

# MONITOR

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY



# USS MONITOR

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
MONITOR NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY



## RED SIGNAL LANTERN

The last sign of the ship before it sank, and the first artifact recovered from its wreckage.

On January 30, 1975, Congress designated Monitor National Marine Sanctuary off the North Carolina coast 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 USS *Monitor* fought for the Union in the famous Battle of Hampton Roads. The battle ended in a draw, but it initiated the dawn of iron warships. Today, Monitor National Marine Sanctuary protects the *Monitor* shipwreck for future generations and works to share this iconic vessel's historical and cultural legacy.

## ABOUT THE ARTWORK

In this representation of the first crewed expedition to the USS *Monitor* shipwreck, a hard-hat diver shines his lights on the lantern while submersibles explore the anchor and propeller on the upside down sunken warship. Soft coral, fish, and sharks use the shipwreck as an artificial reef. Artistic license was taken to enhance the illustration (e.g., anchor laid on the opposite side of the vessel and the gun ports pointed underneath the hull).

## LOCATION



## QUICK FACTS

### LOCATION

16 miles off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina

### PROTECTED AREA

1 square mile

### DESIGNATION

January 1975

### HABITATS

Artificial reef, open ocean

### WILDLIFE

Amberjack  
Black sea bass  
Corals  
Dolphins  
Manta rays  
Red barbler  
Sand tiger shark  
Scad  
Sea anemones  
Sea urchins  
Stingrays



### SINKING

On Dec. 31, 1862, the USS *Monitor* sank in a storm while being towed to Beaufort, North Carolina, less than one year after its launch.



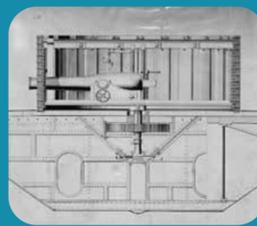
### ULTIMATE PRICE

Sixteen sailors paid the ultimate price, including two who were buried with full military honors after being discovered in the turret during the 2002 expedition.



### POSTER INSPIRATION

The wreckage was viewed in person for the first time in 1977 via submersibles that ferried divers to the vessel.



### TURRET

A first of its kind, this rotating gun concept was soon adapted and used on naval ships around the world.



### PROPELLER

Protected from enemy fire by its location, the 9-foot propeller was unique at the time.

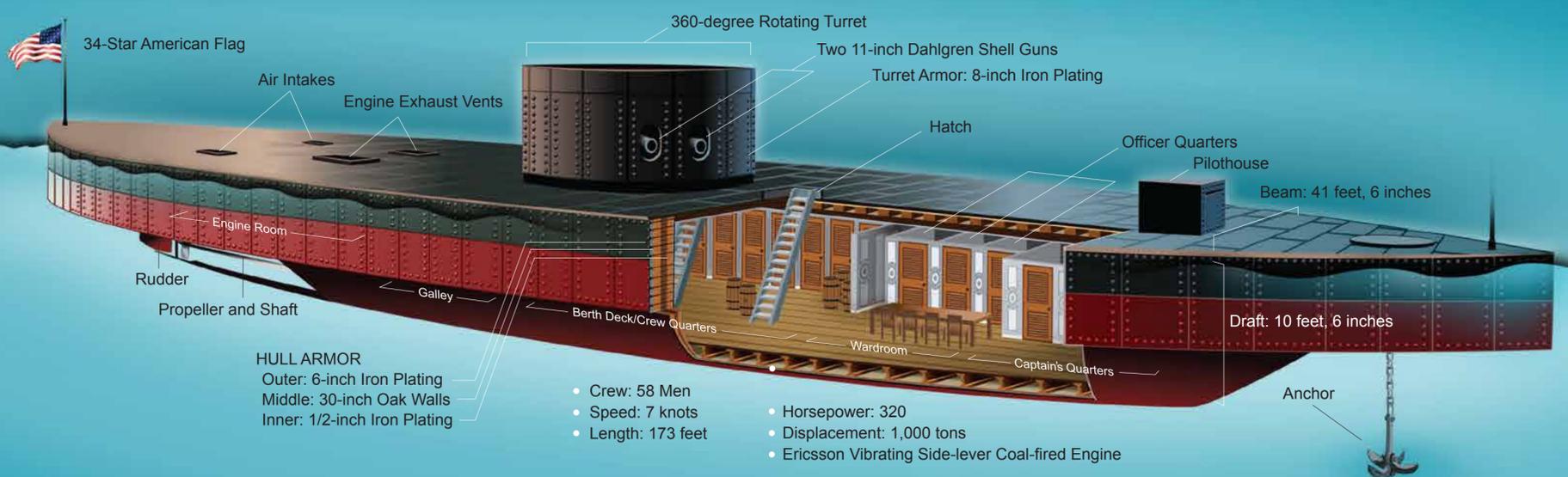


### ANCHOR

John Ericsson, the inventor who designed the USS *Monitor*, engineered the anchor to operate inside the vessel's hull, protecting it and the gun crew from enemy gunfire.

The conserved propeller, anchor, and lantern are on display at The Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia. To learn more, visit [marinersmuseum.org](http://marinersmuseum.org).

All images courtesy of The Mariners' Museum and Park, NOAA, and Library of Congress



USS Monitor illustration: Matt McInroon

## AMERICA'S UNDERWATER TREASURES

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 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 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: [sanctuaries.noaa.gov](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov)



○ National Marine Sanctuary  
▲ Marine National Monument  
■ Proposed National Marine Sanctuary

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

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