



## A SPECIAL PLACE

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary boasts picture postcard scenery nearly everywhere you look—pelicans soaring above the swell, sea otters lounging in soft beds of kelp and waves crashing wildly on a rocky shore. It is home to a rich array of marine life and diverse habitats. The sanctuary stretches along one quarter of the central California coast, and is deeper than the Grand Canyon at its deepest point.

## VARIETY OF HABITATS

Encompassing more than 5,300 square miles, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is one of the richest, most diverse marine environments in the world. Wave-swept beaches, lush kelp forests, active tide pools and one of the deepest underwater canyons in North America are just a few of the habitats found within the sanctuary. Each of these vastly different environments teem with life, from tiny plankton to the largest animal that has ever lived on Earth – the blue whale.



### Sandy Beaches

Stunning beaches harbor a world of life that is mostly out of sight. Worms, sand crabs, snails and clams live beneath the sand at the water's edge, where shorebirds probe for a tasty meal.



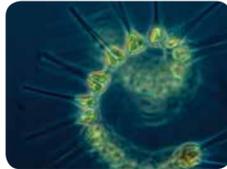
### Seafloors

Beyond the waves, much of the seafloor is covered with sand or mud. Here, sand dollars, tubeworms, anemones, brittle stars, flatfishes and stingrays hide.



### Lush Kelp Forests

Supporting a rich array of life, including fish, snails, crabs, sponges, urchins, anemones, sea stars and lingcod, kelp can grow up to 18 inches a day, and tower 100 feet above the ocean floor.



### Open Water

Winds drive surface water away from the coast, which upwell cold nutrient-rich water from below. This process fuels the growth of phytoplankton, the base of the sanctuary's abundant food web.



### Deep Canyons

The largely unexplored submarine canyons, some descending more than two miles, harbor a variety of animals specially adapted to a life of darkness. Some even produce their own light.



### Tranquil Wetlands

Elkhorn Slough, part of the sanctuary and one of California's last great coastal wetlands, is an important resting, feeding and breeding area for a huge variety of species.



### Tide Pools

Rocky shores are an ideal environment for small creatures. When tides subside, tide pools form to become wet oases for a diverse range of creatures like snails, sea stars, small fish, anemones and more.



### Davidson Seamount

Davidson Seamount, an undersea mountain, is one of the largest in the world. From base to crest, it is 7,480 feet tall, yet its summit is still 4,101 feet below the surface.

Habitat photos (left to right): MBNMS, CCNMS, Chad King, NOAA MESA Project, ©2014 MBARI, Steve Lonhart, Vince Stamey, MBARI

## THINGS TO DO:

For those who love nature and outdoor activities, the sanctuary offers exciting adventures for everyone. Whether it's watching whales, paddling among kelp forests or exploring tide pools, there is no more spectacular place to enjoy the ocean and outdoors.

### Sanctuary Visitor Centers

Stop by one of our free interpretive centers to enjoy exciting, interactive exhibits. Knowledgeable volunteers are on-hand to answer your questions and enhance your understanding of the sanctuary.

#### Coastal Discovery Center, San Simeon

Located at William Randolph Hearst Memorial State Beach on beautiful San Simeon Bay, the center celebrates the connection between land and sea, offering interactive displays and programs that highlight the cultural and natural history of the region.

#### Sanctuary Exploration Center, Santa Cruz

Just steps away from the famed beach boardwalk, the center features state-of-the-art interactive and multimedia exhibits. Explore the sanctuary's remarkable marine environment, as well as your personal role in protecting one of our nation's special underwater treasures.



[montereybay.noaa.gov/visitor/](http://montereybay.noaa.gov/visitor/)



### SCUBA Diving

Abundant sea life and kelp forests make Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary one of the world's greatest cold-water SCUBA diving destinations.



### Fishing

Whether from shore, a public pier or charter fishing boat, the sanctuary offers top-notch fishing! Please follow regulations, and acquire license where necessary.



