	1
		Humpback whale	7
		Harbor porpoise	2
		Northern Fur Seal	1
		Steller sea lion	1
	Fishery Interaction	Steller sea lion	3
	Shot	Harbor seal	1
		Ringed seal	1
		Steller sea lion	1
<b>Confirmed Total</b>			<b>23</b>
<b>Suspected</b>	Entanglement	Beluga	1
	Shot	Harbor seal	1
<b>Unconfirmed Total</b>			<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>25</b>



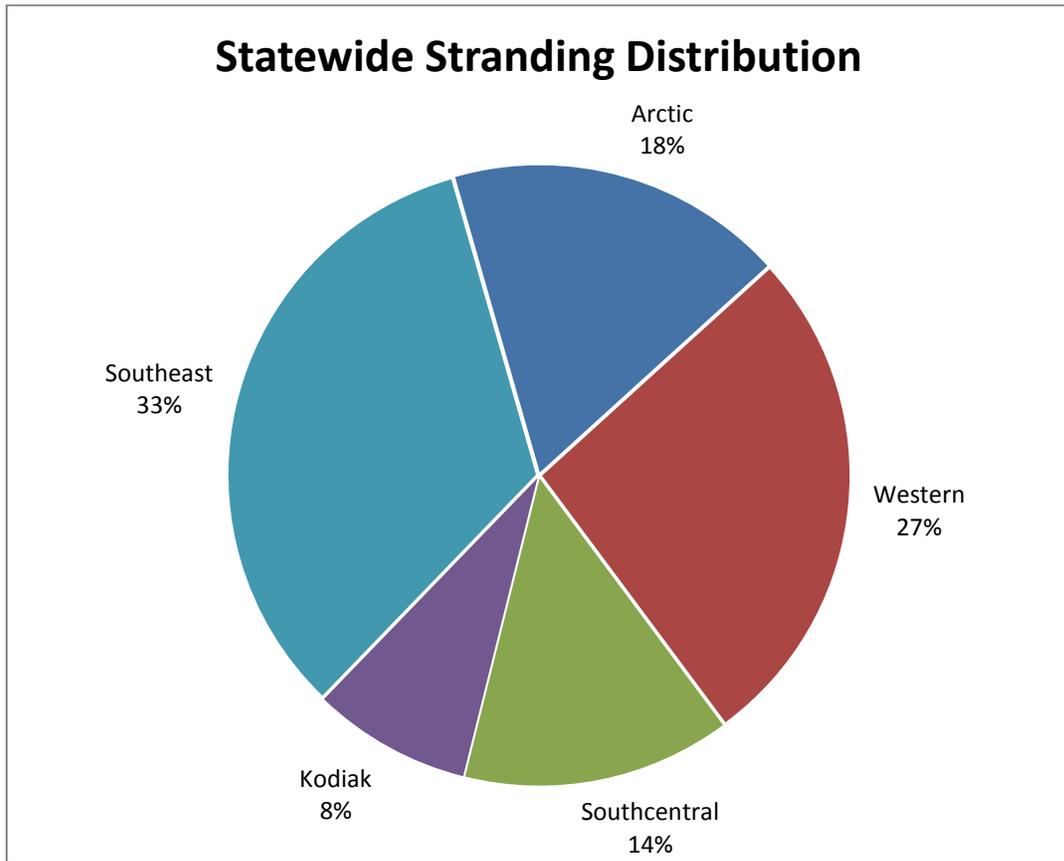
**Figure 3.** 2013 Alaska Region stranding events involving human interaction. This figure only displays reports that were confirmed human interaction events. Fishery interactions are separated from entanglements here by internal evidence of human interaction.



**Figure 4.** 2013 Alaska Region stranding events involving live entangled animals. Although it is not always possible, attempts are made to determine the final status of each entangled animal. Animals that were partially released of gear are included here.

**Table 5.** 2013 Alaska Region marine mammal strandings by area, species, initial condition, and number of animals.

Area	Species	Animal Initial Condition		
		Alive	Dead	Total
<i>Arctic</i>	Beluga	0	4	4
	Bowhead	0	6	6
	Gray whale	1	3	4
	Unknown cetacean	0	4	4
	Bearded seal	0	1	1
	Ringed seal	0	2	2
	Unknown Pinniped	0	11	11
	Unknown marine mammal	0	2	2
<b><i>Arctic Total</i></b>		1	33	34
<i>Southcentral Alaska</i>	Stejneger's beaked whale	2	0	2
	Beluga	0	5	5
	Harbor porpoise	1	1	2
	Humpback	0	5	5
	Harbor seal	6	1	7
	Steller sea lion	2	3	5
	Unknown pinniped	0	1	1
	<b><i>Southcentral Total</i></b>		11	16
<i>Southeast Alaska</i>	Dalls' porpoise	0	6	6
	Harbor porpoise	0	1	1
	Humpback	9	5	14
	Orca	1	1	2
	Unknown cetacean	0	2	2
	Harbor seal	2	3	5
	Steller sea lion	6	27	33
	Unknown Pinniped	1	0	1
<b><i>Southeast Total</i></b>		19	45	64
<i>Western Alaska</i>	Beluga	1	3	4
	Bowhead	0	1	1
	Gray whale	0	5	5
	Humpback	0	1	1
	Orca	0	3	3
	Stejneger's beaked whale	0	1	1
	Sperm whale	0	1	1
	Harbor Porpoise	0	1	1
	Unknown cetacean	1	4	5
	Bearded seal	0	6	6
	Harbor seal	3	2	5
	Elephant seal	0	1	1
	Northern fur seal	2	2	4
	Ringed seal	3	2	5
	Unknown Pinniped	0	5	5
Steller sea lion	0	3	3	
<b><i>Western Total</i></b>		10	41	51
<i>Kodiak</i>	Gray whale	0	2	2
	Fin whale	0	1	1
	Humpback	1	5	6
	Harbor seal	0	1	1
	Steller sea lion	2	4	6
<b><i>Kodiak Total</i></b>		3	13	16
<b><i>Total</i></b>		44	148	192



**Figure 5.** Distribution of statewide stranding reports.