

35,000 walrus come ashore in northwest Alaska

September 30 2014, by Dan Joling

Pacific walrus looking for places to rest in the absence of sea ice are coming to shore in record numbers on Alaska's northwest coast.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration confirms an estimated 35,000 walrus were photographed Saturday near Point Lay. That's about 700 miles northwest of Anchorage.

The enormous gathering was spotted during NOAA's annual arctic marine mammal aerial survey.

The gathering of walrus on shore is a phenomenon that has accompanied the loss of summer [sea ice](#) as the climate has warmed.

Walrus dive from sea ice to feed on snails, clams and worms on the ocean floor.

In recent years, walrus have come ashore as sea ice has receded north beyond [shallow water](#) and into parts of the Arctic Ocean where the water can be 2 miles deep.

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Citation: 35,000 walrus come ashore in northwest Alaska (2014, September 30) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-09-walrus-ashore-northwest-alaska.html>

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