



Caithness Seal Rehab & Release

Newsletter 2025



Issue No.2

ALL ABOUT US

Caithness Seal Rehab & Release officially opened the hospital doors for admittance on the 1st November 2022. We had our first rescued seal pup in on the 8th November 2022. Since then, we have been really busy.

In the winter of 2022, we admitted 14 grey seal pups. In the summer of 2023, we admitted six common seal pups and then in the winter we admitted 21 grey seal pups.

In the summer of 2024, we admitted 16 common seal pups, almost tripling in numbers from the year before. Then 21 grey seal pups in the winter season.

In total we have rescued 78 seal pups and two juveniles. We have released 69 pups and two juveniles. Unfortunately losing nine pups between 2022 and 2025. Our success rate in rehabilitating and releasing seal pups and juveniles is 90%.

How the hospital has improved since 2022

Since 2022 we have made various changes to the hospital improving the accommodation for the seal pups, making the ICU easier to keep hygienic and bug free. Improving the available space for socialization, improving the area around our first pool and adding a second pool. We have also built a new quarantine building and our food preparation room is fantastic. All this would not have been possible without the funding from Dounreay Community Fund, Animal Friends Pet Insurance, Stroupster Community Fund and the Aviva Community Fund. We would also like to thank the Jean Sainsbury Animal Welfare Trust for their grant towards fish for the seals.





MACKEREL

NUTRITIONAL FACTS PER 100G

PRINCIPLE	VITAMINS	MINERALS
Energy: 205 Kcal	Vitamin D3: 40%	Selenium: 63%
Carbohydrates: 0g	Vitamin B12: 145%	Phosphorus: 22%
Protein: 18.7g	Vitamin B6: 20%	Magnesium: 19%
Total Fat: 13.9g	Vitamin A: 3%	Potassium: 9%

Recommended Dietary Allowance

Mackerel for our fish soup and chunks.
And Herring given as whole fish

THE HOSPITAL RUNNING COSTS



Veterinary grade Cod Liver Oil



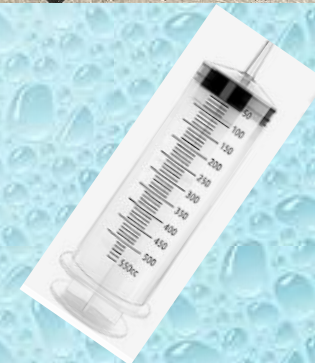
Pinniped multi vitamins and minerals



Lactose free milk formula



Electrolytes



Fish

Approximately
£9984.00 per
year

Veterinary
fees

Approximately
£6576.00 per year

Consumables

Paddling pools, tubs,
teddies, syringes etc.
Approximately £4000.00
per year

THE HOSPITAL

The food prep room



This is where we prepare the food for the pups.

We have a large freezer that can store half a tonne of fish.

All stainless-steel work tops so the surfaces are easy to keep clean and hygienic.

A washing machine and tumble drier for the laundry.

A stainless-steel cabinet for storing all first aid essentials for the seal pups.

A large white board. This is where all feeding regimes are written together with any medication needed.



OUR INTENSIVE CARE UNIT



Our intensive care unit has hospital grade vinyl flooring and splash back boards that are easy to keep clean and hygienic.



This is where the sick or injured are moved to once they have done their quarantine stay for the first 10-14 days after being admitted.



There are heat lamps and heat mats in each pen, if needed.



Weighing scales to weigh pups when they are first admitted and for monitoring their weight throughout their stay.



This is a quiet, stress-free environment to facilitate rest and recovery.



They are monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

THE NURSERY



The nursery is step two in the process to release. This is where the healthy pups come once they have gained a bit of weight

In here they may be separated into pens with their own paddling pool.

In recent years, we do not pen this area, we let them socialize as a group.



The common pups prefer this as they are very social seals.

The greys have also preferred this to being penned up separately.

Paddling pools are placed around the room.

And each seal picks their pool. It tends to stay that way; they never seem to swap pools.

They are fed whole herring and learn how to eat whole fish from their room mates

Depending on how many are in the group, they are also given access to the big pool.

POOL 1



This is where the seals learn to swim.

They learn how to dive, hold their breathe and return to the surface.

How to “bottle” when its time to sleep.

They develop the muscles they need for swimming and for hauling out.

They learn how to dive and catch fish.

How to eat fish independently in deeper water.

It's a great play area as well. They love their rings & balls.

Hauling out on the mini trampoline beside the pool is their favourite activity





QUARANTINE BUILDING & POOL 2

This is our newly built quarantine building with its own swimming pool. Each pen has its own heat mat and heat lamp, if needed.

