



**Species**

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**Marine Mammals**

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**Overview**

Marine mammals are mammals that are well adapted for life in the marine environment. Two major groups of marine mammals are:

1. Cetaceans ([whales, dolphins, and porpoises](#))
2. Pinnipeds ([seals, sea lions, and walruses](#))

There are approximately [125 marine mammal species worldwide](#) managed under the MMPA. Of those 125, 8 species are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (walrus, polar bear, sea otter, marine otter, West African manatee, Amazonian manatee, West Indian manatee, and dugong).

**Status of Marine Mammals**

All marine mammals are protected under the [Marine Mammal Protection Act \(MMPA\)](#); some marine mammals may be designated as "[depleted](#)" under the MMPA. Endangered and threatened marine mammals are further protected under the [Endangered Species Act \(ESA\)](#).

The table below includes marine mammals found in U.S. waters and endangered/threatened foreign species. Note: Species listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA are, by default, also considered "depleted" under the MMPA.

(E = "[endangered](#)"; T = "[threatened](#)"; P = "[proposed](#)"; C = "[candidate](#)"; S = "[species of concern](#)"; D = "[depleted](#)"; DL = "[delisted](#)"; F = "[foreign](#)")

Species	Status
■ <a href="#">Atlantic Spotted Dolphin</a> ( <i>Stenella frontalis</i> )	
■ <a href="#">Atlantic White-Sided Dolphin</a> ( <i>Lagenorhynchus acutus</i> )	
■ <a href="#">Baird's Beaked Whale</a> ( <i>Berardius bairdii</i> )	
■ <a href="#">Bearded Seal</a>	



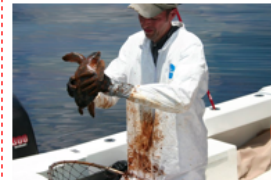
**Video**

**What do marine mammals eat?**  
Credit: Alaska Fisheries Science Center, NOAA Ocean Media Center



**MMPA Fact Sheet**

**After the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill**



**Dr. Brian Stacy, NOAA veterinarian, cleans a young Kemp's ridley turtle**  
Photo: NOAA/GADNR

• [Sea Turtles, Dolphins, and Whales and the Gulf of Mexico](#)