SCOTTISH ENTANGLEMENT ALLIANCE

Understanding marine animal entanglement in Scottish waters
Background to this project:

The organisations involved in preparing this booklet are working together to find ways to reduce the risk of large marine animals becoming entangled in fishing gear. This work was initiated by SCFF and our aim is to work closely with fishermen to raise awareness, improve our understanding of the issues and develop practical solutions.

This booklet was the first step towards achieving these goals. Since the first publication of this booklet the partnership has won EMFF funding, to find out more about this project visit www.scottishentanglement.org
More information on entanglement and strandings can be found at: www.scottishentanglement.org
This best practice guide is supported by:
Set-up to reduce the risk of entanglement

- Chain droppers
- Marker buoy
- Weighted riser
- Creel
- Weight
Setting Creels

1. **Set riser length** to water depth (suggested set-up in picture above)
2. Use a **weighted rope** on the riser
3. **Minimise** soak time
4. Only set creels when **actively fishing**
5. Immediately report all incidents of entanglement (phone numbers at end)

*Aim: To reduce excess rope in the water column to minimise the risk of entanglement in riser line.*
Encountering an entanglement:

- Look for buoys and lines moving or unusually clumped near an animal.
- Remember your own safety when approaching a wild animal and **NEVER** enter the water. Large whales are extremely powerful and unpredictable.
- Seek advice from the Scottish Entanglement Alliance before attempting a rescue. Cutting an animal free could result in partial disentanglement only. This may leave the animal at risk and lead to loss of gear.

**Aim:** Report all entanglements to improve knowledge and minimise damage to fishing gear
Key information to record and report:

- **Take photos** wherever possible (remember your phone has a camera)
- **Location** of animal: record coordinates
- **Description**: species, size, injuries, presence of tags
- **Condition**: alive, mobile, injured, inactive, if dead is it fresh or decomposing

All information shared will be treated in strictest confidence

**Aim**: To gather as much information as possible to assist in rescue attempts, and improve our understanding and guidance
Minke whale

Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water
Minke whale

Size
Length: 7-8.5m (23-28ft)
Weight: Up to 9 metric tons (10t)

Behaviours
Feed on wide variety of fish (herring, cod and sandeels)
Can be seen at surface feeding beneath flocks of seabirds
Dive times are typically 10 minutes
Usually does not produce a visible blow
Humpback whale

Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water
Humpback whale

Size
Length: 11.5-15m (38-50ft)
Weight: 23-40 metric tons (25-45t)

Behaviours
Feeds on young schooling fish such as sandeels, herring and mackerel
Often seen lunge feeding
Dive times are typically around 5 minutes
Typically raises tail (fluke) when diving
Basking shark

Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water

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Basking shark

Size
Length: 6.7 to 8.8m (22-29ft)
Weight: c. 2 metric tons (1.9t)

Behaviours
Feeds on zooplankton (small copepods, fish eggs, larvae)
Feeds by swimming with mouth open
Dorsal fin and tail fin can protrude from the water, can look like two sharks following each other
Leatherback turtle

Diver for scale only NEVER enter the water
Leatherback turtle

Size
Length: up to 2m (6.5ft)
Weight: up to 600kg (1320 lbs)

Behaviours
Feeds on jellyfish
Summer visitor to Scottish waters
Commonly seen at the surface, and can look like an upturned saucer.
Head protrudes from the water
Reporting entanglements:

To report an entangled animal (live or dead) please contact:

Scottish Marine Animal Stranding Scheme - 01463 243030
Outside office hours – 07393 798153
Coast Guard - VHF ch. 16
Or email entanglelement@sac.co.uk