As a travel destination, few places on the planet can compete with the diversity of the National Marine Sanctuary System, which protects America's most iconic natural and cultural marine resources.

Encountering wildlife can be a once-in-a lifetime opportunity! These simple guidelines were created to educate the public to prevent human/wildlife conflict while promoting positive and memorable experiences.

We encourage the public to show their support for wildlife on social media by taking the pledge. Download the pledge badge with the hashtags #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly.

Share these messages in Spanish too! Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/espanol/ and encourage folks to take the pledge, download the pledge badge (in Spanish) and share the hashtags: #SantuariosSalvajes #RecrearResponsablemente.

Make these posts your own and let your voice shine through! Remember to tag National Marine Sanctuaries, add #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly / #SantuariosSalvajes #RecrearResponsablemente and link to sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wildlife-viewing // https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/espanol/ whenever you can.

For general questions on responsible wildlife viewing: Grace Bottitta-Williamson, grace.bottitta@noaa.gov
For responsible wildlife viewing social media inquiries: Shannon Shikles, shannon.shikles@noaa.gov
Key Information

Key Guidelines - English and Spanish

Wildlife Viewing Guidelines Video

Sample text social media posts

Graphics for social media posts - English and Spanish

Photos with descriptions and alt text

Social Media Handles

Key Information:
Hashtag: #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly
Launch date: May 25, 2021

(ENGLISH) Wildlife Viewing Guidelines website: sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wildlife-viewing

Shortened link URL for Main Wildlife Viewing Page (English) https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV
Shortened link URL for Wildlife Pledge Page (English) https://go.usa.gov/xH385
Shortened link URL for Spanish Wildlife Viewing Page and Pledge http://go.usa.gov/xH39q

Key Guidelines:

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Wildlife Viewing Guidelines Video:
Website: sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wildlife-viewing/video.html
YouTube: https://youtu.be/NSieRUbQoSE

Sample text social media posts:

Post 1: Keep Pets Home or on a Leash

Facebook/Instagram: Before you take your pet on an outdoor adventure, make sure they are permitted to be there, and if they are, keep them on a leash at all times! When pets get too close to wildlife, especially marine mammals, all animals are at risk of harm, stress, and even disease. View our Wildlife Viewing Guidelines to learn more about the small steps we can all take to protect wildlife. Visit: https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly
Twitter: Pets can enjoy an outdoor adventure too, as long as they are permitted to be there and leashed! When pets and wildlife get too close, they’re at risk of harm, stress, and disease. Learn more about how you can protect wildlife, visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Post 2: Keep Pets Home or on a Leash  
Facebook/Instagram: If you bring your furry friend along on your outdoor adventure, it’s important to #RecreateResponsibly! First, check local guidelines to ensure that animals are permitted in the area you plan to visit. Then, make sure that your pet is leashed at all times and kept away from wildlife. This will protect the safety of you, your pets, and wildlife too! Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV for more information. #WildSanctuaries

Twitter: When you bring your furry friend along on your outdoor adventure, it’s important to #RecreateResponsibly! Check local guidelines to make sure that animals are allowed, and keep them leashed and away from wildlife at all times to keep everybody safe. Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV for more information. #WildSanctuaries

Post 3: Lead by Example  
Facebook/Instagram: What are some ways you can lead by example while enjoying the outdoors? By helping others to become responsible wildlife watchers, we protect both people and animals. Show respect for wildlife and other visitors, speak up about wildlife viewing violations, and choose businesses who #RecreateResponsibly. Learn more about how you can protect our #WildSanctuaries! Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV to learn more.

