

The Northern Fur Seal



Names of the species

Scientific name:

Callorhinus ursinus (“bear-like”)

Common English name:

Northern fur seal

Indigenous names:

Hlaaqudax - western dialect Unangan/Aleut, Laaqudax - eastern dialect Unangan/Aleut, Algax - Commander Island dialect Unangan/Aleut

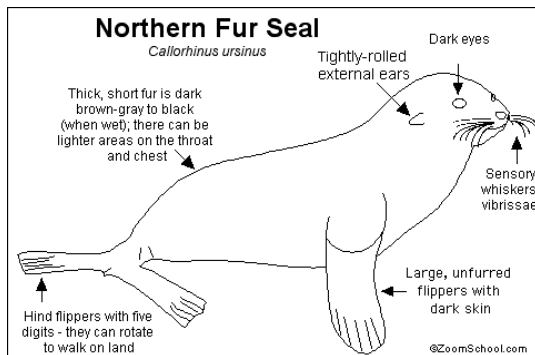
Biological information about the species

Habitat:

-Open ocean

-Rocky/sandy beaches on islands - resting, reproduction, molting

Detailed labelled diagram of the species:



Method(s) of reproduction

- Asexual
- Polygynous

Interdependence

In what ways is this species dependent on other species?

They are carnivores so they depend on them for food

Food:

- Fish
- Squid
- Pollock
- Pacific Salmon
- Pacific and lance
- Pacific herring
- Atka mackerel
- Northern smooth tongue

In what ways do other species depend on this species?

Predators are dependent on them:

- Killer whales
- Steller sea lions
- Sharks

In what ways do the abiotic features of British Columbia and the species interact? (rainfall, sunlight, soil, etc)

The Northern Fur Seal depends on abiotic features for many things:

- Habitat / living space
- Food (They eat small fish and then small fish feed on plants and other abiotic organisms) (Food chain)
- Sun (For warmth)
- Rainfall helps plants on land grow and creates lakes and ponds from run offs from the mountains

First People's utilization of the species

Traditional use(s) of the species in BC

- hunted for their fur on land and at sea
- Used for their pelts, flesh and fat which were used for lamp fuel, lubricants, cooking oil, a constituent of soap and for processing materials such as leather and jute

Traditional harvesting and/or cultivation methods

- Inuits used harpoon heads made out of ivory from walrus tusks or whalebone. For fish they used fishing lines, nets, leisters and three-pronged spears. Inuits also used spears, bow and arrows, clubs and stone traps.

Harpspoon head:



There are no medicinal properties or nutritional benefits

Traditional practices and sustainability

Consider the reproductive processes, life cycle, and survival needs of the species. What conditions are necessary to sustain the species?

- The growth of plants to feed the little fish that the Northern fur seal eats and sunlight to keep those plants growing healthy, they also need sunlight for warmth. They need the land so that they can reproduce and possibly get away from the predators that can't go on land. A clean ocean to get the nutrients that they need to grow and become healthy.

Consider the traditional practices of harvesting, cultivating, using, and disposing of waste of this organism. Are these traditional practice sustainable? (Eg. limits on quantities harvested? Locations? Methods? Time of harvest within the life cycle of the organism?)

- No they do not seem sustainable, this is because their population is decreasing and it will continue to do so if we keep hunting them. All the big fisheries that used to catch them have been discontinued and the Northern fur seals have been labeled as vulnerable.

Current use and sustainability

Are the First People of BC still utilizing this resource? If so, are traditional methods still used, or have methods changed?

- No they are not, there was a death of 5,200 seals because of the entanglement in high seas driftnet fisheries in 1991. But these fisheries have been discontinued

Is the organism still commonly used in BC beyond the First People's communities? are current methods of harvesting, cultivation, and use sustainable?

- No they are not, the northern fur seal is not used much anymore due to the decrease in population and the fisheries are not allowed to hunt them anymore

Citations

- “The Marine Mammal Center.” *The Marine Mammal Center*, www.marinemammalcenter.org/education/marine-mammal-information/pinnipeds/northern-fur-seal/.
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