

**Disturbing marine mammals is prohibited under the *Marine Mammal Regulations*.**

As per section 7(2), disturbance is defined as a number of human activities including:

- Feeding, swimming, or interacting with a marine mammal.
- Moving a marine mammal (or enticing/causing it to move).
- Separating a marine mammal from its group.
- Trapping a marine mammal or a group either between a vessel and the shore, or between a vessel and other vessels.
- Tagging or marking a marine mammal.

**To report a marine mammal disturbance or harassment, or dead marine mammal:**

Fisheries and Oceans  
Canada's Observe, Record,  
Report (ORR) line

1-800-465-4336

**To report a seal that you believe is injured or abandoned:**

Vancouver Aquarium  
Marine Mammal  
Rescue Society

604-258-SEAL (7325)

For more information, email:  
[mammals.marine@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:mammals.marine@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

DFO website



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**Moulting elephant seals**

**Please keep  
your distance!**



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**Canada**



Marine mammals are wild animals that people may inadvertently come across while enjoying the ocean. In those cases, we ask that you keep your distance, not only for their well-being but yours as well.

### **AN INTIMIDATING SIGHT:**

A moulting elephant seal can be an intimidating sight. Weighing up to 2,300 kg and as long as 5 metres, when this animal moults it may appear to be very sick and may develop “elephant seal skin disease”. However, moulting is a natural process and should not be interfered with.

If you see a moulting elephant seal, please keep your distance. It may look slow and harmless, but is capable of moving very quickly and could be dangerous if it feels threatened.



### **STUCK ON LAND:**

If you spot a sickly looking elephant seal on land, it is probably moulting. All elephant seals spend one month a year on land to moult; they undergo what is called a “catastrophic moult” in which they shed all of their fur along with the underlying layer of skin. For just over a month, the seal is confined to land and spends most of its time dozing and lazily flipping sand onto itself to stay cool. It doesn't eat and may lose up to 25% of its body weight.



### **VISITS OUR SHORES:**

Elephant seals are regular visitors to the B.C. coast, especially in the spring and summer months. Most elephant seals seen off B.C. shores are adult males or juveniles, whereas females tend to remain further offshore. They can be spotted off Vancouver Island's West Coast, in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and off the Queen Charlotte Islands.