

Observations of Steller Sea Lions with Flipper Tags at South Marble Island, Glacier Bay National Park

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This document summarizes observations that were made of Steller sea lions with flipper tags at South Marble Island in Glacier Bay National Park. Observations were made primarily during a vessel interaction study that occurred during 1994, 1995, and 1997. Two observers monitored the sea lion haulout (resting area) for a total of 23 days: 8 days in 1994 (1-7 August and 8 September), 5 days in 1995 (28 July – 1 August), and 10 days in 1997 (11-18 July; 27-28 September). During this study two people tabulated the behavior of all sea lions every 2 or 3 minutes for approximately every hour per 1.5 hours. Observations of the northeast haulout site on South Marble Island were made almost continuously for 9– 14 hours per day. We monitored the haulout for a total of 233 h.

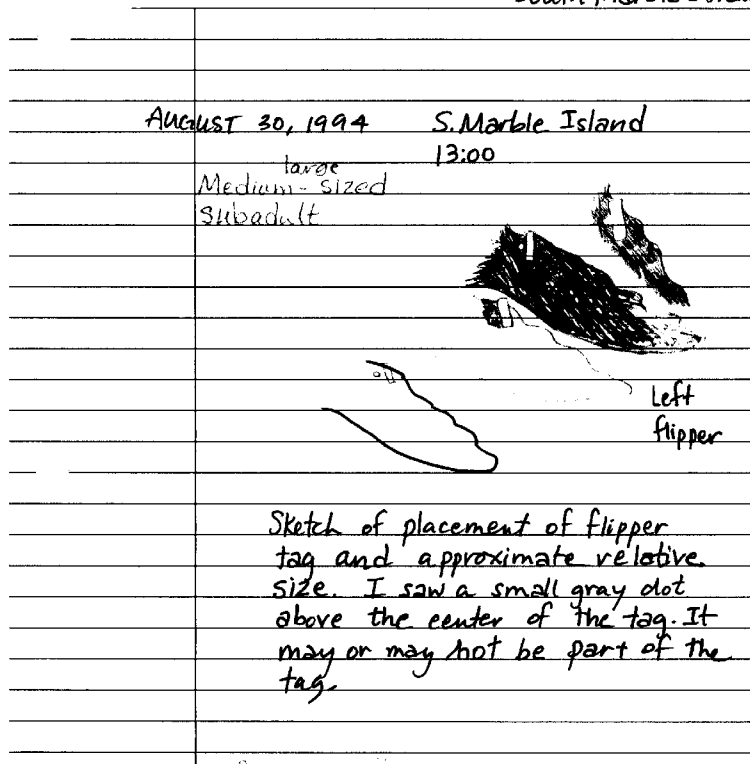
In addition, one observer (Kate Casey, NPS volunteer) monitored the South Marble Island haulout from 6-10 October 1995. One observation of a flipper-tagged sea lion was made by Julia Richards, an NPS Interpretive Ranger who was on a tourboat at the time.

We observed sea lions with flipper tags, including one that also had a brand, on 6 different occasions and some individuals were present on more than one day (Table 1). In 1996, I sent the data on our tag observations to Ken Pitcher (Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage, AK). He thought that most likely the beige tags (ID#s: 9417, 9535, and 9536) that we had observed on 30 August 1994 and 29-31 July, 1995 (Table 2) were animals tagged at Marmot Island by the National Marine Fisheries Service in the 1990s. It was not clear from Pitcher's response if the sea lion with the yellow tag observed on 10 October 1995 may also have been from Marmot Island; it is worth noting that a different observer (K. Casey) recorded the color as "yellow" for this animal and that both observers recorded yellow, gold, and bronze as color descriptors for the first 4 tagged sea lions. Sea lion "F250" was branded in 1994 at Lowrie Island (in the Forrester Island complex) and the animal is a female (ADF&G Steller sea lion branding database).

