

Gulf of Alaska - Marine Mammals

Regional Variation in Steller Sea Lion Vital Rates in Alaska

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From 2000-2005, nearly 2,500 Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*) pups and juveniles were branded throughout Alaska at rookeries or during dive captures by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Over 25,000 resights of these individuals were collected from 2001-2007 to assess vital rates. We examined population processes responsible for greater rates of population growth in northern vs. southern rookeries in Southeast Alaska. Preliminary results suggest that, compared to sea lions from southern rookeries, sea lions from northern rookeries had higher annual survival from birth to 3 yrs of age, larger body size and improved body condition as pups at the time of branding, a greater occurrence of emigrants from the Western stock and a potentially younger age of first reproduction.



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