



# NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

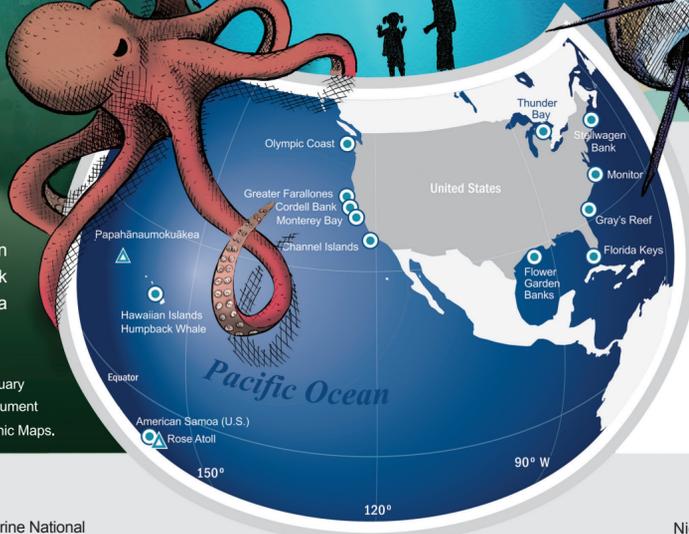
2016



**T**he Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 170,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The network includes a system of 13 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments.

- National Marine Sanctuary
- Marine National Monument

Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.



### Monterey Bay (Designation: September 1992)

Known as the "Serengeti of the Sea," Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary contains vast kelp forests, incredibly diverse habitats, near-shore deep-ocean environments and one of North America's largest underwater canyons.



### Channel Islands (Designation: September 1980)

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary contains a productive ecosystem and protects sensitive species, habitats, and shipwrecks and other maritime heritage artifacts.



### Thunder Bay (Designation: September 2000)

Nicknamed "Shipwreck Alley," Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary protects one of America's best-preserved and nationally-significant collections of shipwrecks.



### Stellwagen Bank (Designation: November 1992)

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary is one of the world's premiere whale watching destinations, a historically important fishing ground, and the resting place for significant shipwrecks that reveal our maritime past.



### Monitor (Designation: January 1975)

Designated as the nation's first national marine sanctuary, Monitor National Marine Sanctuary protects the wreck of the famed Civil War ironclad USS *Monitor*.



### Gray's Reef (Designation: January 1981)

Gray's Reef is Georgia's amazing underwater park. The natural live-bottom reef teems with marine life and is part of the endangered North Atlantic right whale's calving grounds. Loggerhead turtles rest at the reef, where scientists have identified more than 200 fish species.



### Florida Keys (Designation: November 1990)

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is home to the world's third-largest barrier coral reef, extensive seagrass beds, mangrove islands, and more than 6,000 species of marine life. Archaeological treasures such as shipwrecks, anchors, cannons and glassware represent the rich maritime history of the Keys.



### Flower Garden Banks (Designation: January 1992)

Home to manta rays, whale sharks, sea turtles and large coral heads, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary includes underwater communities sitting atop submerged mountains called salt domes that rise from the depths of the Gulf of Mexico.



### American Samoa (Designation: April 1986)

Located in the South Pacific and containing Rose Atoll Marine National Monument, National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa is the most remote sanctuary and the only true tropical reef in the National Marine Sanctuary System.



### Papahānaumokuākea (Designation: June 2006)

One of the largest fully protected conservation areas in the United States, Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was created to protect an exceptional array of natural and cultural resources. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site inscribed for both its outstanding natural and cultural heritage.



### Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale (Designation: November 1992)

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary protects the breeding, calving and nursing grounds used by the majority of humpback whales in the North Pacific.



### Olympic Coast (Designation: July 1994)

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary hosts one of North America's most productive marine ecosystems and spectacular undeveloped coastlines. The sanctuary also has a rich cultural and historical legacy, particularly for the contemporary cultures of the Quinault Nation and Makah, Quileute and Hoh Indian tribes.



### Greater Farallones (Designation: January 1981)

Encompassing highly productive marine habitats and home to diverse wildlife, Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary protects one of the most bountiful marine environments in the world.



### Cordell Bank (Designation: May 1989)

Cordell Bank rises from the soft sediments of the seafloor and provides a rocky habitat that is home to colorful and abundant invertebrates, algae and fishes. Plentiful food in these waters attracts mammals, seabirds and turtles from around the Pacific Ocean.