When a pup first arrives, it will spend the next 10-14 days in quarantine so we can make sure they are not carrying or have any

bugs that might affect the other pups. Once clear they will move over to the ICU. Pups are monitored 24 hours a day, seven days

a week. One to two persons will manage the cleanliness of the building and tend to each seal pup. These people will not enter

any other building during their shift.

BLAIR DRUMMOND SAFARI AND ADVENTURE PARK

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Linking up for local wildlife: Blair Drummond Safari Park and Caithness Seal Rehab & Release.

At Blair Drummond Safari Park, conservation isn't just something we talk about, it's something we do every day. Through our link to the wild initiative, we support small, grassroots projects that protect animals and their habitats – both here in Scotland and around the world. Since launching in 2014, Link to the Wild has raised over £242,000 for conservation, with every penny going directly to the charities we support.

Based in the heart of Scotland, Blair Drummond Safari Park has been home to iconic species like lions and giraffes since 1970. Today we welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, offering unforgettable experiences while championing conservation.

This year we're proud to begin a new partnership with Caithness Seal Rehab & Release. Chosen by our sea lion team, this brilliant Scottish charity stood out for its hands-on work rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing injured or orphaned seal pups along the coastline.

Led by Jennifer Carpenter, our sea lion team leader, the team have created a dedicated link to the wild display in their area of the park. The board tracks how many seals have been rescued, rehabilitated and released so far this year, and shows how close the team are to reaching their fundraising target of £3,100. It also shares key information about the project and the people who run it – helping visitors connect with the impact of their support.

The sea lion team also highlight the work of Caithness Seal Rehab & Release in their twice daily sea lion training demonstrations. These engaging and educational sessions are a brilliant way for visitors to learn more about the charity, and the team always stick around afterwards to answer questions and chat to guests about the project.

“We're really proud to support Caithness Seal rehab & Release” says Jen. “It's a brilliant local charity doing vital work for Scotland's marine wildlife, and it's been incredibly rewarding to bring their story to life for our visitors. The support we've had so far has been amazing – people really connect with the seals journey and want to be part of it.

As well as raising funds, we promote all our links to the wild projects through daily talks, displays and demonstrations across the park. Our goal is to inspire families to care about wildlife – and to show that even small actions can lead to big change.

We're excited to see how this new collaboration with Caithness Seal Rehab & Release grows – and proud to be playing a part in giving Scotland's seals a second chance.



The first seal pup I would like to talk about is “Blossom”. If there ever was a will to live, she had it. A 10kg grey seal pup that came in with severe head trauma. She was unable to see or hear. She couldn't lift her head because she was so weak. Pneumonia didn't help either. I honestly did not think she would make it. It took a lot of time and patience. Time passed by and eventually she could lift her head and feed herself. Her sight came back gradually, as did her hearing. She never gave up, no matter how tough things got. It was tough, but like her, I was never going to give up on her.

She was released healthy and fat to live a long and happy life out at sea.

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”

My second story is about “Faith” A tiny grey seal pup with the most special zest for life. Faith came in with a bilateral cleft lip, missing a tiny section of his upper front jaw. He was an amazing animal, nothing got him down, he was dealt the cards he was given and he just got on with life being a merry, mischievous seal pup. I always thought this would be a challenge, but Faith showed me that you just need to get on with things.

I wondered how he might feed himself; would he be able to? Would he be able to dive and catch fish to eat? Faith proved that by being resilient, adaptable and just loving life, you can do anything. He was released after passing every goal post. May he swim happy and free.

“Resilience is knowing that you are the only one that has the power and the responsibility to pick yourself up.”

AMAZING AND INSPIRING SEAL PUP STORIES....



SOME OF OUR PUPS



Contact Details

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE A SEAL PUP CAITHNESS SEAL REHAB & RELEASE



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE (AT LEAST 100 METERS)

KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEASH NO MATTER HOW GOOD ITS RECALL IS.

Do not touch, move, or pick up the seal pup. When your scent is left on the pup, its mother will abandon it. **Do not put or chase the pup back into the water.**

Do not take a seal selfie. Do not feed them. Do not follow others bad behaviour, discourage it. Phone us straight away. **It is an offence to disturb a seal in its natural habitat.**

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Message us on
Facebook or
Facebook
Messenger

**Do not message us
on messenger or
Facebook if you have
concerns about a seal
pup, ring us, if we do
not answer leave a
text message.**

Registered Charity Number: SC052004

Animal Welfare Establishment License: MAU 015338

Company Number: CS005919