

RANGE

The Atlantic Grey Seal is found throughout the northern Atlantic Ocean. There are three distinct populations. One found in the eastern Atlantic near the United Kingdom and Ireland, one in the western Atlantic off the coast of New England and Canada and one found in the Baltic Sea.

HABITAT

Grey seals can be found in coastal areas on land and on the open pack ice. Grey seals prefer exposed areas such as remote islands, rocky coasts and reefs.

SIZE

Body Length: Males: up to about 7.5 ft **Females** up to about 6.5 ft.

Weight: Males: Average from 375 lbs. to 680 lbs. **Females:** Average from 225 lbs. to 385 lbs.

DIET

Wild: Opportunistic feeders. Wide variety of fish, crustaceans, cephalopods, and the occasional sea bird.

Zoo: Fish, Squid

BEHAVIOR

- Grey Seals are highly gregarious, often found congregating on pack ice or coastal areas in rookeries.
- Pups can be born on land or on the pack ice
- Pups are born with a white woolly coat, which they will moult after about 2-4 weeks.
- Pups nurse for about 17 -18 days, and near the end of that period the mothers will mate with one or more males and once the pup is weaned it is left to fend for itself. Pups stay in the rookeries until they fully moult, living off the rich fat reserves it built up while nursing. They then make their way to the sea to start feeding.
- New pups are known to wander distances of several hundred miles from their original birth sites.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Grey Seals are known to dive up to depths of close to 900 feet.
- Known to stay underwater for up to 20 minutes.
- In the wild, females may live up to 35 years, males up to 25 years.
- Their main predators besides humans are sharks and killer whales.

STATUS

Listed as endangered on the IUCN Red list.

Populations under pressure by commercial hunters.

CITES---Appendix III

Protected under Annex II & Annex V of the European Community's Habitat Directive

Total worldwide populations estimated at 290,000 – 300,000.

REFERENCES

<http://pinnipeds.org/species/grey.htm>

[http://www.arkive.org/grey-seal-\(eastern-atlantic-population\)/halichoerus-grypus/facts](http://www.arkive.org/grey-seal-(eastern-atlantic-population)/halichoerus-grypus/facts)

**PHOTO
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Order:	Pinnipedia
Family:	Phocidae
Genus:	Halichoerus
species:	grypus