



**MAMMALS** <http://www.peoriazoo.org/mammals.html>

### California Sea Lion

*Zalophus californianus californianus*

**Peoria Zoo Exhibit** **Patio Pool**

<http://www.peoriazoo.org/exhibits.html>

**Habitat:** Coasts, rarely venture more than 10 miles out to sea

**Range:** West coast of North America from British Columbia south to Baja California and the Sea of Cortez.  
A subspecies resides in the Galapagos Islands.

**Activity Cycle:** Active all times of the day

**Size:** Males average between 600-800 pounds but can weigh up to 1000 pounds. Females weigh 200 pounds and up.  
Males can be up to 8 feet long and females are around 6 feet long.

**Social Structure:** California Sea lions are sociable and live and breed in large colonies that may number in the thousands.  
Males establish harems of females and their young which they protect. Females are ready to breed again 3 weeks after giving birth.

**Distinguishing Features:** Sea lions have external ear flaps (seals do not) and their back flippers are divided making them more mobile on land (seals have one back flipper, making movement on land more awkward). There is a large size difference between males and females. They are mostly brown in color and covered in short waterproof fur.

**Diet:** Octopus, squid, and fish

**Life Span:** 15-25 years

### **Did you know?**

**Sea lions can close their ears and nostrils when underwater.**