

Ice seals in the National Marine Fisheries Service Alaska Region (NMFS AKR) stranding records: 1982–2004

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This compilation reflects ice seal stranding events recorded in the database maintained by the NMFS AKR as of December 2004. Data is subject to change as further information on strandings becomes available and further data entry occurs. Not yet entered are three ringed seals from 1992, 95, and 96 respectively. Also still to be entered are carcass surveys done in the late 60's to 70's (e.g., Fay et al. (1979) reports 6 spotted seals).

A total of 40 ice seal stranding events involving approximately 100 animals are recorded here, with the earliest currently appearing in 1982. Strandings include live animals that are injured or sick, and dead animals found beach-cast or floating. The stranding records exclude animals known or likely subsistence hunted. However, animals that were not examined are included here, as were skeletal remains, so some hunted animals might be included. Any unknown pinniped reported from areas where ice seals are found was included.

This compilation is made possible thanks to the work of many people, especially stranding network volunteers and NMFS staff, who report and respond to strandings

Tables

Table 1. Ice seal stranding events recorded by year at NMFS AKR. The mixed species event involved all three species in unknown proportion.

Year	Species						Total
	Bearded	Mixed	Phocid, nk	Pinniped, nk	Ringed	Spotted	
1982					1		1
1986					1		1
1988					1		1
1997					1		1
1998	1				1	1	3
1999	1		1	1	3	3	9
2000				1	1		2
2001	1				4		5
2002	2	1			6		9
2003					4		4
2004			1		3		4
Total	5	1	2	2	26	4	40

Table 2. Ice seal stranding events (1982-2004) by details on event. Details not equal to causation, which in many cases is unknown.

Events by Details	
Beach-cast	15
Cannot be determined	1
Entanglement	1
Floater	3
Out of habitat	2
Pos. collision	1
Pos. shot	2
To Rehabilitation*	14
Sick	1
Total	40

Of the 14 seals sent to rehab, 7 were released, 6 died (1 after many years on display), and 1 fate is unknown.

Table 3. Ice Seal Stranding Reports (1982 - 2004) On Record with NMFS AKR. Compiled 12/13/2004.

All data is provisional and subject to change.

