

## Marine Mammals – Steller Sea Lion Haulouts and Rookeries

### description

Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) are one of two species of sea lions found in the BC Marine Conservation Analysis (BCMCA) study area. Often found together with California sea lions, they are tan to chocolate brown in colour and are larger, with the males weighing up to 1000 kilograms and reaching 3 metres in length. Steller sea lions have a mane of fur around their neck and their vocalizations sound like roars.

There are two genetically distinct populations that inhabit the cool-temperate coastal waters of the North Pacific Ocean from California, north to the Bering Strait, and south along the Asian coast to Japan, the eastern and western populations. They are the largest member of the family *Otariidae* and the eastern population is the only one that resides year-round and breeds in Canadian waters. To breed, sea lions tend to return to the same location where they were born, and breeding takes place primarily during June and July. Breeding locations are usually rocky outcrops called rookeries. Three of four known rookeries for the eastern population are located in BC (Cape St. James, Banks Island and Scott Islands). Note that one unspecified haulout location in the Sea Otter Group (west of Rivers Inlet) has recently regained rookery status (DFO 2008), although that update was not reflected in the data provided.

During summer, non-breeding animals congregate and rest at year-round haulout sites. All age groups and both genders use these haulouts locations during the rest of the year when they are not foraging at sea. Some haulouts are used only during winter; these tend to be found in more protected waters.

During breeding season, Steller sea lion diet consists of fish, such as rockfish, sculpins, capelin, and flatfish and invertebrates, such as squid, octopuses, shrimps and crabs. During non-breeding season they prey mainly upon schooling fish, such as herring, hake, pollock, dogfish, and, to a lesser extent, salmon. They in turn are prey for transient killer whales. Males have a life span of 15-20 years while the life span of a female is about 25-30 years.

Data illustrated represent known haulouts (sites on land where these animals rest and congregate consistently) and rookeries (sites on land where these animals breed year after year) for Steller sea lions along the coast of British Columbia. Haulout locations have been buffered by one kilometre for illustrative purposes. Based on expert advice, the rookery points have been buffered by 15 kilometres to represent a portion of the foraging area for females nursing their young.



PHOTO: NATUREDIVER



PHOTO: CHARLIE SHORT

### data sources

- University of British Columbia - Marine Mammal Research Unit

### data resolution

- None provided.

### date collected

- 1987-1998

### date compiled

- 2010

### reviewers

- None provided.

### reviewer comments

- None provided.

### caveats of use

- Recommended date of expiry for use of these data in a marine planning context: None provided.

### map, feature data and metadata access

- Visit [www.bcmca.ca/data](http://www.bcmca.ca/data) for more information.

### references

- COSEWIC 2003. COSEWIC assessment and update status report on the Steller sea lion *Eumetopias jubatus* in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vii + 47 pp. [www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/status\\_e.cfm](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/status/status_e.cfm)
- DFO. 2008. Population Assessment: Steller Sea Lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Advis. Rep. 2008/047.

**BCMCA Atlas**  
**Marine Mammals**  
**Steller Sea Lion**  
**Haulouts and Rookeries**

**Legend**

-  Haulouts
-  Rookeries

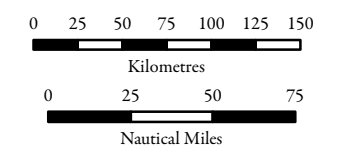
Notes:  
 - Haulouts buffered by 1 kilometre for illustration purposes.  
 - Rookeries buffered by 15 kilometres.