Twitter: How can you lead by example while enjoying the outdoors? Start by respecting wildlife and other visitors and choosing businesses who #RecreateResponsibly. Learn more about how you can protect our #WildSanctuaries! Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Post 4: Report wildlife that seems sick or abandoned  
Facebook/Instagram: Plenty of marine animals love to spend time on the beach to rest or eat, just like us! Seeing wildlife on the shore is not always cause for concern, but if you see an animal that appears sick or abandoned, make sure to give it plenty of space and contact your local wildlife authorities Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV for more information. #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: A lot of marine animals love to spend time on the beach, just like us! Seeing wildlife on the shore is not always cause for concern, but if you see an animal that seems sick or abandoned, make sure to contact your local wildlife authorities #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Post 5: Report wildlife that seems sick or abandoned  
Facebook/Instagram: Leave it to the experts! If you encounter wildlife that seems abandoned, sick, or injured, the best way to help is to contact local wildlife authorities. Although you may be tempted to help yourself, letting experts handle things ensures both yours and the animal’s safety #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Twitter: If you encounter wildlife that seems abandoned or sick, the best way to help is to contact local wildlife authorities. Although you may be tempted to help them yourself, letting
experts handle things ensures both your own and the animal’s safety. https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV
#WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Post 6: Keep my snacks to myself
Facebook/Instagram: Sharing is caring, but not when it comes to sharing food with animals! Wildlife are perfectly capable of finding their own food. Feeding wildlife often does more harm than good and is actually illegal for many species, so keep those snacks to yourself! Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV for more information. #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: Sharing is caring, but not when it comes to sharing food with animals! Feeding wildlife often does more harm than good and is actually illegal for many species, so keep those snacks to yourself! https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Post 7: Lend a hand with trash removal
Facebook/Instagram: Each year, billions of pounds of waste enter our ocean. This debris can be ingested by wildlife causing them harm or even death. To do your part try reusing and even refusing plastics. Make sure to properly dispose of your garbage and recycle whenever possible as well pick up any debris you see! To learn more about how to protect your #WildSanctuaries, visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV. #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: Each year billions of pounds of waste enter our ocean. Please do your part to minimize waste by reusing and even refusing plastics. Make sure to properly dispose of your garbage and recycle whenever possible as well pick up any debris you see! https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Post 8: Keep my hands to myself
Facebook/Instagram: You might be tempted to pet a seal basking in the sun but getting too close or startling them can evoke aggressive behavior and seriously injure them as well as you. Be sure to stand at a safe distance to get that perfect photo as touching, feeding, or harassing wild animals is often illegal and can ruin both yours and the animals’ day. https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: Be sure to stand at a safe distance to get that perfect photo as touching, feeding or harassing wild animals is often illegal and can ruin both yours and the animals' day. For more information, visit: https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Post 9: Keep my hands to myself
Facebook/Instagram: We all can get a little defensive when we are under stress, and so can wildlife! When put in an uncomfortable situation many animals have defenses that cause harm both to us and them. Feeding, touching, or harassing wild animals is illegal under the Federal Endangered Species Act, so be sure to keep your hands to yourself when enjoying their homes! https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: Be sure to #RecreateResponsibly when visiting the homes of wild critters! When put in an uncomfortable situation, many animals have defenses that can cause harm to both you and them. Keep your hands to yourself and ensure an enjoyable time for all! https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #WildSanctuaries
Post 10: Hang back and enjoy the view
Facebook/Instagram: Giving wildlife their space is SO important! Getting too close to wildlife exerts the precious energy they rely on for hunting, attracting mates, and raising their young. By hanging back from our wildlife, we can help to keep them healthy and stress-free. Learn more about how and why we keep our distance from animals at our #WildSanctuaries! Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: Giving wildlife their space is SO important! Getting too close to wild critters can actually use up some of the energy they need for hunting, mating, and raising their young. Learn more about how and why you should keep your distance from the wildlife at our #WildSanctuaries by visiting https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Post 11: Hang back and enjoy the view
Facebook/Instagram: How do you know if you’re too close to wildlife? For starters, there are recommended or legally required distances you should keep from certain species. Behaviors like fleeing, fidgeting, freezing, vocalizations, or aggression mean that you are probably too close! By maintaining your distance, you can make sure that you and wildlife are kept safe. Visit https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV for more information. #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly

