

PUPPING SEASON IS HERE

It's the time of the year when elephant seal and harbor seal pups are born, and the Center commends the Pebble Beach community for its support of the numerous harbor seal pups that are born here and that share the beaches with its residents, most notably through the closure of Fanshell Beach from April 1 through June 1. It is important that humans keep their distance from these pups, and that we do not pick up or relocate any of these seals. **If you think a pup is in distress and is need of medical attention, please call MMC's local rescue line at (831) 633-6298.**



Since 1999, the Center has held a very special annual event at the Otter Cove estate in Pebble Beach. During this event, marine mammals that have been rehabilitated at the Center's Sausalito hospital are released back to the ocean at Cypress Point. Harbor seals are released here, and they are greeted by a "welcoming committee" of the members of the existing harbor seal colony at Cypress Point! The event is also a memorial to one of the Center's former board members and benefactors, and the Center is grateful to the family for hosting this event and sharing its beautiful home with the Center and its friends.

ABAGNALE THE SEA LION IS RELEASED



After nearly three weeks and 20 rescue attempts, "Abagnale," an adult male California sea lion with a tight fishing line entangled around his neck and mouth, was released back to the ocean north of San

Francisco on February 5 by The Marine Mammal Center ("MMC"). Abagnale was originally spotted at PIER 39 on January 1, and was rescued in Moss Landing Harbor by MMC on January 24. Using darts, veterinarians injected a mild sedative (not a tranquilizer) into the animal to calm him down. The MMC team then transported Abagnale to the Center's Sausalito hospital headquarters.

Abagnale's entanglement story, sadly, is a common one seen at the Center. In 2009, approximately eight-percent of the 1,709 marine mammals that volunteers and staff at The Marine Mammal Center rescued were stranded as a result of entanglement in marine debris.

"What's maddening is that you look at the wide array of reasons why marine mammals strand such as illnesses and malnourishment and this one - marine debris - is something we can control if we just change our behaviors and attitudes about how we discard plastics, fishing line and other trash that becomes marine debris," said Jeff Boehm, executive director at The Marine Mammal Center. "We hope people will hear Abagnale's story and make a pledge to eliminate marine debris, and in turn, help marine mammals and the ocean."

The Center responds marine mammal rescues along 600 miles of coast between Mendocino and San Luis Obispo Counties. The small staff and 800 volunteers provide medical care with the goal of getting patients healthy enough to be released back to the ocean.