



SEA LIFE Trust Cornish Seal Sanctuary

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First seal pup of the season arrives at the Sanctuary after rescue from busy Cornish beach

The Cornish Seal Sanctuary has seen a very early start to their rescue season, with the arrival of its first seal pup admitted to the Seal hospital.

The pup named 'Maggot', in line with the Sanctuary's 'Bugs & Mini Beasts' theme for the new season, was rescued by British Divers Marine Life Rescue from Porthtowan beach on a busy summer's day.

Dan Jarvis, Director of Welfare and Conservation at BDMLR explains;

"British Divers Marine Life Rescue's volunteer Marine Mammal Medics were alerted to the seal hauled out on Porthtowan beach and visited the site to manage the situation. Although this was very challenging given the time of year and volume of people present, there was a chance that this pup's mother could still be around.

The team's objective was to keep people at a distance to give the pup and mum a chance to reunite over the next 24 hours, as this would be the best possible outcome. During the observation, the pup spent its time vocalising and moving in and out of the water along different parts of the coast towards Chapel Porth, making a difficult scenario even harder.

Unfortunately, after a few hours it then returned to the middle of Porthtowan beach and headed up in amongst the many visitors, and so, in discussion with the Cornish Seal Sanctuary team, it was decided the situation was no longer tenable and the pup should be brought in for care"

Admitted to the Cornish Seal Sanctuary Seal Hospital

Curator at the Cornish Seal Sanctuary Tamara Cooper comments, "Maggot was brought to the Sanctuary and assessed by our expert vets at Head & Head. She was found to be a female grey seal pup, approximately the weight of a pup just a day or so old. She had a small ulcer in her left eye and still had her umbilicus attached. For a pup so young, our concern is always an umbilical infection, so vets prescribed a short course

of antibiotics and daily cleaning of Maggot's umbilicus to ensure it stays as clean as possible.

Maggot is being fed a blended fish soup every 4 hours to keep up the level of feeding that her mum would have provided, but even so, it is impossible for the team to emulate the nutrient rich and calorie dense milk that ensures pups are able to put on around 1.5kg a day up to their weaning at around 17-21 days.

Maggot has a long rehab in front of her, but the Sanctuary team will make every effort to give Maggot a second chance."

Meet Maggot

As Maggot rests and recuperates, the Sanctuary are inviting guests the rare opportunity to come and see the rescued pup in their seal hospital, (but only if you are very very quiet!)

From today, Sanctuary guests will be able to view the little white coated pup and hear from the team about the rescue, rehab and release process at the Cornish Seal Sanctuary.

What to do if you find a seal pup on the beach this summer

Both charities are now reminding locals and visitors alike that it is now the time of year where pups are beginning to be born around the Southwest. Pups and their mothers are highly vulnerable to disturbance that can cause them to separate, sadly leaving the pup to starve to death.

Coast users are urged to be alert that any beach or cave away from public beaches that they enter may have mums and pups on them at any time from now for the next couple of months.

If seen, then the national DEFRA seal watching code of conduct dictates that people should stay 100m away, minimise how visible they are and any noise, and to move away slowly and quietly so that the seals do not notice human presence and change their behaviour from relaxed to stressed as a result.

If a pup is found alone on a public beach, then do not approach or handle it, and make sure to keep dogs under control on a lead.

The Cornish Seal Sanctuary and BDMLR can be contacted for advice and assistance on 01326 221361 or 01825 765546 respectively.

How you can help...

This pup season the Cornish Seal Sanctuary are asking for donations to upgrade their Animal Rescue vehicle, which will enable them to make more seal pup rescues from around the Cornish coastline.

Donate to their 'Pup my Ride' appeal [here](#)

To find out more about the Cornish Seal Sanctuary and its mission, [click here](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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