Twitter: How do you know if you’re too close to wildlife? There are required distances you should keep for many species, but you can also be on the lookout for behaviors including fleeing, freezing, or vocalizations. Keep your distance to keep you and our wildlife safe! #WildSanctuaries https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Post 12: Lend a hand with trash removal
Facebook/Instagram: Garbage is one of the biggest threats to wildlife at our #WildSanctuaries. Animals can ingest trash or even become tangled in debris, both of which can be deadly. To do our part, we can reuse and refuse plastics when possible, dispose of our garbage properly, and always pick up trash we come across! #RecreateResponsibly https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Twitter: Garbage is one of the biggest threats to wildlife at our #WildSanctuaries. Animals can ingest trash or become entangled in debris. To do our part, we can refuse or reuse plastics when possible, dispose of garbage properly, and pick up trash we come across! #RecreateResponsibly https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Post 13: Lead by example
Facebook/Instagram: Be a wildlife ambassador! When you encourage others to be responsible wildlife viewers, you help protect both them and the animals. Set a great example for others to follow by respecting all wildlife and other visitors, reporting irresponsible wildlife viewing behaviors, and choosing businesses that responsibly view wildlife like our Blue Star operators. #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV

Facebook/Instagram: Be an active part of making the outdoors safe and welcome for wildlife and people of all backgrounds! Set a good example for others to follow by respecting all wildlife and other visitors, reporting irresponsible wildlife viewing behaviors, and choosing businesses that responsibly view wildlife. #WildSanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV
**Twitter:** Encourage others to be responsible wildlife viewers and you help protect both them and the animals. To set a good example, respect all wildlife and visitors, report unsafe behaviors, and choose businesses that responsibly view wildlife - like our Blue Star operators. #Wild Sanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly [https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV](https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV)

**Post 14: Keep my snacks to myself**

*Facebook/Instagram:* While we might be tempted to feed the adorable animals we come across in the wild, doing so teaches them to approach humans, which puts all involved in danger. Feeding wildlife often does more harm than good and is illegal for many species. Remember that wildlife can find their own food, so enjoy your snacks yourself #Wild Sanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly [https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV](https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV)

**Twitter:** We might be tempted to feed the cute animals we see, but this teaches them to approach humans, which puts all involved in danger and is illegal for many species. Remember that wildlife can find their own food, so enjoy your snacks yourself #Wild Sanctuaries #RecreateResponsibly [https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV](https://go.usa.gov/xsSPV)

**Post 15: Wildlife Pledge**

*Facebook/Instagram:* Have you taken the pledge for wildlife yet? Read through our wildlife viewing guidelines to learn about how you can #RecreateResponsibly to protect wildlife at our sanctuaries and enjoy your visit to the fullest. Then join us by taking the pledge to respect, protect, and enjoy your #Wild Sanctuaries Learn more by visiting [https://go.usa.gov/xH385](https://go.usa.gov/xH385)

**Twitter:** Have you taken the pledge for wildlife yet? Read through our wildlife viewing guidelines to learn about how you can #RecreateResponsibly to protect wildlife at our sanctuaries, then join us by taking the pledge! #Wild Sanctuaries [https://go.usa.gov/xH385](https://go.usa.gov/xH385)

**Available for download on our website:**

- Guideline social media graphics (English and Spanish)
- Wildlife Viewing pledge badges (English and Spanish)
- Wildlife Viewing Guidelines pocket graphic (English and Spanish)
- Instagram stories
- Guideline memes
Photos with descriptions and alt text:
These photos are public domain and may be freely used. We ask that you include credit for each photo when you use it (details below), and if possible, tag the appropriate national marine sanctuary and/or NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries in your post. If you have other photo requests please let us know - we are always happy to share public domain photos.

