

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ELEPHANT SEAL TAGS

Brian Hatfield keeps a record of tags seen at the Piedras Blancas rookery and would appreciate your help in gathering the information. A form on which to record your sightings is on a clipboard located on the side of the library/resource center cabinet. The form has space for the following information:

Date Color Number Single/Double Location Comments Observer

Date is the date of you saw the tag

Color is the color of the tag. (White, green, yellow, purple, red, orange, or pink)

Number is the combination of number or letters on the tag.

ONLY RECORD TAGS FOR WHICH YOU ARE CERTAIN OF THE ENTIRE SEQUENCE OF DIGITS. If there is one digit that is unreadable, you may list that number with an explanation - example - it may be hard to tell whether a number is an 8 or a 3. Please indicate that in your notes.

Single/Double Tag refers to how many tags an animal has. Some animals have double tags - that is one on each flipper. If you can tell whether it has one or two tags that is useful information. If you can't tell, don't put anything down. In other words, if you can only see one flipper, you don't know if the other flipper has a tag so you would leave it blank. On occasion, you may see seals with more than two tags -be sure to record that information.

Location is either the south end of VP3 or the north end of VP3. Just enter "VP3 South" or "VP3 North."

Comments are useful. Note if you can tell the sex or age of an animal. During the breeding season, take note if it is a mother with a pup. This information is especially useful if the tag is other than white. Brian has records on those with white tags.

Observer is your name -the name of the person who saw the tag on the seal. ONLY RECORD INFORMATION YOU ARE SURE OF! Color and tag number must be included. If you don't have the entire number, don't record it. Also, record the date, location, and observer's name. Comments and a notation as to how many tags are optional. You won't always know. It's OK to record a tag already seen because it gives an idea as to how long that animal was around.