

Distinguishing between Steller & California sea lions

Steller Sea Lion	Vs.	California Sea Lion
Male- up to 2200 lbs (average 1250 lbs), length up to 10.5 ft. Females- up to 800 lbs (average 550 lbs) length up to 8.5 ft Pups- average 50 lbs, length 45 in. at birth	Size	Males- up to 1200 lbs (average 600 lbs), length up to 8.5 ft. Females - up to 240 lbs (average 190 lbs) length up to 6 ft. Pups- average 15 lbs, length 36 in. at birth
Light blond to reddish blond with dark brown flippers and a darker brown chest and abdomen. Pups born with dark brown almost black lanugo which is molted at ~6 months to a lighter brown coat, gradually lightens as the animal gets older	Coloration	Adult males are light to dark brown to blackish, females and juveniles are golden brown to blond color, coloration fairly consistent over the entire body. Pups are born dark and lighten over a couple months.
Short, blunt, and broad	Snout	Long, pointed, and narrow
Skull broad and flat, crest less pronounced	Sagittal crest	Adult males have a pronounced sagittal crest that is crowned with a light brown to blond tuft of hair
Broad with hair sparsely covering $\frac{3}{4}$ of the dorsal surface. Longer and broader than a California sea lion	Fore flippers	Broad with hair on the upper surface extending past the wrist
Short and slim, with the first and fifth digits longer than the middle digits	Hind flippers	Hairless and short, nails present on the middle three digits on hind flippers
Grumbles, growls, and roars	Vocalizations	Dog-like bark and growls
Adult males have broad upper torso with well developed "mane"	Mane	Males do not have a "mane"
Gap (diastema) between premolars and molars	Teeth	No gap between premolars and molars
Postorbital process square	Postorbital process	Postorbital process triangular
Circular tip	Baculum	Bifurcate tip
~ 1 year	Gestation	~ 1 year
Females give birth late May through early July; most births take place in late June	Pupping	Females give birth late May through July; most births take place in late June
Pups can be weaned at one year but they have been documented nursing up to 4 years old	Weaning	~ 6 months, some may nurse for up to one year, rarely longer
30 + years	Lifespan	15 + years
Threatened under the Endangered Species Act	Status	Protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act

For more information on status of these species please visit:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars/species.htm>

For more information on the management or research of marine mammals

please visit: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/wildlife/management/marine.html>



Adult male Steller sea lion.
Photo: Dyanna Lambourn, WDFW



Adult male California sea lion.
Photo: Sandy Dubpernell, CPSMMSN



Adult female California sea lion.
Photo: Dyanna Lambourn, WDFW



Steller sea lions (light) and California sea lions (dark).
Photo: Dyanna Lambourn, WDFW



Male Steller sea lions. Photo: WDFW



California sea lion male (dark brown)
with adult male Steller sea lions. Photo:
Pat Gearin, NMML



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