### Boating

Whether a motor, sail, deep sea fishing, glass bottom, wildlife and/or whale watching boat, you are almost guaranteed to have a wonderful experience on the sanctuary.



### Paddle Sports

Canoeing, kayaking and paddle-boarding provide a unique, interactive experience with nature. Many local businesses provide rentals, lessons and group tours.



### Surfing

Monterey Bay is a popular year-round surfing destination, for beginners and veteran surfers alike. Always be careful of submerged rocks and powerful waves.



### Whale Watching

Monterey Bay is the marine equivalent of going on an African safari. The diversity in the sanctuary is amazing. Look close, and you may even see whales from shore.



### Tide Pooling

Looking for an exciting ocean adventure? Go no further than the sanctuary's rocky shores. During low tide, you can discover all sorts of critters without getting wet!



### Wildlife Viewing

One of the richest ecological regions along California's central coast, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is home to an amazing amount of diverse creatures.



### Sightseeing

Enjoy breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, eat, shop, study a sanctuary wayside exhibit, learn about Cannery Row, take-in a visitor center or the aquarium.



### Stewardship

The sanctuary needs you! Be a volunteer and participate in beach cleanups, wildlife monitoring and more. Contact us to learn about all the great opportunities.



**USS Macon**  
Of the 1,276 sunken vessels in the sanctuary, one of the most notable is the USS Macon, a helium-filled dirigible that crashed and sank off Point Sur in 1935.

**M**onterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is one of our nation's most spectacular marine protected areas, and offers some of the best year-round wildlife viewing in the world! This "Serengeti of the Sea" stretches along the central California coast from San Francisco to Cambria and includes pristine beaches, jewel-like tide pools, lush kelp forests, steep canyons and an offshore seamount teeming with life—from tiny shrimp to giant blue whales.



## FUN FACTS

### Bixby Bridge

Adjacent to the sanctuary is one of the world's highest single-span concrete arch bridges. It was built by prisoners eager to earn "good time" off their prison sentences. Dedicated in 1932, it is declared to be "one of the most photographed bridges in the world."



### Lone Cypress

On a granite hillside off California's scenic 17-mile drive, the famous Lone Cypress overlooks Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. This tree, nearly 300 years old and the inspiration behind the iconic Pebble Beach Pro-AM golf tournament, is perhaps the most photographed in North America. As a species, the Monterey Cypress naturally grows no place on Earth except for right off the sanctuary shore.

### How Deep?

The sanctuary covers 5,312 square miles, one and a half times the size of the largest national park in the continental U.S. At its center, is an underwater canyon, the Monterey Submarine Canyon, which in terms of height/depth ratio is deeper than the Grand Canyon.



## WILDLIFE VIEWING

Known as the "Serengeti of the Sea," wildlife watching in Monterey Bay is the marine equivalent of going on a safari in Africa. The basis for this explosion-of-life can be traced to upwelling; a process where deep, cold, nutrient-rich water is brought to the surface. This water feeds krill, a tiny shrimp-like crustacean, which is the main staple in the diets of hundreds of different animals. The diverse wildlife that can be found in the sanctuary includes 34 species of marine mammals, over 180 species of seabirds, 525 species of fish, 450 species of algae and countless invertebrates. Furthermore, the sanctuary is home to 26 threatened or endangered species.



### Whales and Dolphins

- Outstanding place to see whales
- 27 kinds seen in the sanctuary
- Some come seasonally, some year-round
- Many travel between Arctic and Baja, CA



### Sea Otters

- Use rocks to open and eat shellfish
- Wrap in kelp to prevent drifting away
- Groom to keep their fur waterproof
- Found in kelp forests or Elkhorn Slough



### Sea Birds

- One of the best birdwatching sites in U.S.A.
- Over 180 species of marine birds
- Many forage on wetlands & beaches
- Some only come to shore to breed



### Harbor Seals

- Shy and curious
- Rest on offshore rocks
- Hunt fish, octopus and squid
- Blubber maintains body temperature