Accession Number	Year	Month	Day	Animals	Species	Age	Area	Location	Contributors	Confirmation Code	Initial Condition	Briefly	Outcome		Note
													(Rehabs shaded)	Final Condition	
1982001	1982	cbd	cbd	1	Ringed seal	Pup	cbd	CBD	Alaska Zoo	Confirmed-low	Alive	pup pick up	Rehabilitation	Died	None
1986113	1986	June	ca. 25	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Alaska	cbd	tbc	Confirmed-low	Alive	pup pick up	Rehabilitation	fate unknown	None
1988042	1988	July	12	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Arctic	Barrow	etal	Confirmed-med	Alive	pup pick up	Perm Display	Died	"Iris" Ak zoo#Ph-1M-Phoc
97039	1997	Aug	16	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Arctic	Barrow	Beck et al	confirmed-med	Alive	Pup Pick Up	Rehabilitation	Released	Found sick. Released @ Barrow.
98030	1998	June	28	1	Spotted seal	CBD	WAK	Naknek	Wildier, J.; NMFS OLE Kodiak;	unconfirmed	Fdead	pos. collision	towed	see outcome	NMFS OLE Kodiak reported "reporting party claims that the cause of death appeared to be an injury to the top of the head, possibly caused by boat propeller." No further details available.
98021	1998	July	17	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Deadhorse	ARCO; Rugh, D.:NMML;	Confirmed-low	Fdead	pos. shot	towed	see outcome	Bullet holes reported, no further details available. ID tentative made by NMML.
1999138	1999	Jan	19	1	Phocid, nk	CBD	Arctic	Cominco	Martinesco, J.: Cominco;	confirmed-low	Alive	Out of habitat	left at site	cbd	small, young seal settled in port equipment 1/4 to 1/2 mile from shore; no further info
1999058	1999	June	13	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotezbue	Scheidt, E.; Burek, K.	confirmed-high	Alive	Sick	Euthanized	died	Emaciated animal was shot to end suffering, later necropsied
1999064	1999	June	20	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotezbue	Lupo, K.;	confirmed-low	Fdead	beach-cast	Sci. collection	see outcome	9901-Ph-KDL
1999069	1999	June	24	1	Spotted seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotezbue	Lupo, K.;	confirmed-low	Mdecomp	beach-cast	Sci. collection	see outcome	9902-Pi-KDL
1999071	1998	cbd	cbd	1	Bearded seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotzebue	Lupo, K.;Anon.	confirmed-low	Mum/skel	beach-cast	Sci. collection	see outcome	9903-Eb-KDL; carcass had washed up in 1998- skeleton collected in 1999
1999077	1999	July	2	1	Bearded seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotezbue	Lupo, K.;	confirmed-low	Adecomp	beach-cast	Sci. collection	see outcome	9907-Eb-KDL
1999078	1999	July	3	1	Spotted seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotezbue	Lupo, K.;	confirmed-low	Mum/skel	beach-cast	Sci. collection	see outcome	9905-Pi-KDL
1999079	1999	July	3	1	Spotted seal	CBD	Arctic	Kotezbue	Lupo, K.;	confirmed-low	Mum/skel	beach-cast	left at site	see outcome	9906-Pi-KDL
1999082	1999	July	11 or 12	1	Phocid, nk	CBD	WAK	Egegik	Haag, D.;	confirmed-low	Fdead	pos. shot	Left at site	see outcome	Reported to be shot by fishers, no evidence
1999104	1999	Aug	11	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Prudhoe Bay	Dawley, B.;AAI Enviro/ARCO;	confirmed-med	Fdead	beach-cast	towed	see outcome	None
2000002	2000	Jan	19	1	Pinniped, nk	CBD	Arctic	Kivalina	Martinesco, J.	tbc	Alive	Out of habitat	left the site	cbd	In culvert 0.8 km. from rd.
2000119	2000	Sep	14	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Egegik	ASLC; et al	confirmed-med	Alive	Pup pick up	Rehabilitation	Released	PH0001-B; Reference to "bald seal disease." Released in Egegik.
2001004	2001	Apr	15	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Kotzebue	Erickson, J.; ASLC; Ayers, L.: Selawik NWR FWS;	confirmed-med	Alive	Pup Pick Up	Rehabilitation	Released	PHS01-01. Ayers via Mahoney reported seal "very healthy, although hungry...molting"; released 7/11/01 @ Kotzebue.
2001023	2001	Apr	14	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Teller	USCG; ASLC; Dr. Leedy, D.: Nome Veterinary Hospital;Comerci, L.; Mahoney, B.	confirmed-med	Alive	pup pick up	sci. collection	Died	dod 4/14/2003 Nome; no cause of death established by examiners
2001026	2001	June	24	20	Bearded seal	Mixed	WAK	Gambell	James, J.	Confirmed-low	Mdecomp	Beach-cast	left at site	see outcome	0101-EB-JJ; Also found were dead birds. Number of animals from 10 or 15 to 20-plus.
2001056	2001	Aug	26	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Seal Island	Barnes, T.; Erickson, A.: BP; et al	confirmed-low	Dead	floater	left at site	see outcome	Stranding report on file.
2001082	2001	June	17	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Point spencer	USCG, ASLC	confirmed-med	alive	pup pick up	Rehabilitation	Died	PHS01-02 dod 7/7/2001 ASLC; no cause of death available in record
2002122	2002	Mar	13	1	Bearded seal	Pup	Arctic	Flaxman Island	Noll, N.: ASLC	confirmed-med	Alive	pup pick up	Rehabilitation	Died	Ers-02-01, died despite treatment
2002125	2002	May	cbd	{15,9,3}	Bearded seal	Subadult	WAK	Savoogna	Waghihi, C.	confirmed-low	Fdead	Beach-cast	left at site	see outcome	"Quite a few" possibly ~15 animals [at least 3] based on description applied to previous events (per Mahoney); 1 used for subsistence. Waghiyi via Mahoney: during break up seals get caught and crushed by ice, mostly young seals get caught.
Temp12	2002	July	3	30	Mixed	Mixed	WAK	Savoogna	Waghihi, C.;Ayala, J. STC;	confirmed-low	Dead	Beach-cast	Left at site	see outcome	Reported to be mostly young animals; PEB, PPL, PPH represented in unknown %s.
Temp14	2002	July	9	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Prudhoe Bay	Erickson, A.;	Unconfirmed	Dead	Floater	Left at site	see outcome	None
Temp25	2002	Aug	2	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Deadhorse	Gooding, L. et al	confirmed-low	Dead	Floater	Left at site	see outcome	None

