Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) reaches along one quarter of the central California coast, from seven miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge to Cambria in the south. Covering 6,094 square miles of water, the sanctuary extends from the high tide line to as far as 53 miles offshore, and includes a separate, offshore seamount. Known as the "Serengeti of the Sea," the sanctuary is home to 34 species of marine mammals, more than 180 species of seabirds and shorebirds, 525 species of fish, an abundance of invertebrates and algae, and 26 threatened or endangered species.

The sanctuary’s seafloor also holds historic and cultural treasures.

Research and Monitoring
Research and monitoring programs in the sanctuary evaluate the status and health of marine species, habitats and ecosystems, provide critical information to resource managers, and coordinate activities with the array of world-class research institutions in the region. With more than 30 research institutions, the greater Monterey Bay community has emerged as a global leader in marine science. The information gained from the sanctuary research program is used to support ecosystem management decisions as well as education programs. Comprehensive, long-term monitoring is a fundamental element of resource management and protection. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Research Program monitors ecosystem resources through SIMoN, the Sanctuary Integrated Monitoring Network, a long-term program that takes an ecosystem approach to identify and understand changes in the sanctuary. It provides resource managers with the information needed for effective decision-making and integrates ongoing efforts at the regional marine research institutions.

Education and Outreach
Education and outreach efforts help promote understanding, support, and participation in the protection and conservation of the sanctuary. A variety of means are used to enhance understanding and stewardship of this national treasure, ranging from sanctuary visitor centers and public events to volunteer and teacher education programs. The sanctuary is committed to promoting ocean literacy and conservation of MBNMS and the world’s ocean through its two interpretative centers, annual events and volunteer opportunities. Sanctuary programs are designed for educators and schools or for those interested in volunteering their time. Activities range from monitoring water quality and studying tide pools to interacting with sanctuary visitors.

Visitor Centers like the Exploration Center in Santa Cruz showcase sanctuary resources and help visitors make the connection between their activities and the health of the ocean.

http://montereybay.noaa.gov
The sanctuary offers exciting adventures, including kayaking, for everyone.

Southern sea otters spend hours grooming to keep their fur waterproof.

Exploring tide pools is a great way to see marine life without getting wet.

http://montereybay.noaa.gov/