# WWW.SANCTUARIES.NOAA.GOV



# GET INTO YOUR NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES



## VISITING SANCTUARIES

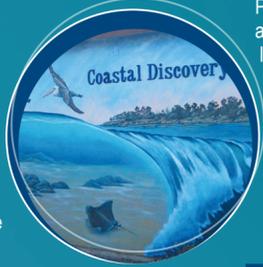
### WEST COAST

**1** SANCTUARY EXPLORATION CENTER  
LOCATION: Santa Cruz, California

Located just steps from the beach, the Exploration Center is a highlight of any visit to Santa Cruz.

**2** COASTAL DISCOVERY CENTER  
LOCATION: San Simeon, California

Enjoy the beautiful view of San Simeon Bay while you visit the Coastal Discovery Center.



**3** GREATER FARALLONES VISITOR CENTER  
LOCATION: San Francisco, California

Located in a historic Coast Guard station at the mouth of San Francisco Bay, the center offers a stunning view of the Golden Gate Bridge and a wealth of educational resources about wildlife and conservation.



**4** OLYMPIC COAST DISCOVERY CENTER  
LOCATION: Port Angeles, Washington

Plan your hikes or kayak trips along the coast, discover local marine life, and learn about the sanctuary's rich history.



**5** CHANNEL ISLANDS BOATING CENTER  
LOCATION: Oxnard, California

Visit the Channel Islands Boating Center to enjoy engaging and interactive exhibits that feature Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

### GREAT LAKES

**6** GREAT LAKES MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER  
LOCATION: Alpena, Michigan

Explore a full-size replica of a shipwrecked Great Lakes schooner and walk along the waterfront Maritime Heritage Trail.



### PACIFIC ISLANDS

**7** MOKUPĀPAPA DISCOVERY CENTER  
LOCATION: Hilo, Hawai'i

Learn about Hawai'i's most remote and spectacular coral reefs at the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center in Hilo.



**8** HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE VISITOR CENTER  
LOCATION: Kihei, Maui, Hawai'i

Learn about Hawai'i's diverse marine life and rich culture in a scenic beachfront setting.



**9** TAUĒSE P.F. SUNIA OCEAN CENTER  
LOCATION: Pago Pago, American Samoa

The center provides a window into the culture, history and natural environment of American Samoa.



### EAST COAST

**10** USS MONITOR CENTER  
LOCATION: Newport News, Virginia

Located in The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia, the USS *Monitor* Center is an extraordinary exhibit that highlights the iconic Civil War ironclad.

### SOUTHEAST AND GULF OF MEXICO

**11** FLORIDA KEYS ECO-DISCOVERY CENTER  
LOCATION: Key West, Florida

Immerse yourself in the Keys with the living reef exhibit, a tank with living corals and tropical fish, and learn what it's like to live beneath the waves in Aquarius, the world's only underwater ocean laboratory.



### PARTNERS

Want to see more? Our sanctuaries partner with aquaria and maritime and science museums to provide interpretive and hands-on exhibits highlighting the ocean and Great Lakes' natural and cultural resources. Check out the New England Aquarium, Tybee Island Marine Science Center, Texas State Aquarium or the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center. We bring the sanctuary to you!

Visit: [sanctuaries.noaa.gov/visit/visitor-centers.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/visit/visitor-centers.html)



