

Nonachus Guardian

# **Cover Story**

# **PLUNDERING THE PACIFIC**

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The cats who run the fishhouse Who runs the Pacific Ocean? Western Pacific council pushes plan to quash historic coral reserve Marine animal casualties How to speak "fisheries" Science Friction

# Marine animal casualties

#### Killed by longline fisheries in the Pacific: Four sea turtles and an albatross



#### Leatherback sea turtle

Endangered throughout its global range.Unlike many other sea turtles, the leatherback has a soft rubbery shell. The species feeds primarily on jellyfish and is capable of diving to depths greater than 3,000 feet. The Pacific population has been decimated by foreign and U.S. longline fleets.









Green sea turtle

Threatened except for the population breeding on the Pacific coast of Mexico, which is listed as endangered. Greens comprised 14 percent of the annual observed take of all species of turtles by the Hawaiian-based longline fishery in the 1990s.

#### Olive ridley sea turtle

Threatened throughout its global range, with the Mexican nesting population endangered. Threats are mortality from fishing and harvest of females and their eggs. Olive ridleys comprised 18% of the annual take of all species of sea turtles by the Hawaiian longliners.

#### Loggerhead sea turtle

Threatened. It has a reddish brown, bony carapace, with a comparatively large head. Adult loggerheads range in weight between 150 and 400 pounds. NOAA estimates that 5,000-50,000 loggerheads are killed each year by fishing activities.

#### **Black-footed albatross**

The population of black-footed albatross in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands dropped as longlining expanded in the 1990s. Each year hundreds of thousands of seabirds die globally from longliners and become unintended "bycatch". The birds dive for the baited hooks.

### Marine Mammals entangled in Pacific Ocean Fisheries

Fishing operations disturb, harass, injure, or kill marine mammals, either accidentally or deliberately. The International Whaling Commission estimates that between 65,000 and 80,000 whales, dolphins, seals and other marine mammals die in global fisheries every year.

For any given species of marine mammal killed in a fishery, the number is often small, but often so are the species' populations. For example, in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands of Alaska, a groundfish trawl fishery kills or injures A fishery for thresher shark and swordfish off California and Oregon annually kills or seriously injures 82 California sea lions and nearly 24 northern right-whale dolphins.

Since 1996, there have been at least 11 reports of humpback whales entangled in pot gear from the Alaska crustacean pot fishery. Of these entanglements, at least 2 likely killed the endangered whale.

#### Southeast Alaska/Gulf of Alaska/Bering Sea

Bearded seal Beluga whale Gray whale Dall's porpoise Fin whale Harbor porpoise

Bottlenose dolphin

False killer whales

Hawaiian monk seal

Harbor seal Humpback whale Killer whale Northern elephant seal Northern fur seal Northern Pacific whitesided dolphin

Pacific walrus Ribbon seal Ringed seal Sea otter Spotted seal Steller sea lion

Spinner dolphin

Sperm whale

#### Hawai'i

Rough-toothed dolphin Risso's dolphin Short-finned pilot whale

## California/Oregon/Washington

Baird's beaked whale Bottlenose dolphin California sea lion Common dolphin, shortbeaked Common dolphin, longbeaked Cuvier's beaked whale Dall's porpoise Harbor porpoise Harbor seal Humpback whale Killer whale Long-beaked common dolphin Mesoplodont beaked whale Minke whale Northern elephant seal Northern fur seal Northern Pacific white-sided dolphin Northern right-whale dolphin Pacific white-sided dolphin Pygmy sperm whale Risso's dolphin Sea otter Short-beaked common dolphin Short-finned pilot whale Southern Pacific white-sided dolphin Sperm whale Steller sea lion Striped dolphin

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