

Seal seasons

Moulting

Seals lose all their fur in just 3 weeks

Losing fur irritates their skin which breaks easily when scratched

Seals need extra rest on land as they feel the cold more

Summer foraging

Easily shocked awake, seals hurt themselves rushing over rocks

Seals move to different offshore sites

It is cooler in the breeze on exposed rocks

Milk is 53% fat and pups put on 10kg a week

Pupping

Single pups are born each year

Mums feed their pups for 3 short weeks

At weaning most pups have their grey coat

www.cornwallsealgroup.co.uk
www.bdmrlr.org

www.cornwallmarinelife.org.uk



Funded by players of People's Postcode Lottery through a Postcode Local Trust grant

Surprising seal secrets

Every whisker has 1500 nerve endings (making its face more sensitive than your fingertips). They use all five senses to find their food

Seals **don't live in static colonies**. Seals from Cornwall have been seen in Devon, Dorset, Wales, Ireland and France – this is a Celtic Sea seal population

Every seal's fur pattern is **unique** (like your fingerprint!)



Seals eat more sand eels than any other single species



Seals can **sleep in the sea** (bottling and logging) and on land

Seals can **dive to 120m for around 30 minutes**



A **rear flipper reflex** (activated by CO₂ build up) returns the seal to the surface to breathe



As soon as their head goes underwater their **heart drops from 120 to 4 beats a minute**



As **top predators** seals keep the ecosystem in balance. Healthy seals mean healthy seas and abundant marine life for all of us to enjoy

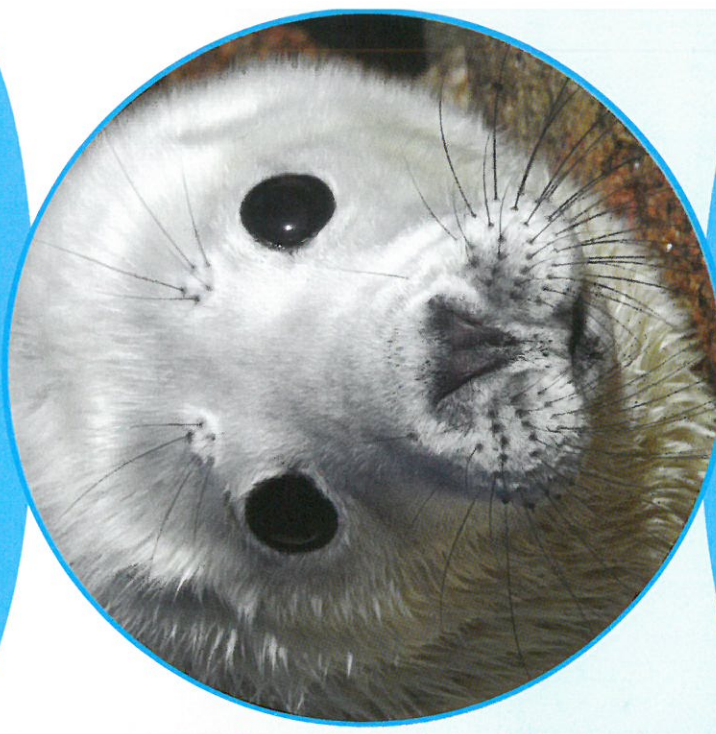
Seals need your help!

Practice tough love - never feed, do a '2 minute' beach clean, take litter home, pee poo and paper only in the loo; eat local line caught fish and pot caught shellfish;

Reduce, reuse and recycle all plastics

Question? Email sue@cornwallsealgroup.co.uk
Concerned? BDMRLR 01825 765546
Disturbed or dead? CWT 0345 201 2626

Grey seals: A southwest speciality species



Grey seals are **globally rare**. The UK has 40% of the world's population but even so, there are more red squirrels in the UK than grey seals

Cornwall Seal Group Research Trust is an **evidence based conservation charity** (number 1162936). Our pioneering photo ID is internationally renowned
www.cornwallsealgroup.co.uk



Seals need your help

Enjoy our globally rare charismatic species

Admire from a distance

Leave seals as and where you find them

Send sightings to sue@cornwallsealgroup.co.uk

As the tide comes in, seals 'banana' to keep their sensitive bits (blubberless faces and flippers) out of the cold water before easing their way slowly into the sea

If a seal is looking at you, it is probably worried that you are too close, so give it more space

When disturbed a seal will:

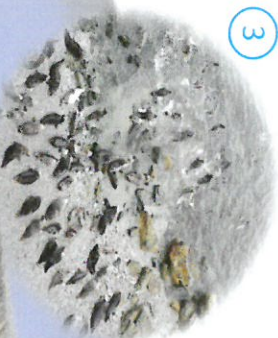
1



2



3



4



5



6

Stop digestion
Release stress hormones
Have a flight response

2

Have a racing heartbeat
Breathe faster

Stampede to the sea

3

Hurt itself

Rip its claws out

4

Gash its belly

5

Have road rash grazes on its flippers

6

Get cold shock

7

Not rehaul after this, so its daily routine will be upset

Have an energy deficit for that day

If pregnant, bounce over rocks on top of her unborn pup which can be fatal

8

Seals will smell, hear and see you first... so always admire from a distance, talk in whispers and keep a low profile (downwind and out of sight)

The worst disturbance CSGRT recorded was 10 stampedes in 70 minutes on a single beach (one every 7 minutes). This came from a number of land, air and sea based sources and had a cumulative impact

Seals need to spend time on land all year to rest and digest their food

Seals can shut more of their brain down when they sleep on land because they don't have to worry about water movements or predators

Analogy – Imagine you are snoozing in your favourite arm chair after a large Sunday lunch. As you drift off, someone walks through your front door uninvited.

You rush to see who it is. Then realise you need not have worried, but by then you have had an adrenalin rush, your heart is racing and you twisted your ankle as you rushed to get up, experiencing cold shock from the draught

It can be a criminal offence to disturb a grey seal in a Special Site of Scientific Interest where seals are a designated special interest feature, even outside of the SSSI boundary and ignorance is no defence. Grey seals are protected by the Bern Convention and are a UK special responsibility species.