



Grey Seals : Net Entanglement Report Godrevy Headland : West Cornwall (North Coast) (Grid Reference : 581433)



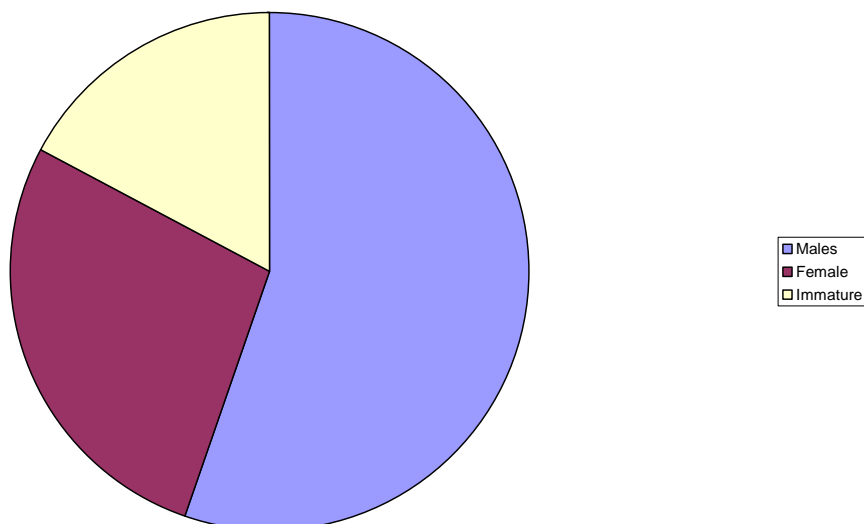
The Godrevy Seal Group has been recording observations of seals with net entanglement injuries, as part of an ongoing and long term photo identification project at one location.

Most frequently net entangled seals, are seen with a few lengths of net around their neck. Other types of entanglement have included a few lengths of net as abdomen rings. Occasionally seals have large amounts of net attached to their bodies as 'aprons', 'scarves' or 'body shawls'.



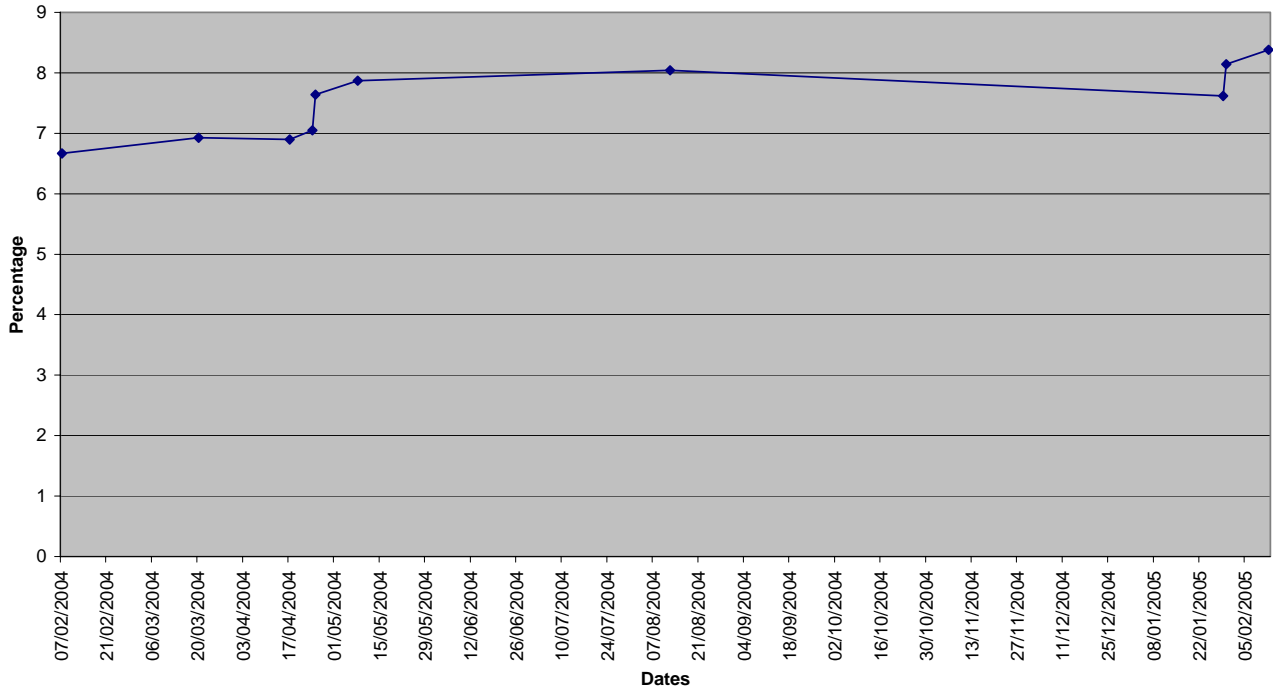
Since monitoring began on 26/05/00, a total of 29 different seals have been seen with some sort of net entanglement injury. Of these, 16 (55%) have been males, 8 (28%) females and 5 (17%) immature seals.