**Hang back and enjoy the view.**

![Humpback Whale Breach](https://flic.kr/p/H1MHP3)
Image description: You increase your chances of seeing some amazing natural behaviors - like this humpback whale’s breach - when you keep a safe distance from wildlife.
Alt text: A humpback whale leaps out of the water.
Credit: NOAA Fisheries Permit #782-1438

![Group of Responsible Wildlife Viewers](https://flic.kr/p/2kZJmpV)
Image description: A group of responsible wildlife viewers remembered to bring their binoculars so they could safely observe wildlife in Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.
Alt text: Group of people on a cliff looking at the water through binoculars.
Credit: Paul Wong/NOAA

**Keep my hands to myself.**

![Keep My Hands To Myself](https://flic.kr/p/WQrxju)
Image description: Diver observes the coral below responsibly in National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa.
Alt text: Diver swims above coral.
Credit: David J. Ruck/NOAA

[Image]
https://flic.kr/p/GS5zwG

Image description: A sea otter demonstrates what it looks like to keep your hands to yourself.
Alt text: A sea otter floats on its back while holding its paws close to its chest.
Credit: Steve Lonhart/NOAA

Report wildlife that seem sick or abandoned.

[Image]
https://flic.kr/p/2iCrxtJ

Image description: If you see an entangled or otherwise distressed animal like this humpback whale, make sure to contact local wildlife authorities.
Alt text: Entangled humpback whale swims with marine debris trailing behind it.
Credit: J. Moore/NOAA

Keep pets home or on a leash.

[Image]
https://flic.kr/p/2kZFsVA
Lend a hand with trash removal.

https://www.flickr.com/photos/onms/27624985333/in/album-72157666079564054/

Image description: A Laysan albatross stares at one of the many toothbrushes that end up on our beaches each year.
Alt text: A Laysan albatross looks at a toothbrush on the beach.
Credit: David Slater/NOAA

Keep my snacks to myself.

https://flkr.kr/p/29Q4Lee

Image description: A western gull snacks on a sea star.
Alt text: Gull holding a sea star in its beak.
Credit NOAA/NMFS

https://flic.kr/p/2jtZojC
Image description: A sea otter snacks on a crab.
Alt text: Sea otter chewing on an orange crab with a second crab floating on its belly in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.
Credit: Douglas Croft

Lead by example.

https://www.flickr.com/photos/onms/27624983713/
Image description: A group of all ages peers through binoculars and points at the ocean at Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.
Alt text: A group of adults and children with binoculars point at the ocean.
Credit: Jennifer Stock/NOAA

https://www.flickr.com/photos/onms/48766484967/in/album-72157711090292541/
Image description: A group of students stand around a fish tank at Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary, learning about wildlife.
Alt text: A group of young students peer into a fish tank as an employee points out a fish with a net.
Credit: Matt McIntosh/NOAA

Social media handles:

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/NOAAOfficeofNationalMarine Sanctuaries/
  Twitter: @sanctuaries
  Instagram: @noaasanctuaries
  Tumblr: @noaasanctuaries

National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa (American Samoa)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/americansamoa.noaa.gov/

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (California)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ChannelIslandsNMS
  Twitter: @NOAA_CINMS

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (California)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/CBNMS/
  Twitter: @CordellBank

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (Florida)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/floridakeysnoaagov
  Twitter: @FloridaKeysNMS

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (Texas/Louisiana)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/FGBNMS
  Twitter: @fgbnms

Gray’s Reef National Marine Sanctuary (Georgia)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/graysreefsanctuary
  Twitter: @GraysReefNMS

Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (California)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/GFNMS
  Twitter: @GFNMS

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (Hawai’i)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/hawaiihumpbackwhale
  Twitter: @HIHumpbackWhale

Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MallowsBayPotomacRiverNMS

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (North Carolina)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/NOAA-Monitor-National-Marine-Sanctuary-75101577927/
  Twitter: @MonitorNMS

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (California)
  Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MBNMS
  Twitter: @MBNMS

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (Washington)
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/usolympiccoastgov
Twitter: @OlympicCoast

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (Hawai'i)
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Papahanaumokuakea

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (Massachusetts)
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SBNMS
Twitter: @NOAASBNMS

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (Michigan)
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ThunderBayShipwrecks
Twitter: @ThunderBayNMS