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*U.S. rates apply to citizens of Canada and Mexico.

NOTE: \$48 of membership dues goes toward a print subscription to *The American Biology Teacher*, for each year joined, except spouse members, in which case only the sponsoring active member receives a subscription to be shared by the two persons.

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NABT accepts checks drawn on U.S. banks, international money orders (payable to NABT), major credit cards, purchase orders, or join online at www.nabt.org. Membership payments are non-refundable and all sales are final.

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The September BioMystery Answer



Our BioMystery is the southern elephant seal (*Mirounga leonine*), the largest seal alive. The image was taken on the beach of South Georgia, a beautiful and rugged island with mountains that rise dramatically from the sea, one of the subantarctic islands that are home to these massive animals. Males can reach 4.5 m in length and weigh 4000 kg; females are typically 2.8 m long and weigh 900 kg. The "elephant" in their name comes from their bulbous nose, best seen in profile on mature bull seals.

Pups are born in mid-October on beaches already occupied by bull seals. The latter establish territories by dominance displays, as shown by the two adolescent males in the photo on the right. The dominant bulls or "beachmasters" may have harems of 30–50 cows. Fortunately, their territorial squabbles are completed by December, when groups of these molting giants lie side by side, feeding their pups, as the weight of both males and females slowly decreases during a period of fasting.

All photographs by W.F. McComas on Gold Beach, South Georgia Island