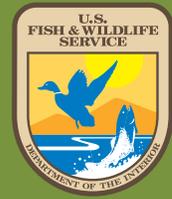




Gray Seals



Share the Shoreline: Things You Can Do to Promote Responsible Wildlife Viewing



Your visit
to a

National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service manages two National Wildlife Refuges that are commonly visited by the Gray Seal (*Halichoerus grypus*): Nantucket National Wildlife Refuge and Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge. Gray seals are a common visitor to Nantucket and Monomoy and haul out throughout the year. Gray seals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and when present on a National Wildlife Refuge, under the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997.

When encountering a seal on a beach remember:

Hands Off: Never touch or handle seals. Touching seals or attempting to do so, can injure the animal, put you at risk and is illegal under Federal law.

View from a Distance: If you see a seal on the beach, give it space. Stay at least 150 feet away from the seal(s). Distance will minimize the potential for disturbing a resting animal and/or reduce stress for an animal that may be recovering from illness or injury.

Do Not Feed: Feeding or attempting to attract seals with food, decoys, sound or light disrupts normal behavior and may cause sickness or death from unnatural or contaminated food items, and habituates animals to people. Habituated animals are vulnerable to vessel strikes or harassment, and can be dangerous to people.

Never Get in the Water with Seals: Seals are large, wild animals and can be extremely dangerous. If they feel threatened they may become aggressive in order to defend themselves.

Report Harassment

Seals are federally protected from harassment and capture by the public. If you observe incidents of people or pets tormenting, disturbing or attempting to remove a seal from the beach contact the **NOAA Marine Mammal & Sea Turtle Hotline (1-866-755-6622)** to report a violation.

Photo credits: Amanda Boyd, USFWS

More information can be found at U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex website:

fws.gov/northeast/easternmanwrcomplex

