

British Divers Marine Life Rescue

A charity dedicated to the rescue and well being of marine mammals in distress around the UK.



Each year our nationwide team of trained volunteer Marine Mammal Medics respond to over 2000 callouts to seals, porpoises, dolphins and whales.



Callouts are increasing each year, meaning we are constantly challenged to keep up with demand with our volunteer and rescue resources!



Key reasons for increased callouts include:

Increasing awareness: more people know about BDMLR as news and social media are sharing our rescue stories more easily and readily, as well as our own efforts to raise awareness locally.

Battle to save whale lost in the Thames



THAT she blew! That was the cry along the banks of the Thames yesterday when a 20ft whale swam into central London.

The six-ton bottlenose whale – nicknamed Willy – was thousands of miles away from its natural habitat in the ice-cold waters of Norway, Canada and Iceland.

And last night a desperate mission to save the stricken creature's life was under way.

Throughout the day fishermen looked to the river and at times brought traffic to a standstill. Some were affectionately calling out encouragement to Willy.

Spezialer Tom Howard-Tyne said "I saw it blow. It was a splash of water which splashed in the air."

It was then that he swam under Westminster Bridge towards the House of Commons. It was an amazing sight.

Marine Wildlife who lives just yards from the Thames on Chelsea Embankment said "I have lived here for more than 50 years and I've never seen anything so interesting in my lifetime."

Near Albert Bridge, Edwin Fenwick of the Adolphus Wharf Foundation leapt into the river in a bid to guide Willy to safety.

Last night rescuers were desperately attempting to track the

By Martin Evans

whales movements in the pitch-black waters.

They were hoping it would locate bottles on the river side to allow them to properly assess the fish creature's condition. But some carried a bleak picture.

Clairie Stirling of the International Fund for Animal Welfare said: "I'm afraid things are looking quite bleak for this beautiful animal. From what we have seen it is carrying some heavy sparring on the head which suggests it could have been struck by a boat at some point."

"It is cannot be taken back to the ocean, the likelihood is that it will die."

Willy was first spotted on Thursday at the Thames Barrier and was said to be part of a three-strong pod. He was then seen alone near Waterloo Bridge as it dawn yesterday by a commuter – who admitted he thought he was "indistinct".

Another bottle-nosed whale, most likely part of Willy's pod, was seen off the coast at Bournemouth yesterday.

The pod, says a fisher who died after becoming stranded on the shore of the Thames at Purfleet, Essex.



WHALE OF A TIME: Willy swimming past Big Ben

PUT WILDLIFE FIRST

What to do if you come across a seal pup on the beach

- 1. Do keep your distance**
If a pup has a fluffy white coat, it still needs its mother. She will have spotted you long before you saw her and she will hopefully be watching from a safe distance out of sea. A mum will only return to feed her pup if she thinks it is safe to do so.
- 2. Don't touch the pup**
It is a wild animal with sharp teeth. A mother may reject her pup if it smells of people, so keep downwind and out of sight.
- 3. Don't put any seal back in the sea**
A white coated pup spends most time out of water. All seals haul out onto land to rest, digest and socialise all year round.
- 4. Do take a good look from distance**
If the pup is alone, thin, injured or seems unwell (noisy breathing, coughing, runny nose) it may need help.
- 5. Do something about it**
Telephone Cornwall Seal Sanctuary for expert advice on 01326 221 361 or British Divers Marine Life Rescue on 01825 765 546 giving an accurate location.

Who to call

- For live stranded whales, dolphins and seals in need of rescue
 - British Divers Marine Life Rescue 01825 765 546 (24 HOURS)
 - The Cornish Seal Sanctuary 01326 221 361
- For injured bird rehabilitation
 - Mousehole Bird Hospital 01736 713169
- For live birds and other marine life in need of rescue and treatment
 - RSPCA 0300 123 4999
- For all dead marine animals
 - Cornwall Wildlife Trust Marine Strandings Network 0345 201 2626
- For disturbance and harassment incidents involving marine wildlife and habitats
 - Cornwall Marine and Coastal Code 0345 201 2626

If you witness a suspected wildlife crime in action call 999 immediately and ask for police

How to look after our wildlife

- Leave wildlife where you found it
- Admire from a distance
- Look for signs that you've been spotted by wildlife and avoid actions that scare, startle or panic them as this can cause serious harm
- Never feed wild seals
- Do a #2minutebeachclean or #2minutelitterpick and remove any plastic, rope or litter to keep wildlife safe
- Report sightings at www.ORKS.org.uk or seal sightings to sue@cornwallsealgroup.co.uk

Seal behaviours

- Resting**
Resting seals often lie on their side with tucked in flippers. Sometimes they get comfy without using their flippers.
- Sleeping**
Seals can sleep in and out of water by floating flat on the surface (logging) or vertically with only its nose sticking out (bobbing); they can do this for hours.
- On land**
Seals spend a fifth of their lives on land to refill oxygen stores, rest, digest and shelter. They come out at high tide and stay there through low tide until the water rises. Never encourage a seal back into the sea.
- Seal calls**
Seals are vocal animals all their lives, especially if you or other seals get too close. Only a seal pup with white long fur will be calling for its mum, which can sound distressing.

