

Guide to Identification of Pinniped Skulls of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary



California Sea Lion (CSLI)



Skull: Strong sexual dimorphism; triangular postorbital processes; wide intraorbital region; adult male has pronounced sagittal crest

Harbor Seal (HASE)



Skull: Minimal sexual dimorphism; no postorbital processes; narrow intraorbital region; large auditory bullae (on ventral side, not shown in photo)

Northern Elephant Seal (NESE)



Skull: Strong sexual dimorphism; no postorbital processes, large nasal shelf





Scapula: Large with two ridges



Scapula: Comma-shaped with a single ridge





Scapula: Large, fan-shaped with a single ridge



Teeth: Unicuspid post canines with strong cingulum often bearing accessory cusplets; upper postcanines generally uniformly spaced; third upper incisor enlarged



Teeth: Postcanine teeth usually bearing at least 3 cusps (mountainous); upper incisors of uniform size



Teeth: Very large canines, postcanines reduced and peglike, lacking cusps; total of 2 lower incisors





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Steller Sea Lion (SSLI)

Northern Fur Seal (NOFS)

Guadalupe Fur Seal (GUFS)



Skull: Strong sexual dimorphism; adult male has no obvious sagittal crest; square or rectangular postorbital processes; wide intraorbital region



Skull: Obvious sexual dimorphism; postorbital processes point back; greatest width across nasals almost equaling their length (snout short)



Skull: Strong sexual dimorphism (no male pictured); postorbital processes point outwards; greatest width across nasals about one-half their length (snout long)





Scapula: Very large with two ridges



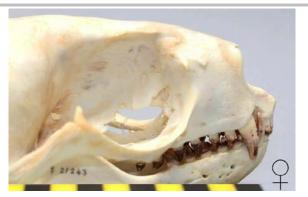
Scapula: Small with two ridges







Teeth: Large canines; unicuspid postcanines, no cusplets; wide gap separating last upper postcanine from its predecessor in adults; third upper incisor enlarged



Teeth: Large canines; unicuspid postcanines with possible minor cusplets; third upper incisor enlarged