Table 1. Six Steller sea lions with flipper tags attached to their fore flippers were observed on South Marble Island in Glacier Bay National Park during a vessel interaction study.

ID#	Date	Observer	Side	Primary Color	2nd Color	Size	Sex	Description
9417	8/30/1994	EAM	Left	beige	yellow	med/lrg	unknown	Field sketch of position
9533	10/10/1995	Kate Casey	Right	yellow	gold	lrg	male	Adult bull with yellow/gold tag on trailing edge of right flipper twds. Base
9535	7/29/1995	EAM	Both	beige	yellow	med	male	Juvenile male with beige or pale yellow tag on the trailing edge of both fore flippers. Description in Beth's field book 7/31/95.
	7/30/1995	EAM						
	7/31/1995	EAM						
9536	7/31/1995	EAM	Right	beige	bronze	small	male	beige/bronze, poss. Pale yellow/cream w/stain; couldn't see left side. Drawing in Beth's field book.
9705	7/30/1997	Julia Richards	Left	silver		med/lrg	unknown	small silver tag on left "thumb"
F250	7/10/1997	EAM	Right	red	red	med	female	has a brand on left side (F250) and a red tag on the right fore flipper Sketch in data notebook. Gender is from ADF&G branding database.
	7/12/1997	EAM						
	7/13/1997	EAM						
	7/14/1997	EAM						
	7/15/1997	EAM						
	7/17/1997	LB Dzinich						

P. 51 b
 30 August, 1994
 E.A. Mathews
 South Marble Island



29-30 July 1995
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 South Marble IS.

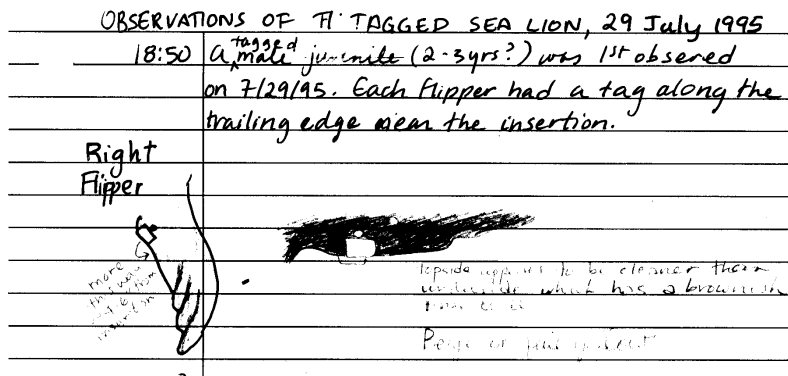


Figure 1. Sketches of flipper tags on 2 different Steller sea lions observed at South Marble Island during August 1994 and July 1995.

Northern Sea Lions: Individual Identification
Glacier Bay National Park

ID Number: F604 F250
Sea Lion Name:

medium, slightly smaller than
291

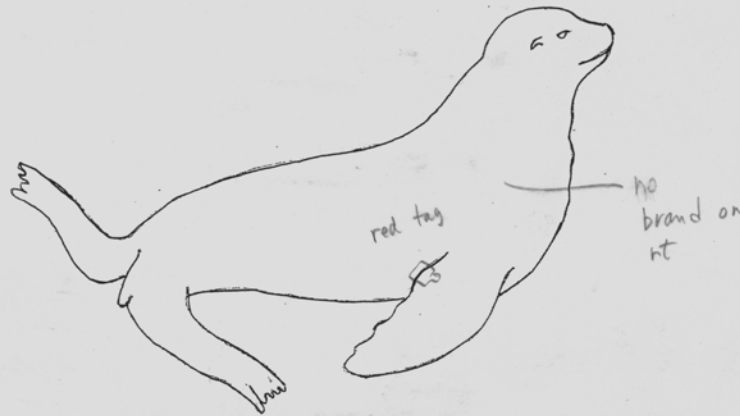


Figure 2. Sketch of flipper tag and location of brand on a Steller sea lion observed at South Marble Island in July 1997.