

Seals in Northern Ireland

A seal's fur is brownish-grey with small dark spots. The common seal has a body covered with a thick layer of fat called blubber. Blubber is stored under the skin and helps to keep the animal warm. A seal uses flippers for swimming. On the land, seals often like to lie in a head up, tail up position.

Common seals eat a wide variety of fish such as flounder, herring and mackerel. Grey seal are born with white fur in June or July. They can swim and dive within a few hours of birth. The pup is fed on very rich milk and grows quickly.

Seals can be seen all around the coast of Northern Ireland, but are mostly found on the County Down coastline. Strangford Lough holds the largest population in Ireland.

The number of seals in the natural environment is getting smaller every year. The main reasons for this are chemical and oil pollution in the sea.



Questions

1. How do seals stay warm?

2. What do seals eat?

3. What do you call a baby seal? Is there another baby animal with the same name?

4. Why is number of seals in the natural environment getting smaller?

5. Go to Exploris – the N. Ireland Aquarium website. Write how Exploris helps seals.
