



Oregon Sea Grant Extension
Sustainable Tourism &
Outdoor Recreation Program

Interpretative Fact Sheet California Sea Lion (*Zalophus californianus*)



The following short article is from the [Oregon Coast 101 Species](#) collection used by the Guide and Outfitter Recognized Professional (GORP) training program. These articles are intended to provide interesting facts you can share with your clientele and add value to your services.

An Interpretive Fact Sheet has been written about each species. We are currently uploading these blogs and creating the links.

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California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*)

 tourism.oregonstate.edu/california-sea-lion-zalophus-californianus/

By
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California sea lions are members of the “eared seal” family *Otariidae*. These pinnipeds live along the rocky Pacific Ocean coastlines of western North America.

They are very social animals and form groups of several hundred individuals onshore. In many areas they have become quite invasive and obnoxious.

California sea lions are the most recognized pinniped species because they are commonly seen doing acrobatic tricks in shows at zoos and aquariums. While they are known for their intelligence and playfulness, these animals also quite athletic.

In the wild, the California sea lion swims up to 25 miles per hour, which is faster than any other sea lion or seal. This superb speed is related to how they use their front flippers.



California sea lion
(*Zalophus californianus*)

Quick Diver

This animal is also an avid diver. When diving deep, California sea lions slow their heart rates to allow them to remain underwater for nearly 10 minutes before surfacing to breathe. This ability gives them an edge in the pursuit of the fish, squid, and shellfish that make up their primary diet.

California sea lions have color vision. They don't see all colors, however, but are limited to blue-greens of the color spectrum.

REFERENCE:

–Wikipedia, California Sea Lions (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_sea_lion)