

Elephant Seal Survival: Answer Key

Activity Questions:

1. Did you find the activity easy or difficult? Why?

The more familiar the spice chosen to represent the "pup" is, the easier the activity is. For example, cinnamon has a very strong, familiar and unique scent so it may be easier for individuals to identify. Conversely, as more spices are added to the lineup and less familiar spices are chosen to represent the "pup" the more difficult this activity becomes. This could be similar to the experience of an Elephant seal mother on a breeding beaches. If the beach has less individuals and "scents" within a small area the easier it may be for the mother to pick up the scent of her pup.

2. How might crowded beaches, less space, or more pups affect an Elephant seal mothers' ability to sniff out their pup?

It is likely that with crowded beaches, less space, or more pups each with a unique scent it would be more difficult for an Elephant seal mother to sniff out her pup. This would be made even more difficult if a pup is washed out to sea and does not return to the same part of the beach as the mother.

3. What ideas do you have to help marine mammal parents and pups, like Stoffle, stay safe?

Because sea level rise is causing beaches to shrink and less space for Elephant seals to have their pups, lessening sea level rise would be a great way to help marine mammal parents and pups. Sea level rise is caused by the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas. This releases excess carbon dioxide into the atmosphere where it acts like a heat trapping blanket warming up the land, air and sea. As the sea warms, it expands leading to sea level rise. Therefore, reducing the use of fossil fuels will lessen the impacts of sea level rise. Switching to renewable energy will reduce the use of fossil fuels. In fact, in many states, it is cheaper to use solar energy rather than fossil fuels.

Become an Ocean Hero:

Explore ways you can take action to reduce your use of fossil fuels and lessen the impacts of climate change, like sea level rise, on marine mammal parents and pups! For example, did you know the energy it takes to produce our food to how it gets to our plates and what we eat can have a big climate impact? Rethinking your meals to eat lower on the food chain can make a positive change for our oceans. Learn more on our [website](#)!