### Elephant Seals

- Most of their time is spent far offshore
- Breed and rest onshore
- Engage in bloody fights for turf and females
- Best seen in Año Nuevo & Piedras Blancas



### Sea Lions

- Intelligent, playful and have a noisy bark
- Rest together on rocks and docks
- Hunt offshore for fishes and squid
- Agile swimmers; can leap out of water

Wildlife photos (left to right): Chad King, Michael Baird, Sandy Johnston, Dan Lineham, Michael Baird, Megan Gong



## WILDLIFE VIEWING CALENDAR

This calendar shows what time of year you can expect to see certain animals around the sanctuary.

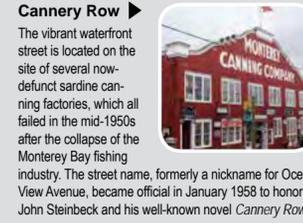
SEABIRDS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Common Murre												
California Least Tern												
Western Gull												
California Brown Pelican												
Brandt's Cormorant												
Sooty Shearwater												
Caspian Tern												
Marbled Murrelet												
SHOREBIRDS/WADERS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Snowy Plover												
Least Sandpiper												
Western Sandpiper												
Sanderling												
Willet												
Marbled Godwit												
Great Blue Heron												
Great Egret												
SEALS/SEA LIONS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Harbor Seal												
Elephant Seal												
California Sea Lion												
Steller Sea Lion												
Northern Fur Seal												
WHALES/DOLPHINS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Blue Whale												
Humpback Whale												
Gray Whale												
Killer Whale (Orca)												
Pac. White-sided Dolphin												
Risso's Dolphin												
Common Dolphin												
Bottlenose Dolphin												
Harbor Porpoise												
SEA OTTERS	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Southern Sea Otter												
SEA TURTLES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Leatherback Sea Turtle												

*Note: The number of seabirds is lowest in March/April, increasing to a peak in Sept., then declines through the winter. The population of shorebirds is highest in late Oct.-early Nov., declining as they continue south; it peaks again in April or May, as they migrate back to northern breeding grounds.*

— can usually be found somewhere in the sanctuary  
 - - - - - doesn't always occur annually  
 (E) endangered  
 (T) threatened



**Krill**  
Krill are shrimp-like crustaceans that measure about one inch in length and can be found in dense swarms in offshore waters. Krill are an important source of food for whales, seabirds and fishes.



**Cannery Row**  
The vibrant waterfront street is located on the site of several now-defunct sardine canning factories, which all failed in the mid-1950s after the collapse of the Monterey Bay fishing industry. The street name, formerly a nickname for Ocean View Avenue, became official in January 1958 to honor John Steinbeck and his well-known novel *Cannery Row*.



**Aquarium**  
With over 2 million visitors a year, the world-renowned Monterey Bay Aquarium, located on Cannery Row, is both a local and tourist favorite.



**Lighthouses**  
The six lighthouses along Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary—Point Bonita, Point Montara, Pigeon Point, Santa Cruz, Point Pinos and Point Sur—acted as safety beacons for sailors over hundreds of years. Today, these important landmarks are popular tourist attractions.

## REGULATIONS

Activities prohibited to protect the resources within Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (this list does not include all exemptions or activities):

- Exploring for, developing or producing oil or minerals
- Operating motorized personal watercraft, except within five designated areas
- Introducing or releasing introduced species
- Discharging or depositing materials into the water
- Flying motorized aircraft below 1,000 feet along portions of the coast
- Altering or placing any structures on the seabed
- Injuring or disturbing marine mammals, seabirds and sea turtles
- Moving, injuring or possessing historical resources of the sanctuary
- Chumming for great white sharks

## AMERICA'S UNDERWATER TREASURES



The 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. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary System, visit: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

- National Marine Sanctuary
- ▲ Marine National Monument
- Proposed National Marine Sanctuary