NOAA Fisheries Service

Share the Shore!

Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act harbor seal populations have recovered to healthy numbers.

Federal marine mammal regulations prohibit harassing seals on shore to reduce human disturbance of important life processes.

What you should do:

Give the animal space: Stay back 100 yards if possible.
Respect nature's role – Don't touch, handle, or feed seals found on the shore.

If the animal is injured or stranded, or to report incidents of harassment, please contact the

NOAA Hotline at:
1-800-853-1964

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service

Don't touch seal pups!

What is a disturbance?

Disturbance is when we interfere with an animal's ability to hunt, feed, communicate, socialize, rest, breed, or care for its young. These are critical processes, necessary for healthy marine wildlife populations. If you disturb a marine mammal it is a violation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

What is a stranding?

- Dead marine mammal on the beach or in the water;
- Alive on the shore and unable to return to the water under its own power;
- Alive on shore and, although able to return to the water, is in need of apparent medical attention ;
- In the water and cannot return to its natural habitat under its own power or without assistance.

Note: Seals and sea lions use shoreline habitat on a daily basis! Do not feed, attempt to remove, or pour water on animals that are hauled out.

Report Violations & Strandings:

1-800-853-1964

For more information please visit:
http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Marine-Mammals/Stranding-Information.cfm

Photo Credit: Robin Lindsey