



University of
St Andrews

Participant Information

Collection, storage and analysis of citizen-provided data on tagged marine mammals

Debbie Russell

What is the study about?

We invite you to submit information regarding sightings or recovery of seal tags. The Sea Mammal Research Unit mark seals or deploy flipper tag to identify individual seals. Sightings of such seals or recovery of these tags help us estimate seal survival and movement. Some other research Institutes and rehabilitation centres also deploy flipper tags. We also deploy electronic devices on seals which provide us with location and activity data; these data are used for various purposes such as to inform marine spatial planning. These are superglued, typically onto the back of the neck, and fall off during the annual moult. Most data on these tags are transmitted to us remotely but some tags store additional data and thus we try and recover these where possible.

Do I have to take part?

This information sheet has been written to help you decide if and what information you would like to submit. If you do decide to take part you will be free to withdraw your data in the subsequent 24 hours, without providing a reason, and with no negative consequences.

What would I be required to do?

Submit tag sightings or recoveries, answering up to 25 optional questions (e.g. location, seal condition, tag number, media (photographs)). Providing your own details (name, phone, email) is optional.

Are there any risks associated with taking part?

Your participation is voluntary and any sightings are made entirely at your own risk.

Informed consent

It is important that you are able to give your informed consent before taking part in this study and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions in relation to the research before you provide your consent.

Reward

Due to the importance of the data on some of the electronic devices, there may be a reward for its return (collection, if agreed by you, would be arranged by SMRU).

What information about me or recordings of me ('my data') will you be collecting?

You can provide your name and contact details (email address/ phone number). Providing this information is optional and may be used in four scenarios (1) to clarify details about the sighting, (2) to provide you with information about the individual seal or institutes that may have deployed the tag, (3) For communication with regards to potential recovery of an electronic tag (optional); recovery may involve provision of your address, and for a reward, provision of bank details, (4) For communication (and associated accreditation purposes) regarding the potential for use of your media files in SMRU publications (optional). University of St Andrews will not use your contact details for any other purpose than the above.

How will my data be securely stored, who will have access to it?

- Initially your data will be stored in a **FULLY IDENTIFIABLE** form, which means that your data will be identifiable as yours. Your data will be stored on a University server and dedicated email account, and only people directly involved with the project will be able to access it.
- Following the actioning of the appropriate scenarios, all personal information held by the University of St Andrews will be deleted.
- The sightings data then be stored in an **ANONYMISED** form, which means that elements of the data submitted by you will be edited or deleted such that no-one, including the researchers, could use any reasonably available means to identify you from those data. Elements of data that identify you will then be permanently deleted. The remaining data will be stored, as described and may be used for a variety of research purposes, which could include publication.
- This is an ongoing, long term study with no planned end date.

Will my participation be confidential?

Yes, your participation will only be known to the project team, and if agreed by yourself (via email), others under scenarios 3 and 4 above.

Use of your personal data and data protection rights

The University of St Andrews (the 'Data Controller') is bound by the UK 2018 Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which require a lawful basis for all processing of personal data (in this case it is the 'performance of a task carried out in the public interest' – namely, for research purposes) and an additional lawful basis for processing personal data containing special characteristics (in this case it is 'public interest research'). You have a range of rights under data protection legislation. For more information on data protection legislation and your rights visit <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/terms/data-protection/rights/>. For any queries, email dataprot@st-andrews.ac.uk.

After 24 hours, you will be unable to withdraw your sightings data as after this period an anonymised version may have been catalogued and have been shared.

Ethical Approvals

This research proposal has been scrutinised and subsequently granted ethical approval by the University of St Andrews Teaching and Research Ethics Committee.

What should I do if I have concerns about this study?

In the first instance, you are encouraged to raise your concerns with the researcher. However, if you do not feel comfortable doing so, then you should contact the School Ethics Contact (contact details below). A full outline of the procedures governed by the University Teaching and Research Ethics Committee is available at <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/research/integrity-ethics/humans/ethical-guidance/complaints/>.

Contact details

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