



HMMA Waves

You Can Help Save A Species | Support Hawaii's Endangered Marine Mammals



Five male seals resting on Oahu's west shore in March. Photo by Jason O'Rourke

Monk seal briefs

It's been an eventful few months for Hawaiian monk seals on Oahu and Kauai. Here are highlights of recent activity.

RO40 De-hooking

Hawaiian monk seal RO40, also known as Ka'ena, has the unfortunate distinction of being the most-hooked seal. On March 31, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) received a report that RO40 had been spotted at Ka'ena Point on

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HMMA is always looking for volunteers to help with field response, educational outreach, and more. Go to monkseals.org for information and to sign up!

Briefs, continued

Oahu with fishing line trailing from his mouth. Staff observed him the day before without line, so they knew the injury had occurred within the past 24 hours. Teams mobilized and although RO40 left the Point and moved to a nearby beach, his location was reported by a member of the public and the team was able to find him. The team approached for assessment and saw the hook under his tongue when he opened his mouth. The team was able to capture him on the beach and remove the hook without the need for transport or surgery. He was sighted two days later looking healthy. This was RO40's seventh hooking.

RH92 Relocation

On March 30, juvenile female RH92 was captured near the Courtyard Marriott Hotel in Kapa'a, Kauai, and moved to the Pacific Missile Range Facility on the island. The seal had been foraging on discarded fish scraps and resting in the Lihi Canal daily for three weeks. Two juvenile seals had died in this same canal in the previous two years, likely due to entrapment in fishing nets and drowning. To avoid a potential third incident, translocation was chosen as the best



Hawaiian monk seal "Ka'ena" asleep at Ka'ena Point in Northwest Oahu in January.

Photo by Jason O'Rourke

option. Capture and transport went smoothly. A satellite tag applied during capture showed that RH92 initially moved east as far as Port Allen, Kauai, then traveled back west and has been spotted in the vicinity of Kekaha.

R4DP Death

The lab reports have come back from a necropsy performed on R4DP, a well-known Kauai seal found dead on February 23 near 'Ele'ele. Preliminary necropsy results indicated that R4DP sustained injuries inconsistent with a natural cause of death. Lab results confirmed the preliminary results, and indicated blunt force injury as the cause of death. The circumstances surrounding R4DP's death remain under investigation.

RB18 Death

Results of lab analysis of the tissues collected from adult male seal RB18 on March 6 supported initial necropsy findings of drowning as the most likely cause of death. This is consistent with the circumstances surrounding his death. Exams showed he was otherwise in good health, and there was no evidence of underlying disease.

Support the work of HMMA by going to monkseals.org and clicking on "Donate Now."



Photo by Jason O'Rourke

HMMA impact

Here's what the organization has accomplished from the start of our three-year grant from NOAA on May 23, 2016, through April 30, 2017. Numbers are approximate.

- ✦ **Hawaiian monk seal sightings reported:** 2,400
- ✦ **Team members engaged in response and shoreline surveys:** 2,700
- ✦ **Escalated and emergency monk seal responses:** 18 responses/91 days of effort
- ✦ **Marine mammal strandings:** 5 responses/10 days of effort
- ✦ **Members of the public engaged by volunteers:** 35,400
- ✦ **Volunteer hours:** 10,170, which equals over 30 hours of volunteer time a day

Vaccine and zoo programs help protect and study seals

Volunteers and staff at HMMA have teamed with NOAA for two important projects. The first is a vaccination program to protect Hawaiian monk seals against what could be a disastrous outbreak of disease caused by morbillivirus. Since last year, our teams have been scouting for seals in need of initial vaccinations or booster shots.

The second project is a collaboration with the Minnesota Zoo, which has five Hawaiian monk seals under permanent care—the largest group in captivity. The seals cannot survive in the wild due to injuries or other health issues. The zoo is collaborating with NOAA to help provide cameras and sensors that will be attached to a few animals in Hawaii to collect information on foraging, swimming, diving and social behavior. As part of the project, the HMMA team is assisting NOAA scientists to find, attach and retrieve these instruments from the Hawaii seals.

Monk seal facts & stats

- Hawaiian monk seals gestate for about 11 months. On average, 30-70 percent of adult females give birth a year. Most births occur in late March and early April, but birthing has been recorded year-round.
- Newborns are black, then molt near the end of their nursing period.

Report a sighting of a Hawaiian monk seal. Call (808) 220-7802 or go to monkseals.org/report from your computer or smartphone's browser.

Contact Information

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Acknowledgements

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Benny



Holokai (Sea Farer)



Honey Girl

Six ways you can help

Hawaii Marine Mammal Alliance counts on the generous support of people like you. Get involved and make a difference today!

1. Donate

You can make a one-time or recurring tax-deductible donation at monkseals.org. Donations help us...

- Offset the costs of equipment, staff expenses, gasoline, tools, online systems and more.
- Produce the materials and purchase equipment used in education and outreach.
- Create a revenue base to pursue matching funds from government agencies and private foundations.
- Develop fundraising campaigns and special awareness events.

2. Adopt a monk seal

For \$150 a year, you get an HMMA "You Can Help Save A Species" T-shirt; photos of your adopted Hawaiian monk seal to use as your computer desktop, phone screen and more; plus the satisfaction of helping one of three popular seals who are "VIPs" on Oahu (pictured at left).

3. Join as a member

There are three levels of annual membership, ranging from \$50 to \$300. At each level you get thank-you gifts.

4. Volunteer some time

Our volunteers are at the core of our work, assisting with field response, dispatch, education, outreach, fundraising and corporate partnership. Sign up today at monkseals.org!

5. Become a corporate sponsor or partner

Whether it's with matching donations, a grant, sponsorship or a contribution of supplies or equipment, your company can help in our cause and get public recognition. Please email info@monkseals.org.

6. Shop

HMMA has been accepted by Amazon into its AmazonSmile program. This means Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases to our nonprofit at no cost to you. So, next time you want to shop at Amazon, please go to smile.amazon.com instead to purchase the same items using your same amazon.com account. All of Amazon's products are eligible and the price you pay for products is the same. When you log in you will be asked which nonprofit you want to help. Type in **Hawaii Marine Mammal Alliance** where prompted.

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Mahalo!