Did you know that Grey Seals are globally rare; a UK special responsibility species and a Cornwall speciality! www.cornwallsealgroup.co.uk

Seal photos by Sue Sawyer

SEALIFE TRUST Cornwall Marine and Coastal Code Cornwall Wildlife Trust RSPCA

This sign was sponsored by the Cornish Seal Sanctuary, part of the SEALIFE Trust (Charity number: 1175859)

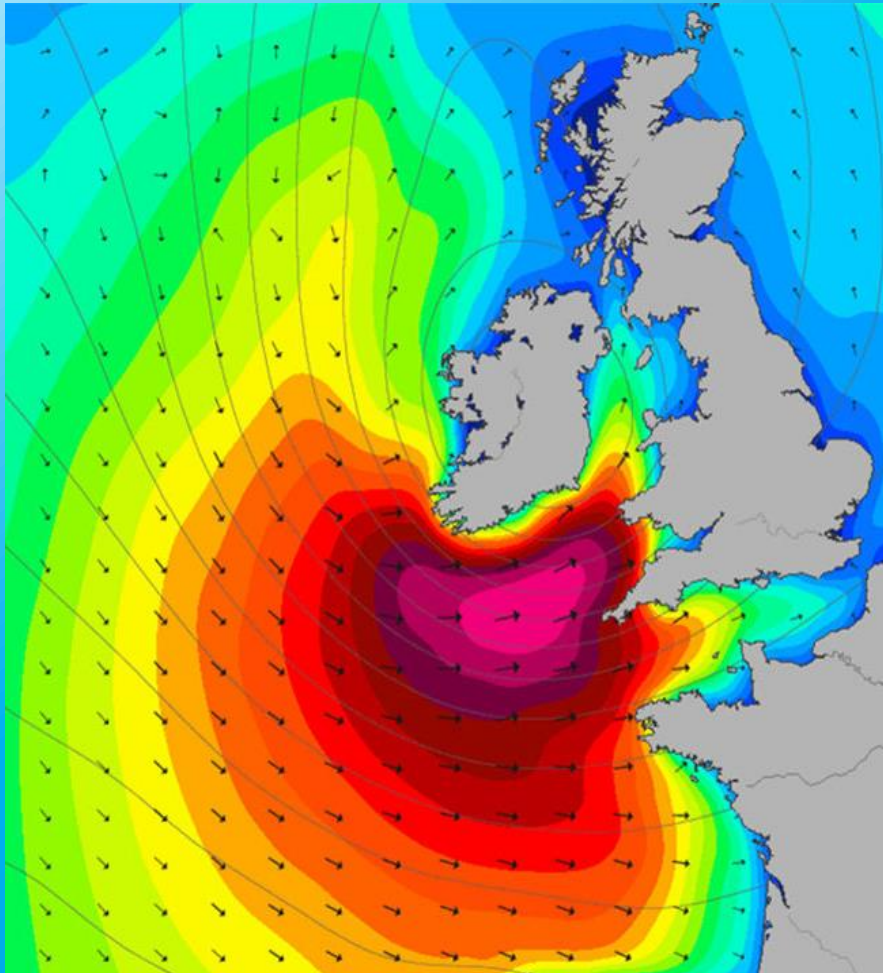
Key reasons for increased callouts include:

More people: the human population living at and visiting the coast is growing, along with activities like SUPs and kayaks that bring us into greater contact, and potentially conflict, with wildlife.



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Climate change: humans are affecting the world's weather and we are seeing this first hand with more frequent, powerful storms in winter that wildlife, especially seals, are struggling to survive.



There are around 90 species of cetacean (whale, dolphin and porpoise) in the world, 30 of which have been recorded in the UK – here are five of the most common we see here.



Cetaceans strand alive for many reasons, including poor health, injury, illness, separated newborns, entanglement, navigational error, underwater noise and disturbance.



Our trained volunteer Marine Mammal Medics can provide emergency first aid, health assessments and veterinary support to decide what is the best outcome for the animal.



Seals also need our help for various reasons, usually young animals that may be injured, ill, malnourished, exhausted, entangled, but occasionally also elderly animals too.