Net entangled seals



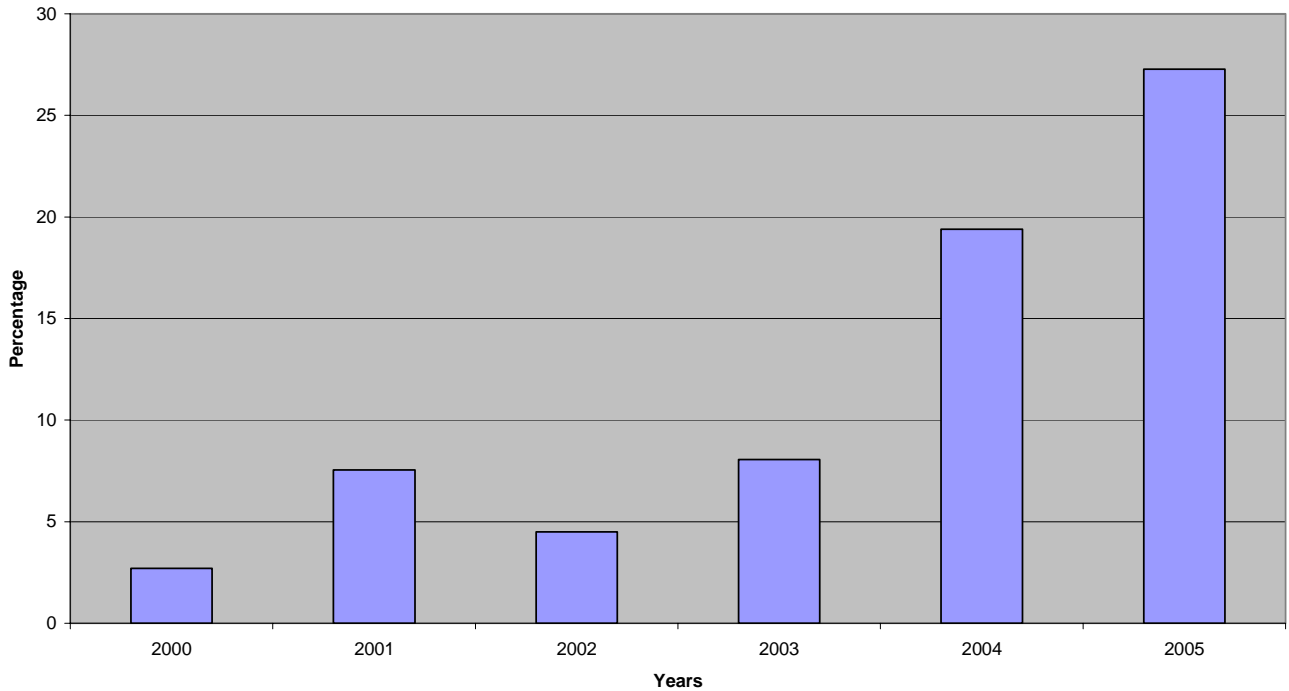
Of all seals observed and identified, the percentage of net entangled seals has varied between 6.67% and 8.38%. Since the end of 2003, more detailed monitoring of net entangled seals has been undertaken and this percentage has fluctuated, but with an overall upward trend. Since early 2004, there have been 2 periods when there has been a sudden increase in the percentage of net entangled seals observed; the first in April/May 2004 and the second in Jan/Feb 2005.

