



National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Region

Marine Mammal Stranding Network



What Causes Marine Mammals to Strand?

When marine mammals come ashore, they may be sick, injured, or disoriented. Marine mammals that come ashore dead may have died from natural causes, illness, or injuries. Naturally occurring toxins, such as red tide, have also been implicated in strandings.

What Should I Do If I See a Stranded Marine Mammal?

● Immediately call your state's Stranding Network Contact number listed to the right. Note the exact location of the stranded animal and leave a number where you can be reached if rescuers need more details.

● **Do not push the animal back out to sea.** Returning animals to sea delays examination and treatment, and often results in the animal stranding again in worse condition.

● Stay with the animal until rescuers arrive, but use caution – marine mammals can be dangerous. Keep a safe distance from the head and tail.

● If the animal is alive, keep its skin moist and cool by splashing water over its body – avoid splashing the blowhole. Wet towels can also be used to keep the skin moist and prevent sunburn, but avoid placing towels over the blowhole.

● Keep crowds away and noise levels down to avoid causing further stress to the animal.

● The Marine Mammal Protection Act prohibits the taking of marine mammals, which includes moving or causing harm to live stranded animals, or collecting any parts (teeth, bones, etc.) from dead animals.



GA Marine Mammal Stranding Network



New England Aquarium

Southeast Stranding Network State Contacts:

- No. Carolina: 1-252-728-8762
- So. Carolina: 1-800-922-5431
- Georgia: 1-800-241-4113
- Florida: 1-888-404-3922
- Alabama: 1-800-262-3151
- Mississippi: 1-800-294-5551
- Louisiana: 1-800-442-2511
- Texas: 1-800-962-6625
- St. Thomas/St. John: 1-340-775-6762
- St. Croix: 1-340-773-5774
- Puerto Rico: 1-787-399-8432

Report Harassment of Marine Mammals to NMFS Enforcement at:
1-800-863-1964

How Can I Get More Involved in the Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Network?

Anyone can volunteer to assist local groups authorized by the National Marine Fisheries Service to respond to stranding events. In fact, there are hundreds of volunteers throughout the Southeast that play an integral part in rescue and rehabilitation of stranded marine mammals.

To volunteer, contact the Southeast Marine Mammal Stranding Coordinator, Blair Mase, at 1-305-361-4586 or go to www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/.