

NMFS No: E02-23	Date First Observed Entangled: 1/20/2023
Location First Observed Entangled: 19.0 NM southeast of St. Simons Island, GA	Latitude/Longitude First Observed Entangled: 31° 00.9' N, 81° 01.9' W
Initial Movement (Anchored/Free): Free-swimming	Status: Partial disentanglement – Gear shed
Sighting prior to entanglement: 8/08/2022	Re-sightings Post-entanglement: 3/10/2023
Whale Biology: Live right whale #3812, “Nimbus”, adult male	
NMFS Serious Injury/Mortality Determination: TBD	

Event Description:
<p>1/20/2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Florida aerial survey team located, reported, and stood by the whale while a multi-agency team of responders from Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR), Florida Fish & Wildlife Research Institute, and NOAA Fisheries began disentanglement efforts. Initially attaching a telemetry buoy in case of an evasive whale or lack of daylight, the team managed to remove and recover over 300 feet of heavy gauge line leaving the whale with a relatively short amount of lines trailing from the mouth. <p>6/10/2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New England Aquarium located the whale south of Martha’s Vineyard, MA gear free.

Description of Gear on Whale as Reported:	
During Initial Sighting: Line exiting both sides of the mouth. One line exiting the right side of the mouth consisted of one line trailing hundreds of feet behind the whale, with another line exiting the same side forming a large trailing loop that ended near the hip. A single line also trailed from the left side of the mouth and trailed an unknown distance.	Subsequent Descriptions: Whale is gear free.

Description of Wounds/Condition:	
During Initial Sighting: Significant entanglement abrasion along the mouth line, peduncle, and fluke with various states of healing or active wounds. Overall, the animal's body condition was okay but not ideal.	Subsequent Descriptions: None.

FISHERY INTERACTION GEAR ANALYSIS			
NMFS No.	E02-23	Gear Recovered (y/n)	Yes
Date Set	Unknown	Date Lost	Unknown
Line Diameter	5/8" and 11/16"	Gear Part	Buoy line
Fishery Mark Recovered/Documented	Yes	Fishery Mark Origin and Color	Canadian orange and yellow
Target Species	Snow crab	Location of set	Unknown
Gear Type	Canadian snow crab – Area 12		
<u>Gear Description:</u>	<p>Just over 62 fathoms of line was recovered. 49 fathoms of line was 5/8" float line with a red tracer which transitioned to 11.5 fathoms of 11/16" beaded lead sink line with a black tracer. The transition from float line to sink is seamless with no knots or splices. An 8 foot trap bridle led from the end of the green float line with rust marks indicating the location of trap attachment.</p> <p>A green Gear Alert Marker was approximately 5.5 fathoms from the trap bridle. Three orange and yellow fishery identification marks were identified in the line. The 1st mark from the trap bridle was approximately 100 feet up the line and was just over 6 inches in length. The second fishery identification mark was ~79 feet from the 1st and about a foot in size. The third mark was ~91 feet from the second and about 10 inches in size. All the fishery identification marks were in various states of unraveling from the main line so exact size estimates were difficult.</p>		
<u>Comments:</u>	<p>Canadian DFO was consulted with this analysis and the marks are consistent with Canadian Snow Crab – Area 12 in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. No known U.S. fishery has a similar color schemed fishery identification mark. The legal season for Canadian snow crab in 2022 was from April 13 to June 30.</p> <p>Canadian DFO analysis can be found here.</p>		
<u>Conclusions:</u>	Whale was entangled in the buoy line of a Canadian snow crab trap from Area 12 of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.		

Gear Images



E02-23 image – Overall recovered gear



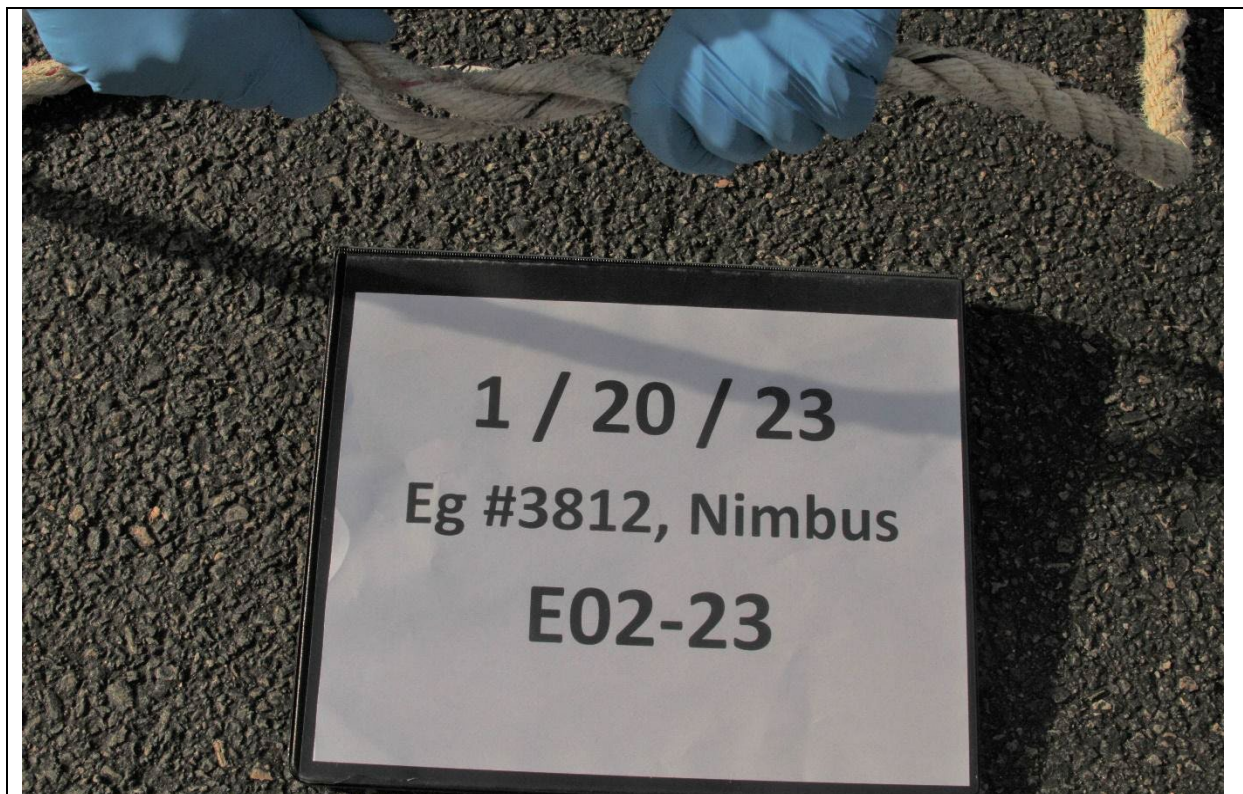
E02-23 image – Orange and yellow fishery identification marks



E02-23 image – Gear alert marker



E02-23 image – trap bridle



E02-23 image – Transition from float line (left side) to sink line



E02-23 image – Beaded lead in sink line