

COMPARISONS OF PINNIPEDS FREQUENTLY SEEN AT PIEDRAS BLANCAS

	California sea lion	Harbor seal	Northern elephant seal
Weight:	Males – 880 pounds Females – 240 pounds Pups at birth – 13-20 pounds	Males – 250-300 pounds Females – slightly less Pups at birth – 15-25 pounds	Males – 3000-5000 pounds Females – 900-1800 pounds Pups at birth – 60-80 pounds
Length:	Males – 8 feet Females – 6.5 feet Pups at birth – 30 inches	Males – 6 feet Females – slightly smaller Pups at birth – 28-40 inches	Males – 15 feet Females – 9-12 feet Pups at birth – 3-4 feet
Who do we see?	Mature males and young of both sexes. Breeding age females remain near rookeries around the Channel Islands and south.	All ages	All ages

REPRODUCTIVE INFORMATION

Lactation:	6-12+ months	21-42 days	22-29 days
Feeding then?	yes	yes	no
Ovulation:	early lactation (21 days after giving birth)	end of lactation	late in lactation (25 days after giving birth)
Gestation:	11 months	10-11 months	11 months
Delayed implant:	3 months	1-3 months	3-4 months
Do they give birth here?	A few, but pups don't survive	yes	yes
Pupping season:	mid-May – late June	March-April	December - early March

FORAGING INFORMATION

Eat while at PB?	yes	yes	no – only nursing pups
Food:	fish, squid, octopus	fish, octopus, shrimp, eel, etc.	fish, squid, octopus, sharks, rays, etc

Foraging strategy: CA sea lions feed alone or in groups, sometimes with cetaceans or seabirds. Harbor seals and e-seals are solitary.

Teeth: Most pinnipeds have pointed, cone-shaped teeth for catching and holding slippery fish and squid. Small prey are swallowed whole. Larger fish are consumed in bite-sized chunks with little chewing or grinding (no molars). Small pointed cusps on harbor seal teeth help grip slick food. Elephant seals swallow food whole. While the canine teeth are most prominent, elephant seals have short, peg-like molars that are not closely spaced. These teeth may help hold larger prey until it is swallowed.