



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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NOAA Partners with “Marine Mammals of Maine” to Respond to Marine Mammal Strandings in Southern Maine

NOAA today welcomed Marine Mammals of Maine, a non-profit organization based in mid-coast, as its new member of NOAA’s Northeast Region Marine Mammal Stranding Response Network. Marine Mammals of Maine is authorized to respond to reports of stranded seals, dolphins, porpoises and whales in the southern and mid-coast areas of Maine, Kittery to Rockland, and provide public education about these creatures and their environment.

“Marine Mammals of Maine will be a great addition to the Northeast Region Marine Mammal Response Network and I’m excited about further developing our partnership with them,” said Mendy Garron, marine mammal stranding response coordinator.

Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, NOAA is required to aid in the protection and support of marine mammals. In 1992, the agency established the Northeast Regional Office Marine Mammal Program, which oversees and authorizes marine mammal stranding response from Maine to Virginia. NOAA collaborates with an extensive network of partners to respond, transport, rehabilitate and release stranded seals, porpoises, dolphins and whales. The Network is now made up of thirteen organizations, consisting of non-profits, academia, state and federal agencies. Six of the thirteen organizations are authorized to rehabilitate marine mammals.

“Marine Mammals of Maine is looking forward to being a part of the network providing education to the public and response to stranded marine mammals from Kittery to Rockland,” said Lynda Doughty, Executive Director for Marine Mammals of Maine.

Under federal law it is illegal and punishable by law to pick up, handle or interact with free-swimming, dead or beached marine protected species. Penalties for harassing these animals can be up to \$50,000 and a year in jail. To report a stranded marine mammal in Maine, please call the Maine Marine Animal Reporting Hotline at 1-800-532-9551. More information about Marine Mammals of Maine can be found at <http://mmome.org>. For more information about the Northeast Region Marine Mammal Stranding Response Network visit http://www.nero.noaa.gov/prot_res/stranding.

What to do when encountering a seal on a beach:

- Stay at least 150 feet away from it. Pup's mothers may be just around the corner;
- Don't handle it, and keep other people and dogs away;
- [Call a local marine mammal stranding network member](#);
- Visit NOAA's Northeast Region website (http://www.nero.noaa.gov/prot_res/stranding) for local contact information; OR
- Call NOAA Fisheries Service's stranding hotline at 1-866-755-NOAA (6622).

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaa.gov>.