**Data Sources:**  
 University of British Columbia

**Base Data:**  
 ESRI Base Data, GeoBase, GeoBC, NOAA, Natural Resources Canada, USGS, Washington State Government

**Thematic Data:**  
 For more information on data sources and methods please refer to the facing page to this map

**Projection:** BC Albers NAD83



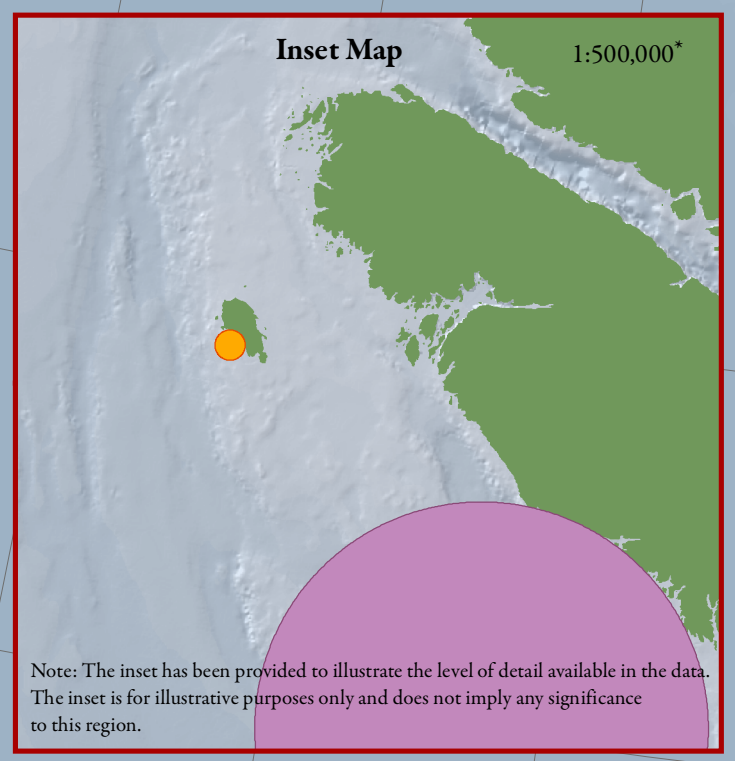
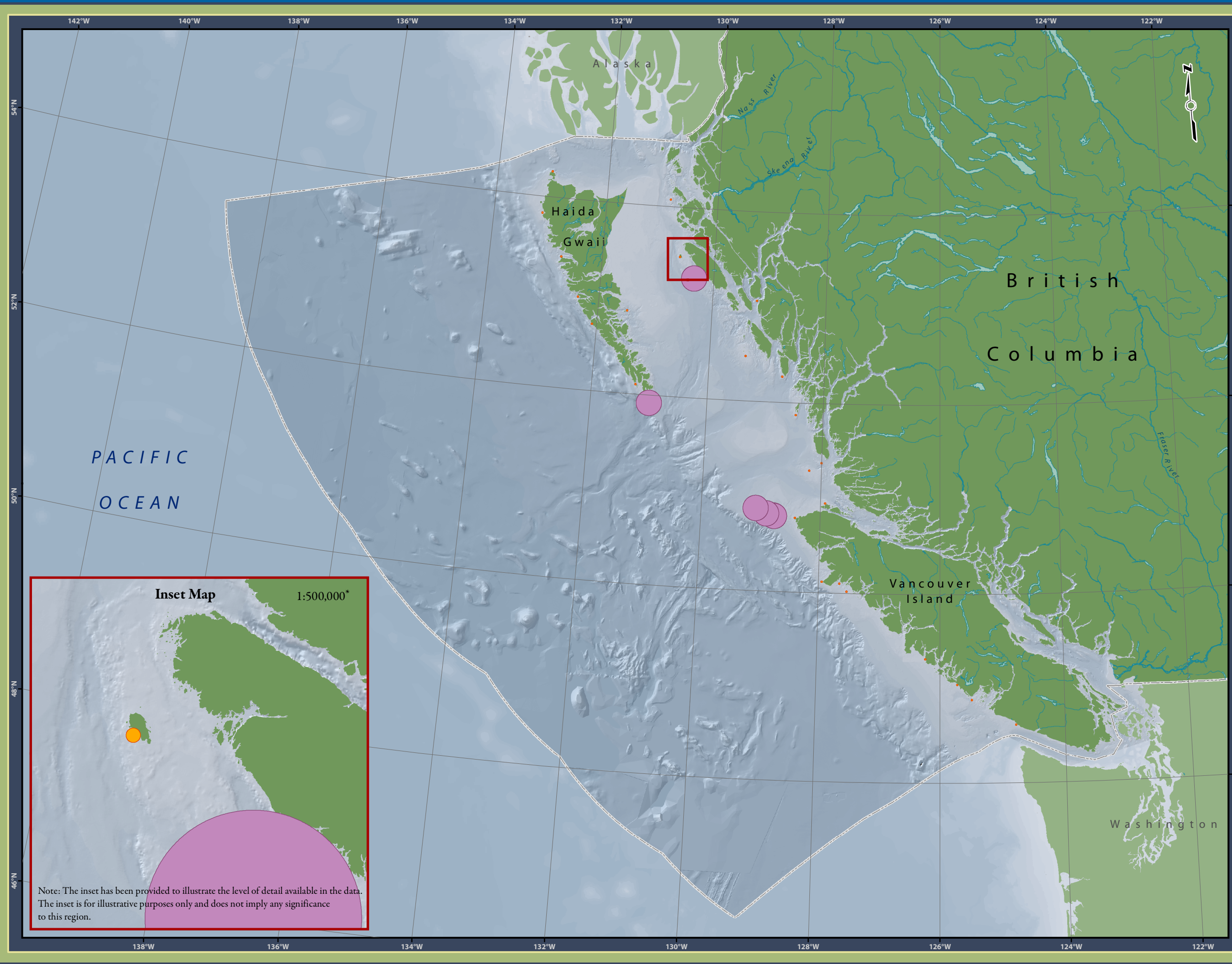
1:4,250,000\*

\* Written scales are approximate and are based on a 11 x 17 inch paper size.

Prepared for:



Map template by Caslys Consulting Ltd.  
 August 16, 2010



Note: The inset has been provided to illustrate the level of detail available in the data. The inset is for illustrative purposes only and does not imply any significance to this region.