



The grey seal pup, now named 'Merle', lay weak and unable to move on the shore of Oban Bay but is now being nursed back to health.

Stranded on the George St shore

OBAN Bay had an unusual visitor in distress recently when a grey seal pup was found stranded on the shore.

The seal, named Merle by her rescuers, was spotted swimming out of the bay and crawling onto the shore close to the George Street slipway.

She is now being nursed back to health at the Scottish Seaife Sanctuary, near Barcaldine, and is expected to be released back into the wild in mid-March.

The rare sight of a pup lying stranded on the shore attracted a number of on-lookers.

Lorinda Madden was one of the passers-by who phoned the sealife sanctuary after spotting the pup.

'I was walking past the bay with two of my friends,' she said, 'when I saw the seal struggling to get out of the water. She didn't seem to be able to move its hind legs.'

Coastguard Iain MacKinnon responded to another call and taped off the slipway to prevent curious members of the public getting too close to the seal pup.

Mr MacKinnon said: 'In my 20 years with the coastguard here I have never seen a seal pup on the shore at the George Street slipway.'

'This pup came out of the water about 2pm and there was no sign of the mother.'