

Sea Lions



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Why place sea cameras on sea lions? It is an innovative way of mapping the seabed in waters near <u>Adelaide</u>, <u>Australia</u>; since exploring the ocean's depths would otherwise require the use of remotely operated underwater vehicles, which could be cost prohibitive and poorly suited to certain weather conditions; let alone uncertain oceanic terrains, that are likely to be traversed.



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Australian sea lion range

As part of a new study, researchers decided to attach tiny recording devices on a number of female sea lions and then tracked their movements using GPS. As they returned to land to nurse their newborns, between two and ten days therafter, the researchers retrieved the cameras and recovered around 89 hours of useable footage that actually covered about 350 miles of seabed.



Parts of the seabed the cameras covered had never been mapped before; according to at least one of the researchers. Some footage was awe-inspiring, as sea lions were seen flipping over rocks to root out octopi (octopods or octopuses), teaching their newborns how to efficiently forage for food. Another benefit derived from retrieving this valuable footage includes identifying sea lion habitats. Future discoveries may improve the quality of life for sea lions, as a species, and even provide useful data for conservationists.

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