

San Francisco Missing Sea Lions, mystery solved?

January 8, 2010

Coos Bay, OR – According to the BBC [HYPERLINK "http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8438215.stm"](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8438215.stm) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8438215.stm> San Francisco's missing sea lions have traveled up North to the Oregon Coast.

Jan Hodder of the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology located in the quaint fishing village of Charleston, Oregon says there's really no way of knowing for sure at this time. California Sea Lions typically go where there are good fishery sources and tend to go where there are large supply of anchovies and sardines. There have been reports of sightings in various places in California, and also Sea Lion Caves in Florence, Oregon.

Shell Island/Simpson Reef has long been the stopping point for California Sea Lions; in fact Shell Island is the largest haul-out of marine mammals on the Oregon Coast. It stands to reason that some of the 1700 sea lions that abruptly departed San Francisco might land there. Shell Island is part of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge and hosts Northern Elephant Seals, Harbor Seals, Stellar Sea Lions and California Sea Lions.

The Coos Bay – North Bend Visitor & Convention Bureau have opted to take another spin on the mystery, they've posted comments on twitter and facebook, blogs and a video with the theme "We're not missing, we're just on vacation."

Director of Promotions & Conventions, Katherine Hoppe said "Its fun to think that these Californians have opted to take a little vacation to Shell Island and the Coos Bay Area. The great thing about social media and a story like this is we can add a little playfulness and encourage visitors to view what we have year round." And playful they are with a video that they are touting as the first ever interview with a San Francisco Sea Lion on their youtube page at [HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/user/coosbayoregon"](http://www.youtube.com/user/coosbayoregon) www.youtube.com/user/coosbayoregon and a missing poster on their facebook page at www.facebook.com/OregonsAdventureCoast

Hoppe ask that visitors use caution. Sea lions are predators; they can be damaging to the fishing industry and a nuisance. While fun to take photos of, its best done from afar and visitors should never feed them. Sea Lions tend to appear lazy and slow because of their size, but they are unpredictable and can become aggressive quickly, especially if they feel cornered or harassed. If a sea lion is showing territorial behavior, back away slowly and stay out of the water and never approach them during mating season.

For more information, contact Katherine Hoppe at 541.269.0215 or 541.297.2432

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