

Nature's Web

Trial Issue

Autumn 2005

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Seafood Recipe
Migrating Birds
Whales
Hibernation
Autumn Leaves
Life as an
Underwater
Photographer
Environmental
Work in Your School
Nature Experiments
More Information
Foreign
Correspondent's
Report
Crabs Up Close
Fun Page
Conservation
& Recycling
Our Place In Space
Nature's Calendar for
Autumn 2005

New Arrivals!

It's that time of year again when seal pups are a common sight around the secluded areas of our coast.

There are two main types of seals around Ireland, the grey seal and the common seal. Grey seal pups are born from September to October and are covered in white fur to keep them warm. They weigh about 15kg at birth but after about 2-3 weeks of drinking their mothers fatty milk they can weigh as much as 45kg. Around this time the pups begin to lose their fur and gradually spend more time in the water. The mothers will stay with them for a few weeks until they are strong enough to look after themselves. Common seal pups are born in the summer and lose their fur before they are born. Their skin is a dark shade of grey at birth and they learn to swim almost immediately.

Never approach a seal pup if you see one alone on a beach. Mother seals rarely abandon or travel far from their pups and will keep a watchful eye even when they are in the water. If you get too close the mother seal may attack to defend her young and the pup may bite you or become distressed and may injure itself getting away from you.

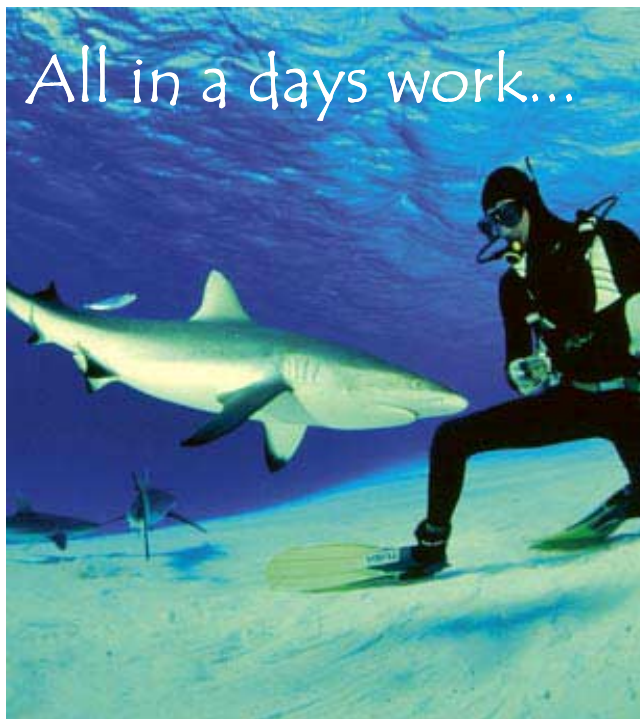


Grey Seal Pup



Adult Grey Seal

All in a days work...



Read about life as an Underwater Photographer with **Pete Atkinson**. He spent some time working at Sherkin Island Marine Station and then sailed the Pacific Ocean taking photographs of creatures like this Reef Shark. He now lives and works in Australia. In each issue we hope to introduce you to someone that has made the environment a part of their every day life.

See page 7...

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