

New research provides insights on seal species

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Conservation and management efforts rely on clear definitions of populations, subspecies, and species.

A new study uses [digital imaging](#), state-of-the-art genetic analyses, archives of historical literature, and other methods to resolve the origin and whereabouts of a more than 200 year old grey seal specimen held in the collections of the Natural History Museum of Denmark, and to prove that this was the lost type specimen of the species.

These and similar methods may be applied to identify, describe, and study existing, lost, and novel specimens.

"We were quite enthusiastic when we began to realize the true origin of the specimen, and overly excited when the use of novel and old-fashioned techniques allowed us to piece the puzzle together," said Dr. Morten Tange Olsen, co-author of the *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society* study.

More information: Morten Tange Olsen et al, The forgotten type specimen of the grey seal [(Fabricius, 1791)] from the island of Amager, Denmark, *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/zoj.12426](#)

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