# CORDELL BANK

## NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

# Cordell Bank

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary

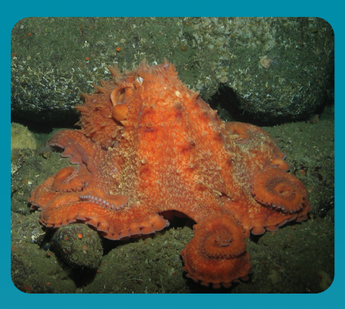
Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary was established to protect and preserve the extraordinary marine ecosystem around Cordell Bank off California's Marin and Sonoma County coastline. The 1,286 square mile sanctuary is entirely offshore and protects soft seafloor habitat, a rocky bank, deep-sea canyons and wildlife. Its dynamic and food-rich surface waters are feeding areas for local and migratory seabirds and marine mammals. Sanctuary explorations have discovered diverse and bountiful wildlife on the seafloor hosting deep-sea corals, sponges, anemones, crabs, and fishes.

## About the Artwork

Ocean conditions and undersea topography combine to fuel a rich and diverse marine ecosystem around Cordell Bank. The rocky bank is encrusted with colorful anemones, sponges, and corals and provides habitat for species like top snails, decorator crabs, rosy rockfish, lingcod, and giant Pacific octopus. The waters above and around the bank concentrate krill, juvenile rockfish, anchovy, and jellies attracting ocean sunfish, California sea lions, Pacific white-sided dolphins, and blue whales.

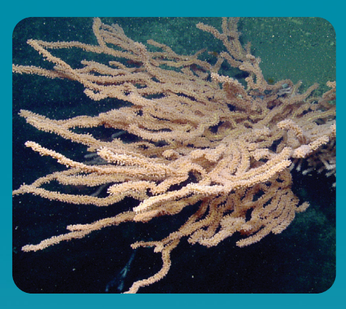
**BLUE WHALE** *(Balaenoptera musculus)*
Blue whales grow up to 110 feet long, weigh nearly 40 tons, and feed on krill.

**YELLOWEYE ROCKFISH** *(Sebastes ruberrimus)*
A long-lived rockfish with lifespans reaching over 115 years, they have a small range and may live their entire adult life on a single rock pile.



**GIANT PACIFIC OCTOPUS** *(Enteroctopus dofleini)*
This stealthy invertebrate hatches from an egg the size of a rice grain and can reach more than 50 pounds in its three to five year lifespan.

**BAMBOO CORAL** *(Keratoisis* sp.*)*
This deep-sea coral is slow growing and can live up to 400 years. It feeds on marine snow that rains down from the surface waters.



**KRILL** *(Euphausia pacifica)*
A key species for the food web, krill feed while swimming, using modified legs to form a food basket that strains food from the water while they swim.

**BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS** *(Phoebastria nigripes)*
Breeding throughout the northwest Hawaiian islands, these seabirds have a six-foot wingspan and travel long distances to Cordell Bank to feed on squid.

## Location

## Quick Facts

**LOCATION**
52 miles west-northwest off the coast of San Francisco, California

**PROTECTED AREA**
1,286 square miles

**DESIGNATION**
May 1989

**HABITATS**
Continental shelf and slope
Deep-sea canyons
Open ocean
Rocky reef

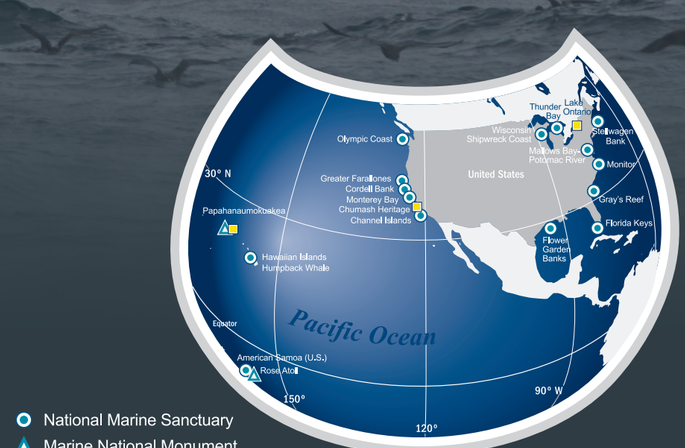
**KEY SPECIES**
Albatross
Bamboo coral
Blue whale
California hydrocoral
Dall's porpoise
Giant Pacific octopus
Krill
Rockfish
Strawberry anemone

Photos: (China rockfish resting in vase sponge) NOAA; (blue whale) NOAA library; (giant Pacific octopus) NOAA; (krill) Sophie Webb/NOAA/Point Blue; (yelloweye rockfish) Bob Lea/CDFW; (bamboo coral) NOAA/OET; (albatross) Sophie Webb/NOAA/Point Blue; (background photo) Sophie Webb/NOAA/Point Blue

**BELOW**
Food sources in the ocean can be patchy, so when it is found in abundance, multiple species can be found feeding together. Humpback whales feed on aggregations of anchovy. Seabirds such as pink-footed and sooty shearwaters, black-footed albatross, and gulls are attracted to the activity and congregate (sometimes up to hundreds of birds at a time!) to join the feeding frenzy.

## 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




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

**CORDELLBANK.NOAA.GOV**