

What are sea lions?

Sea lions are carnivores and belong to the group Pinnipedia. The name comes from the Latin for wing-footed and refers to the animal's flippers. Other members of the pinniped group include seals and walruses. When most people think

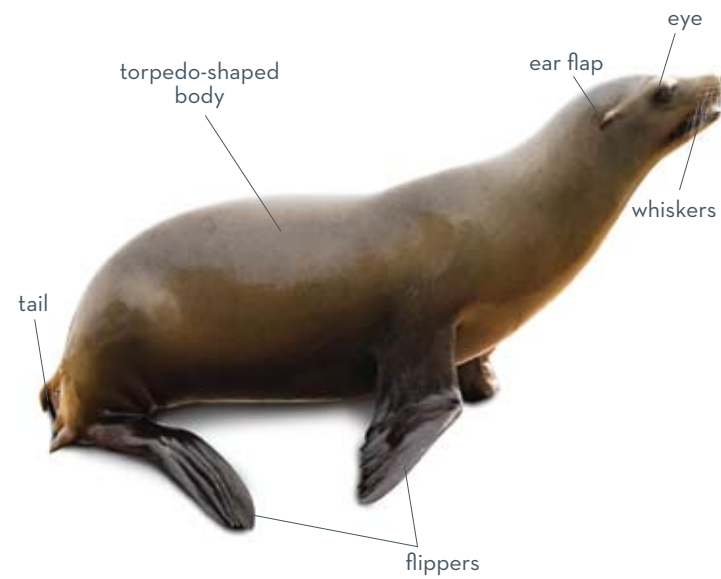
of a sea lion, they imagine a California sea lion since it is commonly seen around the world in performances at zoos and aquariums.



Seal lions are mammals

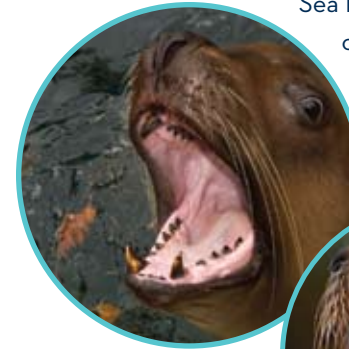
Sea lions are mammals just like humans and have the same basic mammal traits that include:

- 1) Warm-blooded: Sea lions maintain a constant body temperature.
- 2) Possess hair: Sea lions also have blubber, a layer of fat under the skin, to keep them warm.
- 3) Nurse their young: They have fat-rich milk, which enables their young to gain weight quickly.
- 4) Breathe air: Sea lions nostrils remain closed and they voluntarily open them to breathe.
- 5) Give live birth: Sea lions have not become as completely aquatic as whales and give birth on shore.



Teeth for tearing

Sea lions don't chew their food. Instead, they grab their meal and then either swallow it whole or rip and tear it into pieces before they eat it. They will dine on fish such as herring and anchovies or squid.



female sea lion



male sea lion



Sizable suitors

Male sea lions dwarf females in both size and weight. Males average 6.5 to 8 ft. in length and 440 to 880 lb. in weight while females average 5 to 6.5 ft. and 110 to 240 lb. Males use this large size to establish and maintain their territories in a rookery. They patrol their territories, both on land and water, often barking incessantly to let their rivals know they're present. Males mate with numerous females and the mothers raise their young on their own.



Sea lion social life

California sea lions live in groups called rookeries along the west coast of North America from British Columbia, Canada, to Baja California, Mexico. Sea lions spend part of each day socializing, especially the young, which are called pups. Pups will gather in groups and explore the rookery as they play and eventually enter tide pools. These activities help them build survival skills such as avoiding predators and catching food. Pups in California have been observed playing Frisbee® with fish and chasing and snapping at gulls. At birth, the young nurse frequently, though within three weeks nursing occurs usually for only 30 minutes a day. Pups continue nursing until their sibling is born.



Adapted for water

Sea lions have many adaptations that help them survive in the ocean.

Their bodies have been streamlined like a torpedo and their limbs have been dramatically modified. The winglike pectoral flippers contain the sea lion's arm bones as well as the finger bones, which have been elongated. These flippers provide the force that propels the animal through the water. The hind flippers are used for steering.



