

The National Trust announces Farne Islands seal pups found in Holland

Submitted by: pr-sending-enterprises

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The National Trust has announced that three young grey seal pups born on the National Trust's Farne Islands off the Northumberland coast have been discovered hundreds of miles away on a Dutch beach.

The first of the Farne Island three

(http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-global/w-news/w-latest_news/w-news-seal-pups-make-incredible-journey-and-survive) was found on the 13 December 2010 and was less than three weeks old when it made the 350 mile journey. After being found by a member of the public it was taken to a seal rescue centre in Holland.

Pups two and three were found on the 6 and 7 January 2011 and were taken to the same centre. All of the seal pups are recovering well and will be released back into the wild once they have put on enough weight; and they could potentially return home to the Farne Islands or another UK colony.

David Steel, National Trust head warden for the Farne Islands, said: "This is a remarkable tale of determination and survival in the turbulent waters of the North Sea. For three young grey seal pups to make it through such an ordeal is amazing."

The Farne Islands is the only place in the UK to use coloured dye to tag the newly born seals – most pup census work at other sites is carried out by aerial surveys.

The colours are rotated during every colony count; two of the seals had blue dye putting their birth around 30 November, and the third pup had yellow dye, putting its birth date at around mid November.

Home to one of the largest grey seal colonies in England the Islands are also famous for the hundred thousand seabirds including puffins. In 2008 otter prints were discovered on Brownsman Island (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-farnes>) after the mammal braved the swirls and tides of the area around the Farne Islands.

David Steel added: "The two pups with the blue dye would have still been dependent on their parents and the third pup would have only just gained its independence when they began their mammoth journey. Young pups have been discovered along the Northumberland coastline but this is a real rarity."

Dr Bernie McConnell from the Sea Mammal Research Centre at the University of St Andrews, said: "From our own survey work it appears that grey seal pups spend a significant part of their first year exploring, often to places hundreds of miles away."

About the National Trust:

The National Trust is one of the most important nature conservation organisations in Europe with over 1,000 sites covering 250,000 hectares, including coastal sites, woodland and upland areas; many of which are rich in wildlife. All 17 species of UK bat have been recorded as roosting or breeding on National Trust land and 96 per cent of all resident UK butterflies can be found on National Trust land. Wicken

Fen in Cambridgeshire is its most species rich site and 93 per cent of its land has been surveyed for its nature conservation importance.

The National Trust offers many days out ideas (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-vh/w-daysout.htm>) including coastal walks

(http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-chl/w-countryside_environment/w-coastline/w-seabritain-coastal_walks.htm), bike trails, rainy day activities and coast walks

(http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-chl/w-countryside_environment/w-coastline/w-seabritain-coastal_walks.htm).

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