



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
INFORMATION SERVICE

*Office file  
8/1/52*

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release to PM's, FRIDAY, AUGUST 1, 1952

PRIBILOF ISLANDS FUR-SEAL TAKE FOR 1952 ANNOUNCED

A total of 63,870 fur-seal skins was taken this year in the Government-administered sealing operations on Alaska's Pribilof Islands, Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman announced today.

The annual sealing operations which are conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service began on June 20 and were terminated on July 27.

The fur-seal industry on the Pribilofs is a responsibility of the United States Government but 20 per cent of the 1952 take will be delivered to the Canadian Government under the terms of the Provisional Fur-Seal Agreement of 1942 with Canada.

This year's yield was 3,131 skins greater than last year. Pelts are obtained chiefly from the three-year-old males.

Service officials on the Pribilofs have advised Service Director Albert M. Day that the remaining animals in the three-year-old class and the carryover of older males "assure ample reserve stock for the herd."

This year, for the first time, a new beaming machine for the mechanical blubbering of the seal skins was successfully operated on the islands. Also, a new concrete paddle tank for brine curing the skins was reported to have operated successfully. These developments, according to Director Day, are aimed at streamlining the various operations required to prepare the skins for shipment to St. Louis for dressing and dyeing by the Fouke Fur Company—Government agents in the processing and selling of the sealskins.

Approximately 80 per cent of the world's fur seals come to the Pribilof Islands to breed each summer. During the winter they range southward as far as southern California. Pelagic sealing—the killing of seals while they are at sea—is prohibited by an international agreement between Canada and the United States. At one time pelagic sealing nearly brought about the extinction of these animals.

X X X