California Sea Lion

Pinniped predators and perils

Healthy California sea lions have very few threats from predators. Killer whales and large sharks will prey on weaker individuals. The sea lions at Atlantis aren't endangered, but there are seals and sea lions that are such as the Steller sea lion and the Hawaiian monk seal. Sea lions and seals have many challenges that they face on a daily basis:

- Entangling themselves in fishing nets and lines and other litter
- Ingesting trash
- Swimming in water polluted by oil spills and agricultural and mining runoff
- Overfishing in their feeding areas
- Changing climate

Kerzner Marine Foundation

The focus of the nonprofit Kerzner Marine Foundation is protecting the integrity of tropical marine ecosystems, which are becoming increasingly threatened due to overpopulation and overexploitation. We place a priority on projects that include developing and managing Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), conserving coral reefs, as well as supporting dolphin and whale conservation and research on a global level. The Foundation is partially funded by YOU through your participation in Blue Adventures and Dolphin Cay programs.

www.kerznermarinefoundation.org



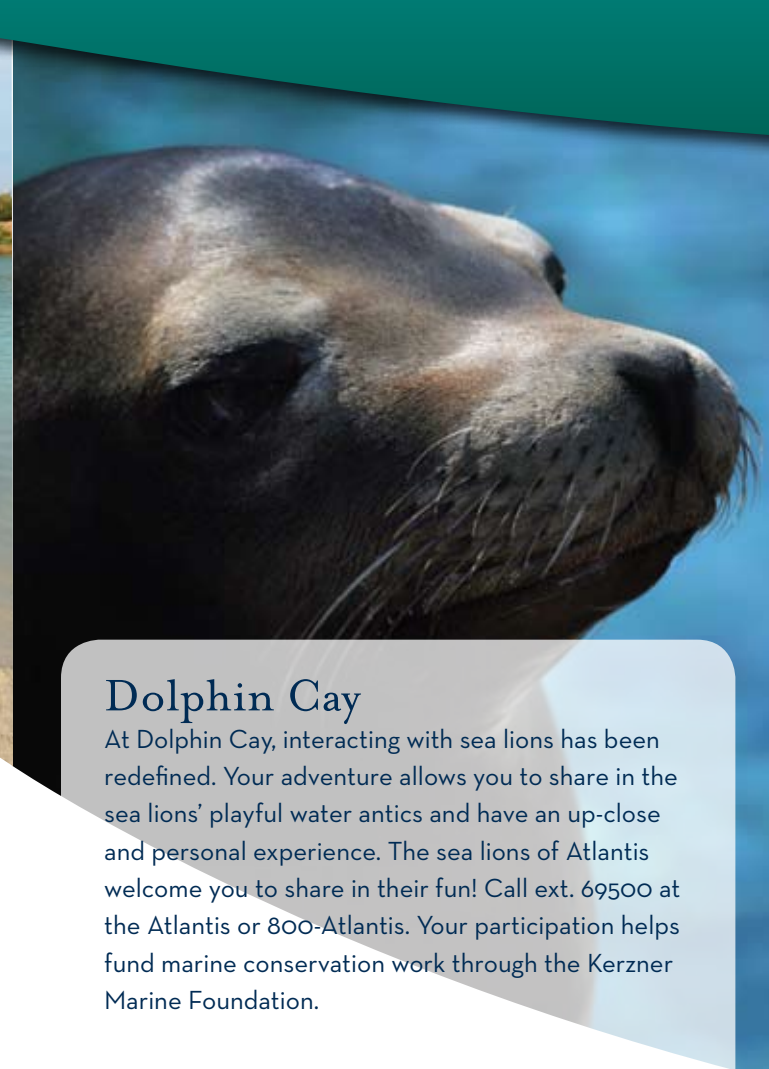
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PARTNERS FOR THE OCEANS



Be Blue!

The most important thing you can do to help protect coral reefs is to invest in their future. Participate in activities at Atlantis, Paradise Island, such as the Blue Adventure tours, and learn more about the local reefs. A portion of each program sale goes to **the blue project**SM. You can also help protect reefs by reducing, reusing, and recycling; disposing of fishing line and pet waste properly; buying biodegradable detergents and soaps; purchasing seafood wisely; avoiding the purchase of items made of coral or shells; and picking up and properly disposing of litter from beaches.

www.blueproject.com



Dolphin Cay

At Dolphin Cay, interacting with sea lions has been redefined. Your adventure allows you to share in the sea lions' playful water antics and have an up-close and personal experience. The sea lions of Atlantis welcome you to share in their fun! Call ext. 69500 at the Atlantis or 800-Atlantis. Your participation helps fund marine conservation work through the Kerzner Marine Foundation.

www.atlantis.com

