



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Marine Mammal Center responds to a California sea lion after it pops up at MINI of Marin in Corte Madera

Experts at the world's largest marine mammal hospital are pleased with sea lion Mini's early progress during treatment

(Sausalito, Calif. – November 12, 2020) –Forget chickens crossing the road. California sea lion Mini was rescued by trained responders from The Marine Mammal Center last week after being found in a parking lot at Corte Madera's MINI of Marin car dealership. And no, Mini the sea lion was not browsing year-end deals either. Experts note that the wayfaring sea lion likely traveled too far up Corte Madera Marsh State Marine Park, potentially following a food source, before exiting the water and crossing San Clemente Drive. Due to the safety risks posed by the nearby roadway, the animal was immediately rescued and transported to the Center's Sausalito hospital for rehabilitation.

“Mini has made great early progress during her rehabilitation and we're encouraged by her energetic demeanor and active eating skills,” says Dr. Cara Field, Medical Director at The Marine Mammal Center. “Once this animal's rear flipper heals and bloodwork shows no signs of ill health, our team will return this sea lion back to her ocean home.”

Mini received a full admission exam shortly after the animal's rescue on November 2 by Center veterinary experts to check for signs of injury, abnormal neurological behavior, and other potential ailments. Center experts identified the animal as an adult female in excellent body condition besides suffering from joint arthritis in its right rear flipper. The team is also taking extra precautions to further limit the amount of interaction and stimulation around her due to some early signs of the animal's high interest in people.

“The public's continued support is critical for us to continue to provide world-class expertise and medical care for California sea lion patients like Mini,” says Dr. Field. “Each of these animals presents an opportunity to learn more about the threats they face in the wild and continue to improve rehabilitation efforts for this sentinel species.”

To help the recovery and release of marine mammals like Mini, The Marine Mammal Center kindly asks supporters to text OCEAN to 41444 to donate. The public can also play an important role in helping the Center respond to seals and sea lions in distress by calling the rescue hotline at 415-289-SEAL (7325).

As the world's largest marine mammal hospital, the Center is considered an essential business during the ongoing pandemic, and has continued to rescue and respond to marine mammals in need in a way that is responsible and optimizes safety.

An estimated timetable for Mini's release back to the wild has yet to be determined. Experts confirmed the sea lion was previously rehabilitated and released last summer for a swollen jaw and neck wounds by California Stranding Network partner The Marine Mammal Care Center based in San Pedro, CA.

How The Public Can Help:

The Marine Mammal Center would like to remind the public that they play an important role in the conservation of marine mammals by keeping these marine wildlife viewing tips in mind:

- **Keep A Safe Distance.** Whether on the water viewing marine life or walking with your pet on local beaches, a great wildlife viewing experience starts with keeping your distance and keeping pets on leash.
- **Use Your Zoom.** It's ok to take photos and admire the animals, but if you're so close that you're not using your zoom or they're reacting to you, then you're too close. No SEAL-FIES please!
- **Call Us.** If you see a seal or sea lion in distress like Mini, call The Marine Mammal Center's rescue hotline at 415-289-SEAL (7325). The Center will monitor the animal and, if necessary, send a trained responder to rescue it safely.

ABOUT THE MARINE MAMMAL CENTER:

Headquartered on the site of a former Cold War missile base, The Marine Mammal Center is a global leader in marine mammal health, science and conservation, and is the largest marine mammal hospital in the world. The Center's teaching hospital and training programs operate globally, with its headquarters in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, part of the National Park Service. Expert teams from the Center travel around the world to work with emerging first responders and has itself rescued more than 23,000 marine mammals from 600 miles of its authorized rescue area of California coastline and the Big Island of Hawai'i. The Center's mission is to advance global ocean conservation through marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education.

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