## THINGS TO DO:

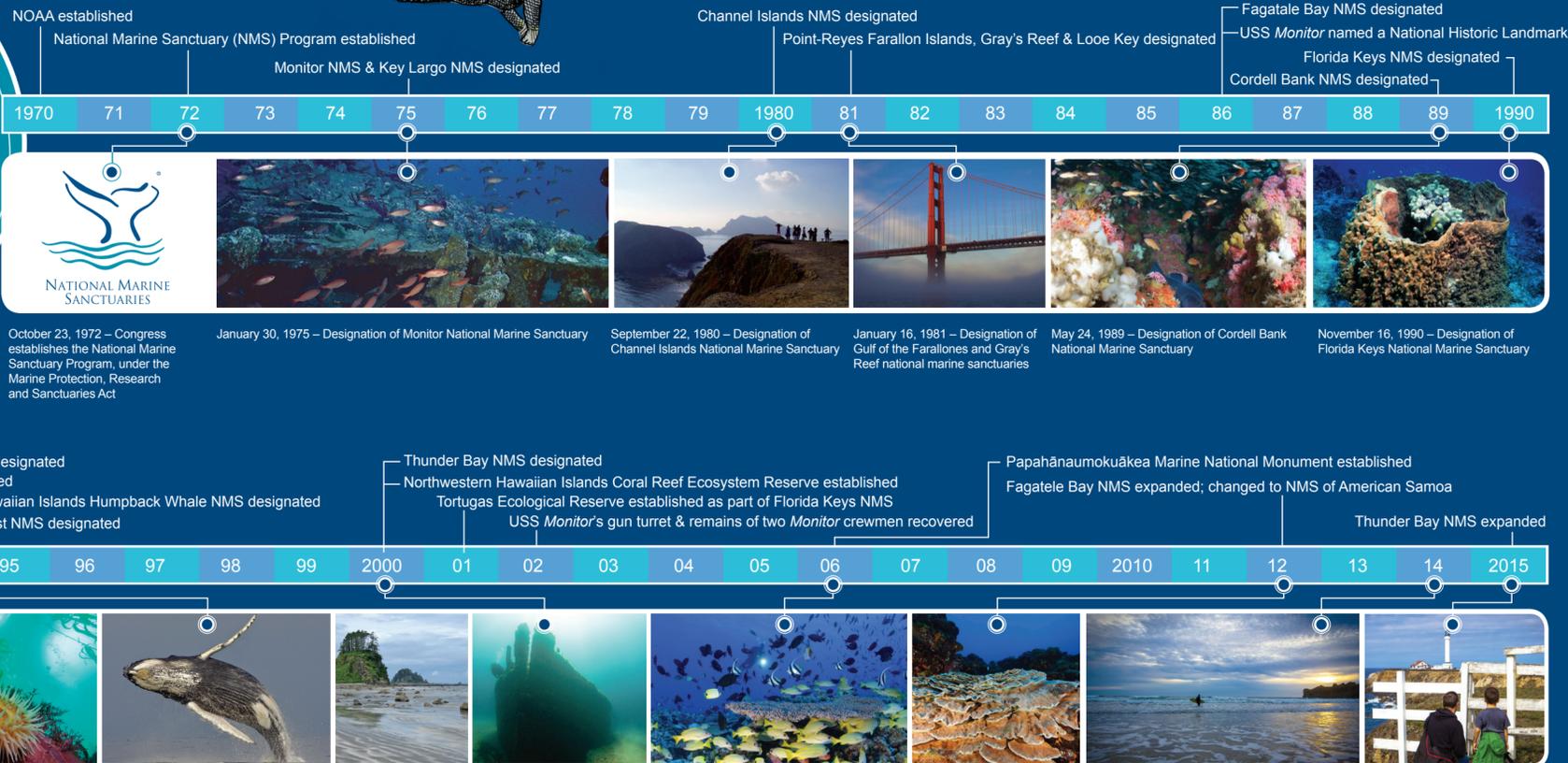


- Diving and Snorkeling** Kelp forests, coral reefs and shipwrecks provide epic opportunities for divers and snorkelers.
- Fishing** Whether fishing from the beach, a pier, or charter fishing boat, sanctuaries offer top-notch fishing!
- Boating** Touring by boat gives you the freedom to enjoy scenery, wildlife and fishing at your own pace!
- Paddle Sports** Canoeing, kayaking and paddle-boarding provide a unique, interactive experience with nature.
- Surfing** Experience some of the most revered surf spots including Mavericks, the Pipeline and Waimea Bay.
- Whale Watching** Go on a whale watching excursion on water or spot these magnificent creatures from shore.
- Wildlife Viewing** Observe sea otters, sea lions, turtles, dolphins, seabirds and other animals.
- Tide Pooling** Teeming with life, tide pools allow all to explore underwater and shoreline critters up close.
- Sightseeing & Heritage Trails** By land or sea, find the jewels of marine ecosystems and maritime history.
- Stewardship** Be a volunteer and participate in beach cleanups, wildlife monitoring and more.

For more information: [sanctuaries.noaa.gov/visit/things-to-do.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/visit/things-to-do.html)

## TIMELINE

A product of the environmental movement of the late twentieth century, the National Marine Sanctuary System is a relatively recent American achievement. National marine sanctuaries protect areas of "special national significance" in our ocean and Great Lakes, and build a marine stewardship ethic across the country. Take a look at some of the system's highlights, from its beginning in 1972 to a network of marine protected areas in 2015.



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 Reverse side photos (top to bottom): left column: Richard Murphy/NOAA, Greg McFall/NOAA, Ed Lyman/NOAA Fisheries Permit #14682-38079, NOAA; Matt McIntosh/NOAA, Clinton Bauder/BAUE; right column: Chad King/NOAA, Laurie C. Van De Werthorst, Tane Casserley/NOAA, Ari Friedlander/NOAA Fisheries Permit #14245, NOAA, Greg McFall/NOAA, G. P. Schmitt/NOAA