

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary



Photo: Monitor Collection, NOAA

The historic shipwreck of the USS *Monitor* was designated as the nation's first national marine sanctuary.



Photo: Courtesy of Library of Congress

Less than a year after its launch, the USS *Monitor* sank in a storm on its way to Beaufort, North Carolina.



Photo: Courtesy of The Mariners' Museum

The USS *Monitor* Center at The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia serves as the sanctuary's primary visitor center.

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (MNMS) was designated on January 30, 1975, off the coast of North Carolina, as the nation's first national marine sanctuary. The sanctuary protects the wreck site of the USS *Monitor*, the prototype for a class of U.S. Civil War ironclad, turreted warships that significantly altered both naval technology and marine architecture in the nineteenth century. The *Monitor* fought for the Union in the infamous Battle of Hampton Roads. The battle ended in a draw, but it initiated the dawn of iron warships. On December 31, 1862, less than a year after its launch, the *Monitor* sank in a storm on its way under tow to Beaufort, NC. Today, Monitor National Marine Sanctuary protects the wreck for future generations and works to share this iconic vessel's historical and cultural legacy with the public.

Research and Monitoring

Since it was first discovered, ship's historical significance captured the attention of researchers and archaeologists; however, due to its remote location, it is a difficult area to study on a regular basis. Today, researchers and archaeologists continue to study the site, and each expedition has revealed new information that provides us with a deeper understanding of the *Monitor*'s legacy.

The Mariners' Museum in Newport News,

Virginia is the leading facility for the conservation of over 200 tons of *Monitor* artifacts. The museum's Batten Conservation Laboratory Complex has conserved over 60% of the collection that includes more than 1,500 objects with items from small personal effects to large pieces, such as the rotating gun turret. A NOAA data buoy installed in the sanctuary now makes it possible to view real-time data on water and air temperature, wind direction, wave height and other environmental conditions. The data collected aide mariners in determining sea conditions off the Cape Hatteras coast.

Education and Outreach

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary remains committed to engaging visitors and local communities through education and outreach to learn more about our nation's maritime heritage. Whether it is participating in events supporting local economies, placing wayside signs to create a *Monitor* Trail, providing educational programs and materials that teach about our maritime heritage and the USS *Monitor*, or creating a series of downloadable videos that depict iconic places in North Carolina, the sanctuary strives to inspire new audiences to protect our rich maritime heritage resources and act as wise ocean stewards.

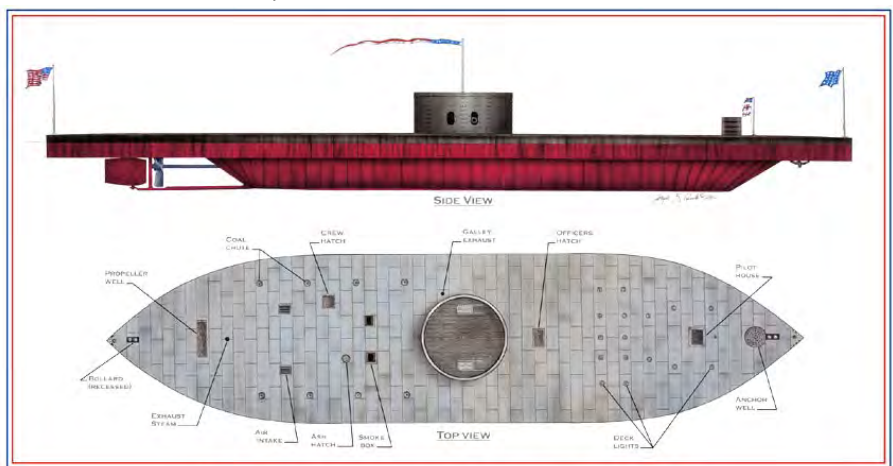
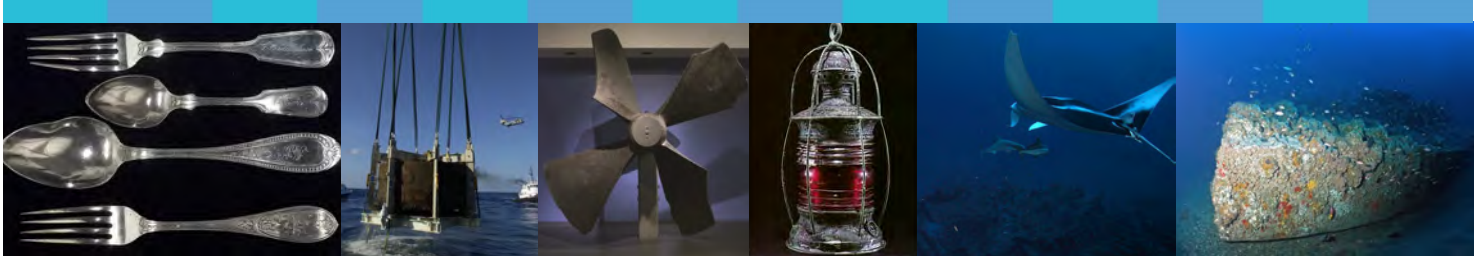


Photo: Joe Hines

The USS *Monitor* represented a revolutionary concept in ship design with new inventions and innovations.



Monitor National Marine Sanctuary

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM

Location

16 miles off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina

Protected Area

1 square mile

Designation

January 1975

Habitats

Artificial reef
Pelagic, open ocean

Key Species

Amberjack
Black sea bass
Coral
Dolphin
Manta ray
Sand tiger shark
Scad
Sea anemone
Sea urchin
Sting ray



Find Us

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On the Web

Email: monitor@noaa.gov
www.facebook.com/pages/Monitor-National-Marine-Sanctuary/75101577927

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

Network of marine protected areas
Encompasses more than 600,000 square miles
Established October 1972

On the Web

sanctuaries.noaa.gov
www.facebook.com/NOAAOfficeofNationalMarineSanctuaries
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Photo: Courtesy of Library of Congress

On July 9, 1862, some of the *Monitor's* crew relaxed on deck in this photo taken by James Gibson.



Photo: Monitor Collection, NOAA

The remains of two unidentified sailors were discovered in the USS *Monitor's* recovered turret.

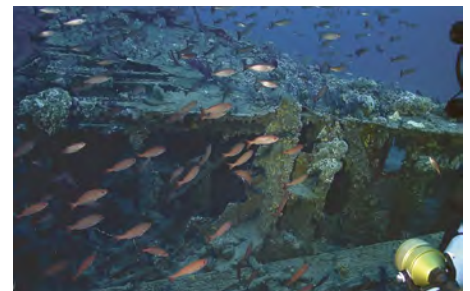


Photo: Monitor Collection, NOAA

After sinking in 1862, the USS *Monitor* wreck now teems with marine life.

<http://monitor.noaa.gov/>