



Cover Story

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PLUNDERING THE PACIFIC

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Editor of [Cascadia Times](#)

[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

an average of 7.8 endangered Steller sea lions each year.

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	Harbor seal	Pacific walrus
Beluga whale	Humpback whale	Ribbon seal
Gray whale	Killer whale	Ringed seal
Dall's porpoise	Northern elephant seal	Sea otter
Fin whale	Northern fur seal	Spotted seal
Harbor porpoise	Northern Pacific whitesided dolphin	Steller sea lion

Hawai'i

Bottlenose dolphin	Rough-toothed dolphin	Spinner dolphin
False killer whales	Risso's dolphin	Sperm whale
Hawaiian monk seal	Short-finned pilot whale	

California/Oregon/Washington

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