

## **SWIM SPEEDS**

Using tracking data we find that during transit, e-seals travel 60 to 75 surface miles a day. This works out to 2.5 to 3.1 miles per hour (mph). Remember, elephant seals are not cruising along the surface. They are constantly diving to depths of 1,000 feet or more, even while traveling; usually spending 2-3 minutes stationary at the surface between dives. Putting these facts together with a little math, we find that when traveling, e-seal's speed through the water is 3 to 4 miles per hour.

### **Northern Elephant Seal**

Typical rate of travel – 2–3 mph or 60-75 miles per day

Typical swim speed 3-4 mph

Top swim speed estimate – 10-15 mph

*(Remember these animals dive as they travel.)*

Here is a list of the top swim speeds  
for some other marine mammals seen at Piedras Blancas:

### **California Sea Lion**

Top swim speed – 25 mph

### **Harbor Seal**

Top swim speed – 12 mph

### **Gray Whale**

Top swim speed – 5 mph

### **Dall's Porpoise**

Top swim speed – 34 mph

### **Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin**

Top swim speed – 22 mph

### **The Great White Shark**

Top swim speed is estimated at between 25 & 35 mph

### **The Orca**

Top swim speed - 30 mph

### **A Human**

Top swim speed - 3-1/2 mph