

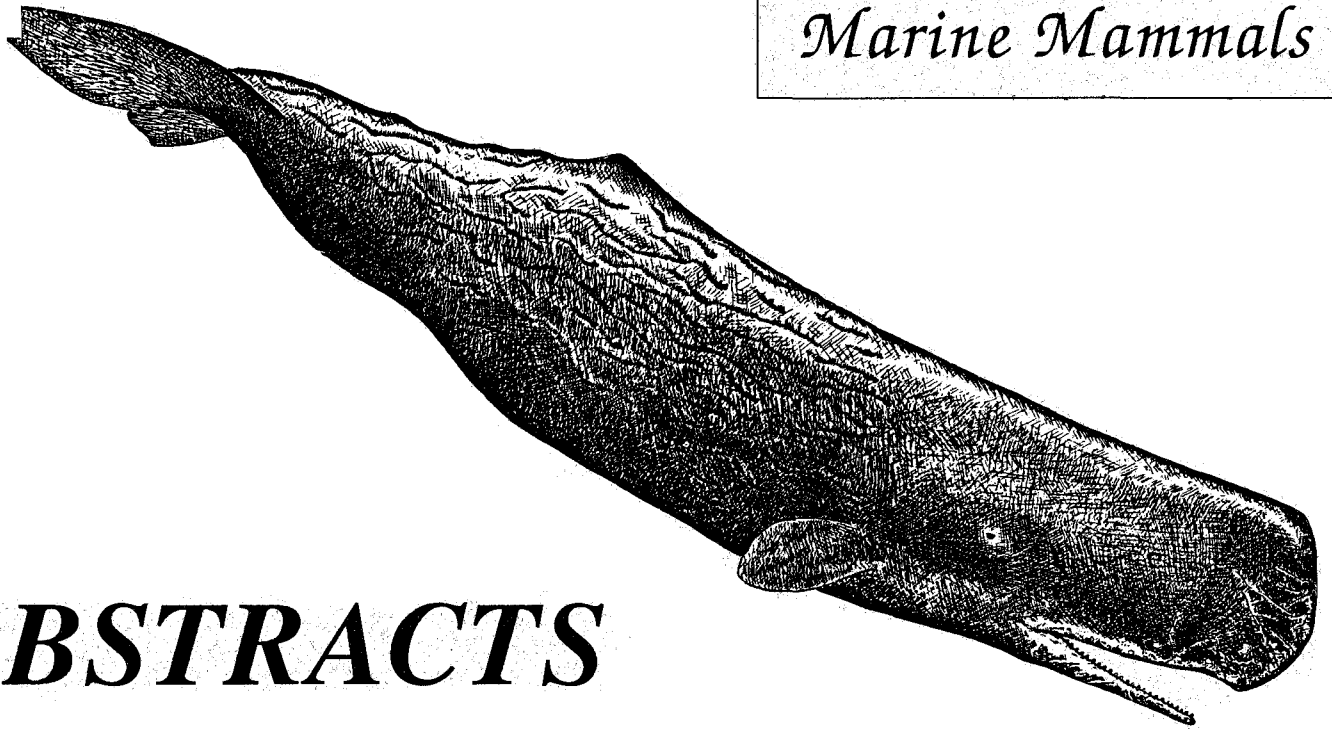
SYMPOSIUM: Steller Sea Lions

FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE EFFORT AND PUP GROWTH IN STELLER SEA LIONS

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Indices of adult female reproductive effort and pup growth were studied on Alaskan Steller sea lions. Data from declining populations at Chirikof (CI) and Marmot (MI) Islands were compared to a stable population at Lowrie I. (LI). Trip duration of adult females was monitored by attaching transmitters to their backs; known-age pup growth and body condition were measured during their first 40 days. Mean trip duration (21.4 hrs) was not significantly different for females on CI and LI. There was no significant difference in mean birth weight (20.5 kg) of pups at CI and LI, although males (21.8 kg) were larger on average than females (18.6 kg). Pups grew linearly at the same rate at CI and LI, but were heavier on CI during the first 40 days. Male and female pups gained weight (0.4 kg/day) at the same rate, but males remained consistently heavier than females. Preliminary data indicate that the smallest and leanest pups occur on MI. Additional data is needed to account for inter-annual variation at the study sites.

*Tenth Biennial
Conference on
the Biology of
Marine Mammals*



ABSTRACTS

**Galveston, Texas, U.S.A.
November 11-15, 1993**

**Hosted by
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