Elephant Seal Tagging and Sighting

ACTIVITY: Become a scientist and track tagged seals

GRADE LEVEL(s): k-6th

⏰ varies (30 minutes)

DISCIPLINES: Science, language arts

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to:
- Create an elephant seal life history tag
- Discuss why scientists tag and track elephant seals

MATERIALS:
- card stock
- child-safe markers
- yarn
- pencils or pens
- crayons
- hole punch
- photocopies: *Elephant Seal Tag Sighting Form* and
- *Elephant Seal Tag* pattern (k-2nd or 3-6th)
- Photo of elephant seal tag

NOTE: Depending on students' age and time allowed, you might choose to create the tag and complete the form, or only do one of the activities

Preparation:

Step 1: Photocopy *Elephant Seal Tag Sighting Form* (one per student)

Step 2: Select the *Elephant Seal Tag* that will work for your students. Then print or photocopy one per student onto card stock. Cut out.

Step 3: For younger students, pre-punch the hole punch at the top of the tag.

Step 4: Pre-cut yarn (one per student). For younger students, you might choose to pre-tie the yarn onto the tags.

Step 5: Print a photo of an elephant seal tag and *various photos of elephant seals on the beach (see Celebration of Conservation activity page) or prepare to project on classroom screen.

WHAT TO DO:

Step 1: Show students the photo of the tag on an elephant seal. Read Dr. Patrick Robinson's Seamail and discuss the purpose of the tag and how scientists track the seal throughout the years.

Step 2: Tell them, as part of Team Elephant Seal, they'll each create a tag for one of the seals and track its history for the year.

Step 3: Have students decide their seal's four-digit ID number. Have them write it as big as they can on the back side of the tag (the side without writing).

Step 4: Complete the tag form together. NOTE: Students do not need to fill in every date. The tag/form could be for the day the seal was tagged. You can discuss how scientists would fill in the form throughout the year and subsequent years. Have students draw their seal.

OPTIONAL: Create a classroom log of seal sightings. Put the tags in a pile and have kids randomly select a seal. Pick a date some time between December to August. The student tracking that seal can add the sighting to their form.

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Elephant Seal Tag Sighting Form
Team Elephant Seal

TAG NUMBER: _____

Male _____   (At time of tagging)
                 Pup   _____
Female _____   Juvenile _____
                 Adult   _____

Team Elephant Seal Member: _____

Date Tagged: _____

Location: ____Año Nuevo_____

If adult female, did she have a pup?   Yes   No

Other observations: _____

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TAG OBSERVATIONS:

YEAR: _____

Date	Location	(if female) Pup?	
_____	Año Nuevo	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No

Celebration of Conservation
WhaleTimes Virtual Team Member Activity

K-2nd grade

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Celebration of Conservation
WhaleTimes Virtual Team Member Activity

ELEPHANT SEAL TAG INFORMATION

YEAR: _____

Observed by: _____
TEAM ELEPHANT SEAL MEMBER

		(if female)
Date	Location	Pup?
_____	__Año Nuevo__	Yes No

Draw a picture of the elephant seal you observed

Student writes seal's ID number on the opposite side

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ELEPHANT SEAL TAG INFORMATION

YEAR: _____

Observed by: _____

TEAM ELEPHANT SEAL MEMBER

Date	Location	(if female) Pup?	
_____	___Año Nuevo___	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No
_____	_____	Yes	No

Draw a picture of the elephant seal you observed

Student writes seal's ID number on the opposite side