

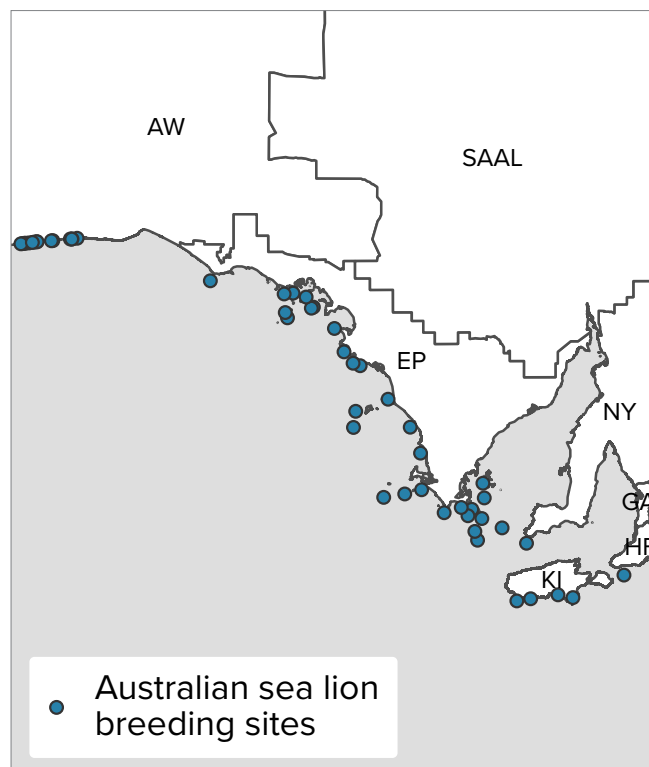
Australian sea lion *Neophoca cinerea*

Status National (EPBC Act): Endangered | State (NPW Act SA): Vulnerable

The many small, isolated and declining populations of Australian sea lion present challenges to improving the population trends of this nationally endangered and endemic species.

Distribution and habitat

The Australian sea lion is endemic and restricted to South Australia and Western Australia. Breeding and haul-out sites largely occur on offshore islands, but a small number of mainland sites at the base of large cliffs are also used. Sea lions are restricted to continental shelf waters and forage on the sea bed utilising a range of benthic habitats.



Population trend

Nationally Australian sea lions have declined more than 60% over the last 40 years. Most of the species' population (more than 80%) occurs in South Australia where its abundance has declined by almost 70% over the last 40 years (or 2.6% per year). There is marked variation in population trends among breeding sites (for example, pup production trends for Seal Bay (Kangaroo Island) and The Pages are presented in the figure showing the 2 year moving average).

Threats to the species

Key threats include bycatch in fisheries, entanglement in marine debris, disease, pollution, and climate change.

What is being done?

Research and monitoring programs have underpinned key management measures to reduce fishing and aquaculture related impacts. The Australian sea lion is the only marine mammal included in the Australian Government's 110 priority species in its Threatened Species Action Plan 2022–2032. South Australia has taken a lead role in establishing a National Recovery Team for the species which will play an important role in shaping and implementing recovery actions over the next decade.

