

HARBOR SEAL

Phoca vitulina concolor

De Kay, 1842



CLASSIFICATION

Class: Mammalia

Order: Carnivora

Family: Phocidae

3 other subspecies



NOT LISTED



Species Survival Plan

VERY RARE



LEAST CONCERN

Identification : Adults can reach a body length of 1.90 m for a weight of 140 kg. Round and broad snout, round head, very short limbs. Coloration is variable but usually beige-cream with dark grey spotting and mottling, more intense on back.

Range: This subspecies occurs in north-west Atlantic Ocean, from Greenland to USA. Species also found in north west and east Pacific and north-east Atlantic.

Habitat : Island coastlines, bays and harbors with sandy and pebbly beaches.

Behavior: The species is fully aquatic, coming on land to give birth, rest and bask. Forages usually in shallow waters. Feeds on fish and marine invertebrates.

Status in the wild: This species has a large range but some populations suffered from persecution and killing for their fur, oil and skin. Water pollution is an issue too.

In captivity: This species is very common in captivity around the world with nominate subspecies being commonest. This subspecies is only known from a few American zoos. It is now kept in very small numbers with probably no recent breeding.