



NOAA
FISHERIES

IATTC Bycatch Working Group Meeting

Marine Mammal Species ID Guide,
Safe Handling and Release General Guidelines

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Marine Mammals in the IATTC

- Not included in C-04-05 (Consolidated Resolution on Bycatch)
- No taxa-specific resolution for their protection
- Little to no data from longline fisheries



U.S. policies and procedures

- The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) prohibits the take of all marine mammals
- The Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) authorizes commercial fishermen to lawfully incidentally take a marine mammal in a commercial fishery
 - Reporting requirements – all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals must be recorded on the mortality/injury reporting form and submitted to NOAA

The image shows a 'MARINE MAMMAL AUTHORIZATION PROGRAM MORTALITY/INJURY REPORTING FORM'. At the top left is the NOAA logo. The title is 'MARINE MAMMAL AUTHORIZATION PROGRAM MORTALITY/INJURY REPORTING FORM'. Below the title is the address: 'National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910'. The form contains several sections:

- PLEASE PRINT NEATLY AND IN CAPITAL LETTERS**
- 1- LAST NAME OF VESSEL OPERATOR (grid)
- 2- FIRST NAME OF VESSEL OPERATOR (grid)
- 3- MI (checkbox)
- 4- MAILING ADDRESS (grid)
- 5- CITY (grid)
- 6- STATE (grid)
- 7- ZIP (grid)
- 8- VESSEL NAME (grid)
- 9- COAST GUARD DOC. NO. OR VESSEL STATE REG. NO. (grid)
- 10- STATE COMMERCIAL VESSEL NO. (grid)
- 11- FISHERY I.D. NO. (grid)
- 12- FISHERY GEAR TYPE AND TARGET SPECIES (text)
- 13- DATE OF MORTALITY/INJURY (MM DD YYYY) (grid)
- 14- APPROXIMATE TIME OF MORTALITY/INJURY (AM/PM) (grid)
- 15- LOCATION OF MORTALITY/INJURY (LATITUDE and LONGITUDE) (grid)
- 16- TYPE OF INTERACTION (PLACED AN 'X') (checkboxes for INTENTIONAL and INCIDENTAL)
- 17- ENTER SPECIES CODE, TYPE OF MORTALITY/INJURY (SEE LIST OF CODES ON PREVIOUS PAGE), AND THE NUMBER OF EACH SPECIES INVOLVED. MAKE ONE ENTRY FOR EACH SPECIES INVOLVED IN THIS INCIDENT. YOU MAY MAKE UP TO THREE MORTALITY/INJURY CODES PER SPECIES. (Table with columns: SPECIES, MORTALITY/INJURY CODE, NUMBER)
- 18- DESCRIPTION OF UNKNOWN SPECIES OR CIRCUMSTANCES OF MORTALITY/INJURY INCIDENT (text box)

 At the bottom right, it says 'OMB Control No. 0648-0282 (expires 11/30/2012)'.

- “Non-serious” vs. “serious” injury, and mortality- Policy for distinguishing serious from non-serious injuries, and findings published in a report documenting the annual injury determinations for that region, which is incorporated in annual Stock Assessment Reports.
- Goal - incidental mortality or serious injury of marine mammals occurring in the course of commercial fishing operations be reduced to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate.
 - Serious Injury - any injury that will likely result in mortality (e.g. hook in the mouth).

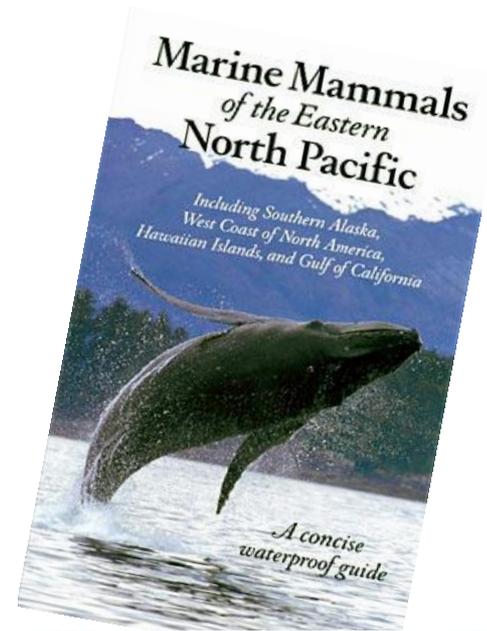
Marine Mammal Handling and Release

General Guidelines for Longline Fisheries

- Safety First! Hooked or entangled marine mammals can be very powerful and unpredictable
- Avoid sudden actions and movements that may scare the animal.
- Do NOT use gaffs or sharp objects to grab or hold an animal.
- Identify the animal to the species level, then determine if and where it is hooked/entangled
- For all Interactions - write down a description of the animal and its injuries (take photos if possible):
 - Species ID: How long was the animal? What did the animal look like? Did it have stripes, spots, or different colors?
 - Did you see any tags on the animal? If yes, did you see any letters or numbers on the tag?
 - Was there fishing gear on the animal when it was released? If so, where, what kind, and how much?
- If hooked, de-hook if possible or cut the line as close as possible to the hook
- If entangled, cut as much line off animal as possible
- Capture myopathy concerns – reduce duration of interaction to avoid increasing stress or injury to the animal

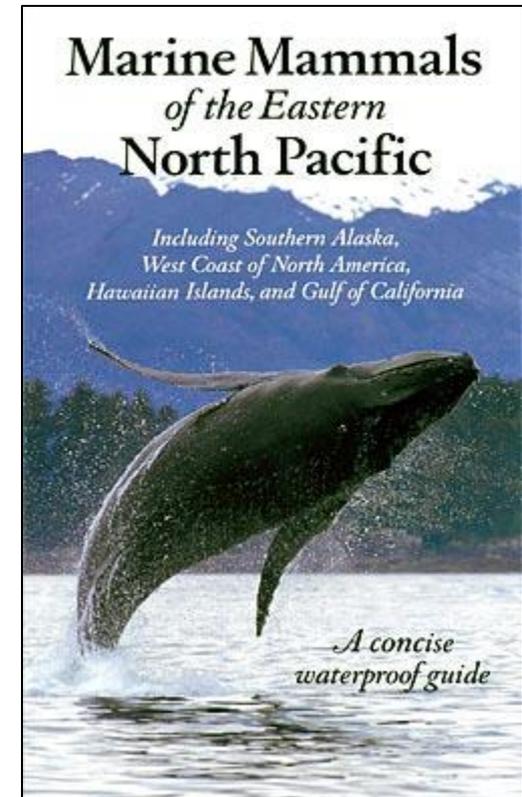
Marine Mammal Identification

- Identify to the species level (e.g. humpback whale)
- Use identifying features on the whale's body (e.g. scars, fluke patterns, chevrons) and blows (e.g. heart shaped for gray whales, to the left for sperm whales)
- This information will help us identify trends and incidents of depredation and bycatch by species in order to reduce these interactions to understand impacts to populations



Recommendations to the Bycatch Working Group:

- Post the marine mammal ID guide and the general handling and release guidelines on the IATTC website
- Incorporate the guide and general guidelines into an IATTC marine mammal resolution
- Use this information to develop marine mammal safe handling and release guidelines specific for different IATTC fisheries, including longline, purse seine, and troll gear.



Thank you!



Sperm whale



Gray whale



Sperm whale



Humpback whale

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/foreign/marine-mammal-protection/noaa-fisheries-establishes-international-marine-mammal-bycatch-criteria-us-imports>