

WHEN YOU FIND AN ANIMAL AT RISK WHAT TO DO?

INFORMATION

Please, follow the instructions of this guide if you find any of these stranded (marine animals in distress that are found ashore or in open waters) or injured animals in the wild.

In all situations regarding the stranding of a wild animal (including others not mentioned in this document - e.g. birds), **local authorities and/or Wildlife Support teams should be contacted immediately** (contacts on this guide).

ATTENTION: You should never put yourself or others at risk. Although weak, these are wild animals that, when scared, can react aggressively to defend themselves. Should you need to handle an animal, and if possible, wear gloves and mask as protection.

DOLPHINS

Avoid any noise, physical contact or other disturbing stimuli.

Protect the animal from the wind and the sun.

Always keep the dolphin's body wet, avoiding the blowhole.



If the dolphin is in the water, maintain the beak in the direction of the waves, keeping the blowhole out of the water.

If the dolphin is stranded on land:

- make sure the animal's body is covered with wet towels. Do not cover the blowhole
- dig small holes in the sand in order to keep the flippers in their natural

position.

Avoid all physical contact with the mouth and caudal fin. As a wild animal, it can react aggressively if scared.

Strandings of mother-calf pair

- keep mother and calf in auditory and visual contact at all times;
- if the dolphins need to be moved (e.g. risk of clashing against rocks), avoid separating the mother from the calf;
- avoid handling the calf. It will be particularly susceptible to stress;
- implement the recommendations for live dolphins, reducing each and every disturbance.

Mass strandings (two or more animals that stranded ashore alive, except mother-calf pair):

- describe the situation to the authorities with the most detailed level (number of animals, distribution on the beach, injuries, presence of calves);
- Provide aid only to live animals;
- implement the recommendations for live dolphins, reducing each and every disturbance.

SEALS

Avoid any noise or other disturbing stimuli.

Do not try to move the animal.



Avoid any kind of contact (these animals can be aggressive, when scared. They can move towards after people and bite, being potentially dangerous due to their mobility).

On the beach, and when there is no risk for the people involved or to the animal: block its access to the sea (you may use beach furniture).

On land, and if it's too hot, protect the animal from the sun, always keeping it wet.

RIVER OTTERS

Avoid any noise or other disturbing stimuli.

Avoid any kind of physical contact. These animals can be aggressive.

Don't try to feed the otter. It could be harmful for its welfare.

If it is one or more cubs that are not in a risky situation, as the risk of getting run over, don't try to move them and keep a safe distance (the mother could be nearby waiting and watching the cubs).



SEA TURTLES

Avoid any noise, physical contact or other disturbing stimuli;

Protect the animal from the wind and the sun;

Keep the sea turtles' body always wet;



On a hot day, if possible, cover the sea turtles' body with towels and keep them wet. Avoid covering the nostrils;

Don't try to move the animal;

Avoid all physical contact with the mouth. Being a wild animal, it can react aggressively in order to protect itself (e.g. it may bite).

If the sea turtle is in the water, make sure it can come to the surface to breathe.

THE ROLE OF ZOOMARINE

In the absence of a physical structure in Portugal with specialized professionals dedicated to the rehabilitation of marine fauna, Zoomarine decided it was its ethical duty to open, in 2002, the first Rehabilitation Centre for Marine Species in Portugal – Zoomarine's Porto d'Abrigo.

Since then, and in a tight collaboration with the Portuguese Authorities, a multidisciplinary team is dedicated to the marine and aquatic species rescue, rehabilitation and release to the wild.



CONTACTS

24 hours/day, 365 days/year

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ABRIGOS

Marine Mammal
Support Network

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