Net entangled seals as percentage of all seals observed



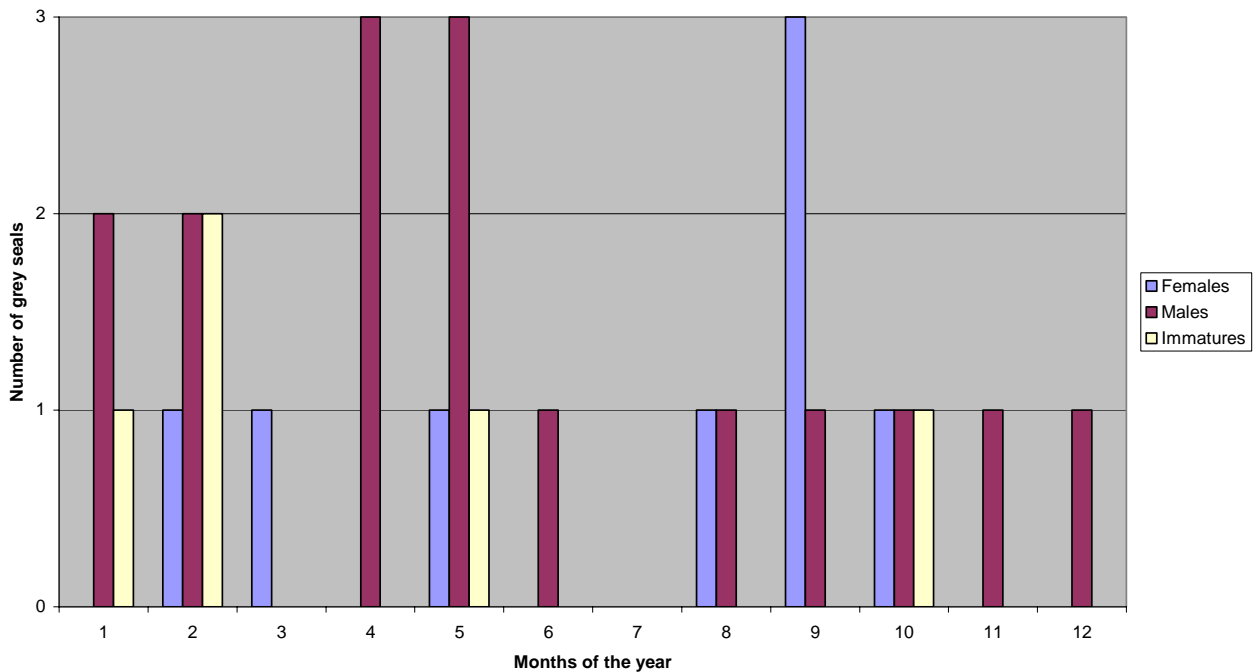
The number of new net entangled seals observed in each of the years since 2000 has fluctuated, but appears to show an overall upward trend. A significant increase occurred during 2004, coinciding with the time volunteers were asked to pay more attention to their observation of net entangled seals. (It is too early in 2005, to know if this figure is significant.)

New observations of net entangled seals as a percentage of all new identified seals



Since 2000, the peak months for new observations of net entangled seals are (in numerical order, largest first) February, May and September (although the numbers may not be significantly larger than the other months.)

First observations of net entangled grey seals



Members of the Godrevy Seal Group have taken action in conjunction with the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR), Cornwall Seal Observation and Monitoring Group (CSMOG), The National Seal Sanctuary (NSS) and the Maritime Coastguard Agency Portreath Cliff Rescue Team (MCA) to rescue 4 young net entangled seals, 3 of which took place during 2004. We hope, in the future, to develop a strategy for helping some of the small adult net entangled seals.

Some seals appear to have become entangled in nets set for fishing out of which they may have been cut. This seal had a single loop of monofilament around his abdomen with several cut strands projecting from around this.



Other seals may have become entangled whilst curiously exploring discarded net floating as marine debris. At least 3 seals have been observed to play and circle around floating sections of net which then get wrapped about their bodies. Fortunately on the observed occasions the seals have untangled themselves and swum off.

Report compiled by **Sue Sayer : Godrevy Seal Group** : ssayer@suesseals.eclipse.co.uk : More information about seals visiting Godrevy can be found at www.suesseals.eclipse.co.uk

Appendix : Images of all net entangled seals observed



S3 Ring Neck
 S46 Ring Neck
 S69 Abdomen Ring
 S83 Ring Neck - severe
 S100 RN Cable Car
 S104 Ring Neck

S140 Ring Neck 4PL

DP14
7 Invert V

DP19 Ring Neck - thick cord

DP28 Ring Neck - rescued

DP15
0 Loop

DP52 Ring Neck

DP15 3 Faint RN
 DP15 5 3 W blobs

DP59 Abdomen Ring

DP10 0 Neck shawl

DP15 6 Long line

DP10 2 Ring Neck

DP12 2 Ring Neck

LP17 Apron

DP12 9 Body shawl

DP17 8 Injured

DP13 5 Ring Neck

DP13 6 Abdomen Ring

Males	16	55%
Female	8	28%
Immature	5	17%

8.3% of seals observed between 26/05/00 and 12/02/05 show signs of net entanglement

S170 Scarf Monfilament
 DP180 S171 Belly Ring

LP9 Ring Neck

LP16 Ring Neck

NE	18	Total	19	Total	20	Total	21	Total	23	Total	24	Total	25	Total	26	Total	28	Total	29
DP	125	DP	126	DP	136	DP	140	DP	142	DP	145	DP	147	DP	164	DP	166	DP	168
S	129	S	132	S	138	S	142	S	143	S	144	S	147	S	157	S	158	S	158
LP	16	LP	16	LP	16	LP	16	LP	16	LP	16	LP	17	LP	20	LP	20	LP	20
Total ID	270	Total ID	274	Total ID	290	Total ID	298	Total ID	301	Total ID	305	Total ID	311	Total ID	341	Total ID	344	Total ID	346
%	6.67%	%	6.93%	%	6.90%	%	7.05%	%	7.64%	%	7.87%	%	8.04%	%	7.62%	%	8.14%	%	8.38%
	07/02/04		20/03/04		17/04/04		24/04/04		25/04/04		08/05/04		12/08/04		29/01/05		30/01/05		12/02/05