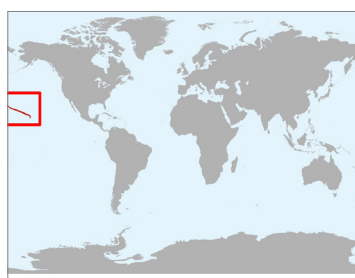




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Geographical range

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Species of the Day: Hawaiian Monk Seal

The **Hawaiian Monk Seal**, *Monachus schauinslandi*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species™. It is the only true seal found year-round in tropical waters and, as its name suggests, it is found around the islands and atolls of Hawaii.

Historically, the Hawaiian Monk Seal was hunted for its meat, hide, and oil. Additional pressure was experienced by the seals due to the presence of humans and dogs on islands and atolls that prevented them from using preferred habitats. Although now protected, the species is continuing to decline as a result of a lack of food resources, entanglement in marine debris and fishing gear, and shark predation. Rising sea level and acidification of reefs as a result of global warming could further impact this seal's future.

Additional efforts are needed to minimize interactions with humans in the inhabited main Hawaiian Islands, and consideration is being given to manipulation of the ecosystem of the northwestern Hawaiian Islands to make it more favourable to the seals (e.g., the removal of sharks).



Species of the Day
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