
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE DESIGNATION OF THE HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL AS THE
STATE MAMMAL OF HAWAII.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaiian monk seal
2 (Monachus schauinslandi) is in crisis as the population is in a
3 decline that has lasted 20 years so that now only around 1,200
4 monk seals remain. Scientific modeling predicts the species'
5 population will fall below 1,000 animals in the next five years.
6 Like the extinct Caribbean monk seal and the critically
7 endangered Mediterranean monk seal, the Hawaiian monk seal is
8 headed to extinction if urgent action is not taken.

9 The Hawaiian monk seal was listed as an endangered species
10 pursuant to the Endangered Species Act on November 23, 1976, and
11 remains listed as endangered. The species has a recovery
12 priority number of one, based on the high magnitude of threats,
13 the high recovery potential, and the potential for economic
14 conflicts while implementing recovery actions.

15 The Hawaiian monk seal has the distinction of being the
16 only endangered marine mammal whose entire range, historically
17 and currently, is within the United States. The majority of the



1 population of Hawaiian monk seals is now located in the
2 Northwestern Hawaiian Islands with six main breeding sub-
3 populations. The species is also found in lower numbers in the
4 main Hawaiian Islands where the population's size and range both
5 appear to be expanding.

6 For more than two decades, great effort has been made to
7 manage, study, and recover the Hawaiian monk seal. The species'
8 status would undoubtedly have been worse but for these actions.
9 However, actions to date have not been sufficient to result in a
10 recovering population, with significant threats still facing
11 this species. In the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, threats
12 include food limitation, entanglement in marine debris, shark
13 predation, and male aggression. In the main Hawaiian Islands,
14 human disturbance, habitat loss, infectious disease, and fishery
15 interactions serve as the main threats to this species.

16 The purpose of this Act is to make the Hawaiian monk seal
17 (Monachus schauinslandi) the official state mammal of Hawaii.

18 SECTION 2. Chapter 5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
19 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
20 read as follows:



1 "§5- State mammal. The Hawaiian monk seal (Monachus
2 schauinslandi), also known as the 'Ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua, is
3 established and designated as the official mammal of the State."

4 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



Report Title:

Hawaiian Monk Seal

Description:

Designates the Hawaiian monk seal as the state mammal of Hawaii.
(HB2626 HD1)