Our Medics can attend to monitor them, provide health assessments, first aid and make decisions about whether they need rehabilitation or even relocation to a quiet place.



You can report marine mammals of concern to BDMLR's 24hr hotline on **01825 765546**. We can provide advice over the phone and get urgent help from our team if required.

Here is some advice for you if you find them:

Seals:

- Beware disease risks and injury from bites.
- Keep people far back and dogs under control on a lead to reduce stress and avoid disturbing them.
- Do not touch them, or put them in the sea.

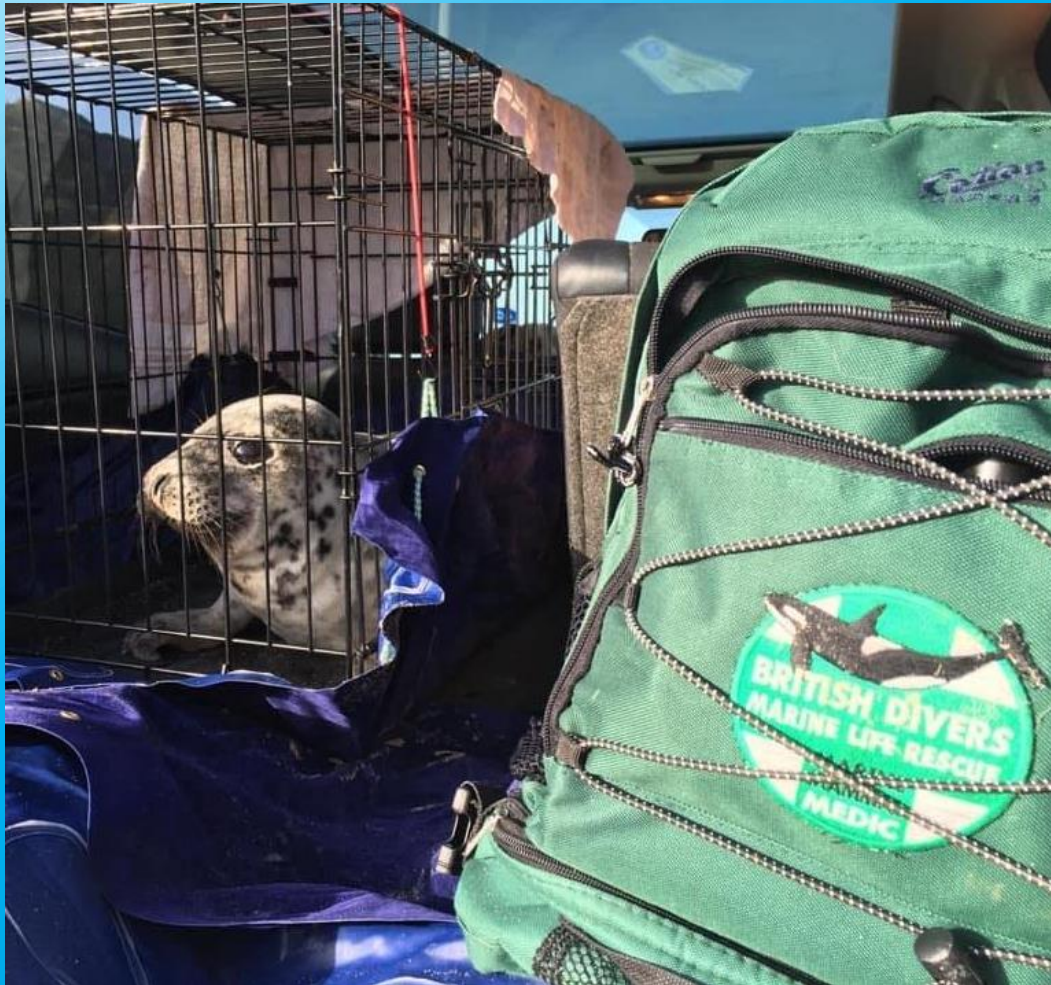
Cetaceans:

- Beware disease risks and injury from their tail thrashing.
- Do not put it back in the sea before BDMLR help arrives.
- Keep it upright and wet (avoiding blowhole) if safe.

We run training courses for new volunteers to join our Marine Mammal Medic rescue team – no need to be a diver, you just have to be over 18 and motivated to get involved in hands on practical marine conservation! See our website for details.



We are entirely self-funded through our training course and the efforts of our staff and volunteers carrying out fundraising activities and events themselves. If you would like to support us too then please leave a donation!



British Divers Marine Life Rescue

www.bdmlr.org.uk

24hr hotline: 01825 765546

Discover us on social media



Help us to help them