Accession Number	Year	Month	Day	Animals	Species	Age	Area	Location	Contributors	Confirmation Code	Initial Condition	Briefly	Outcome (Rehabs shaded)	Final Condition	Note
Temp26	2002	Aug	7	1	Ringed seal	Subadult	Arctic	Prudhoe Bay	Erickson, A.;	confirmed-low	Adecomp	beach-cast	Left at site	see outcome	None
Temp30	2002	Aug	14	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Arctic	Endicott Island	O'Brien, R.;	Confirmed-low	Adecomp	Beach-cast	Towed	see outcome	None
Temp63	2002	Aug	2	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Deadhorse	McDaniel, M.;	confirmed-low	Adecomp	Beach-cast	left at site	see outcome	None
2002154	2002	July	16	1	Ringed seal	CBD	Arctic	Endicott Island	O'Brien, R.; et al	confirmed-low	Fdead	Beach-cast	Towed	see outcome	None
2003019	2003	May	19	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Nome	Tuomi, P.: ASLC; et all!	confirmed-med	Alive	Pup Pick Up	Rehabilitation	Released	ASLC#PHS-03-01; Janus. Released @ Prudhoe Bay.
2003037	2003	June	6	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Nome	Persons, K.; ADFG; Noll, N. : ASLC;	confirmed-high	Alive	Pup Pick Up	Rehabilitation	Released	PHS-03-02; Diana. Per ASLC "Observed in area uncommon to sea seals. Lethargic. Picked up by K. Persons, ADFG. Reluctant to return to spot due to potential of hunting. Transferred to ASLC." Released @ Teller.
2003030	2003	June	15	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Arctic	Deadhorse	ASLC; Lawhead, B., J. Mosher...et al	confirmed-high	Alive	out of habitat	Rehabilitation	Died	PHS-03-03; Boreus, found inland quite a bit. ASLC reports "diagnosis: gastric grass impaction"
2003139	2003	Sep	9	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Arctic	Barrow	Noll, N. : ASLC;	confirmed-med	Alive	Entanglement	died	see outcome	PHS-03-04, DOA to Sealife center, who report: "entangled in wire cable [no further details on tangle]. Possible shock/septicemia"
2004012	2004	May	12	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Unalakleet	ASLC et al	confirmed-med	Alive	Pup Pick Up	Rehabilitation	Released	PHS-04-01. Released @ Nome/Safety Sound.
2004018	2004	June	3	1	Ringed seal	Pup	WAK	Nome	tbc	Confirmed-med	Alive	Pup Pick Up	Rehabilitation	Released	PHS-04-02. Released @ Nome/Safety Sound.
2004023	2004	June	26	1	Ringed seal	Pup	Arctic	Kotzebue	tbc	Confirmed-med	Alive	abandoned	Rehabilitation	Died	PHS-04-03. Three dead seals in area, mother possibly shot?
2004037	2004	July	15	1	Phocid, nk	CBD	Arctic	Prudhoe Bay	tbc	unconfirmed	Mdecomp	beach-cast	left at site	see outcome	None
Total (40 events)				-100	Animals Approximately										

Confirmation code grades the quality and quantity of information received on a stranding report. (E.g., confirmed-high= high quality, well reported; unconfirmed=report not confirmed by office.)

Initial condition corresponds to stranding report choices: Alive, Fresh Dead (Fdead), Moderate Decomposition (Mdecomp), Advanced Decomposition (Adecomp), Mummified/ Skeletal, Dead (no further details)

Note that events 2001026 and 2002125 both involved multiple beach cast animals but the total number of animals involved was not known with certainty.

nk= unknown

cbd= cannot be determined

tbc= to be completed

WAK= Western Alaska (any area other than Kodiak which is west of Cook Inlet's southwestern-most point, to the Arctic circle)