

GET INTO YOUR SANCTUARY



SPLASH,
EXPLORE,
AND RELAX



#ILoveMySanctuary

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES:

MEMORIES HAPPEN HERE



#ILoveMySanctuary



Cover: A pair of surfers walk into the sunset at Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA

Inside cover: A child fishes in National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa. Photo: Apulu Veronika Molio'o Mata'utia Mortenson/NOAA

Printed on recycled paper with environmentally-friendly ink.



Photo: Ian Armor

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello,
As director of NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, I'm pleased to welcome you to "Get Into Your Sanctuary: Memories Happen Here," a publication that spotlights ways

you can responsibly enjoy national marine sanctuaries. Within these pages, you will learn why we believe few places on the planet can compete with the diversity of recreational experiences found across the National Marine Sanctuary System.

Like iconic parks on land, ocean parks—national marine sanctuaries—are sources of great pride. They are places we all can go to experience the power and beauty of the ocean and Great Lakes.

The National Marine Sanctuary System spans more than 620,000 square miles 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.

As humans, enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoors is fundamental to our collective well-being. Whether you like to scuba dive, bird watch, paddle, fish, surf, watch a whale breach, or just lounge on your boat, national marine sanctuaries are great places to connect with nature.

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary near Boston offers some of the best whale watching in the country. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is a great place to fish, boat, and dive. You can paddle among kelp forests, fish for salmon, or view seabirds and otters in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. History lovers can travel back in time among the shipwrecks in Mallovs Bay-Potomac River, Thunder Bay, and Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast national marine sanctuaries. Like to surf? Some of the most revered surf spots on Earth—Mavericks, Waimea Bay, Pipeline, and even places in the Great Lakes—are all found within the National Marine Sanctuary System.

So whether you're a hard-core adventure seeker, or someone who enjoys the peaceful feeling of an ocean view, do yourself a favor and add national marine sanctuaries to your next outdoor recreation experience. Get into a sanctuary—the memories you make will last a lifetime!



Photo: David J. Ruck/NOAA

John Armor, Director

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Kayakers wait for their next trip in Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.

Photo: Bruce Bowser



Earn Your Badges

In collaboration with the National Park Trust, Blue Star Families, and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, you can earn badges for any visit (in person or virtual) to all sites within the National Marine Sanctuary System! Download the ParkPassport App to create an account, and then you are on your way!





Planning an adventure or dreaming of your next vacation? Look no further than your national marine sanctuaries! These jewels of the ocean and Great Lakes hold possibilities for everyone. Discover the ocean and Great Lakes, and yourself, in national marine sanctuaries.



HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE

As the only place in the U.S. where humpback whales reproduce, the sanctuary protects one of the world's most important humpback whale habitats.



AMERICAN SAMOA

Travelers seeking an off-the-beaten-path experience can enjoy cultural excursions and visit one of the largest known coral heads in the world in American Samoa.



OLYMPIC COAST

Visitors will find the spectacular, sparsely populated, and undeveloped shoreline makes this place one of the most dramatic natural wonders in the United States.



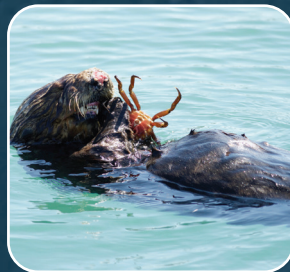
GREATER FARALLONES

These waters are home to dolphins, white sharks, whales, and a quarter-million seabirds. Quiet estuaries, beaches, and rocky reefs offer opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts to explore.



CORDELL BANK

The productive area of the bank provides bountiful forage for many marine mammals and seabirds, such as humpback whales, Dall's porpoises, albatrosses, and shearwaters.



MONTEREY BAY

From the pristine beaches and jewel-like tide pools to the lush kelp forests, this "Serengeti of the Sea" offers some of the best wildlife viewing and diving in the world, and plenty of offshore boating opportunities.



CHANNEL ISLANDS

The waters of the sanctuary are home to many species of marine mammals. Kayaking among the numerous sea caves or diving in the kelp forests can satisfy a traveler's thirst for exploration.



PAPAHĀNAUMOKUĀKEA MARINE NATIONAL MONUMENT



As one of the largest marine conservation areas in the world, the monument was created to protect ecosystem health and diversity of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, as well as honor the significance of the area to Native Hawaiian culture. Immerse yourself in the interactive natural and cultural exhibits at the Mokupāpapa Discovery Center.

- RECREATION ACTIVITIES**
- BOAT
 - DIVE
 - FISH
 - PADDLE
 - SNORKEL
 - STAND-UP PADDLE
 - SURF
 - VISITOR CENTER
 - WATCH WILDLIFE

Photos (top to bottom, left to right): Jason Moore/NOAA, Permit #15240; Wendy Cover/NOAA; Darryl Wood; Sara Heintzleman/NOAA; Joe Hoyt/NOAA; Jenni Peters; Robert Schwemmer/NOAA; Andy Collins/NOAA



To many, the ocean and Great Lakes are our planet's greatest playground—and national marine sanctuaries protect some of the best, most iconic places to play. In these ocean parks, you can dive in technicolor coral reefs, explore historic shipwrecks, paddle around lush kelp forests, watch a humpback whale's majestic breach, explore a shoreside tide pool, and more. Adventures never end in national marine sanctuaries.



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STELLWAGEN BANK

Voted “Best Place to See Aquatic Life” by USA TODAY’s 10BEST contest, these waters are one of the premiere whale watching destinations in the world. Fishing, bird-watching, and diving are also within easy reach for visitors.



MONITOR

The wreck of the Civil War vessel *USS Monitor* is found 240 feet below the ocean surface and provides habitat structure to a variety of corals and sponges, as well as sea turtles, sharks, and manta rays.



THUNDER BAY

Nicknamed “Shipwreck Alley,” these waters protect one of America’s best-preserved collections of shipwrecks. The wrecks can be viewed by paddlers, snorkelers, divers, and glass-bottom boat passengers.



GRAY’S REEF

Rocky outcroppings and ledges provide homes for marine life, including black sea bass, snapper, and loggerhead sea turtles. This rich ecosystem offers exciting fishing and diving opportunities for adventurers.



WISCONSIN SHIPWRECK COAST

The 36 sunken historic shipwrecks resting along Wisconsin’s coast attract curious divers. Visitors may also enjoy boating, fishing, paddleboarding, surfing, and wildlife watching.



FLOWER GARDEN BANKS

A treasure within the Gulf of Mexico, the sanctuary is a diving and fishing paradise—a Caribbean oasis in an unexpected place. Vibrant coral reefs are home to a stunning array of species, including iconic manta rays.



MALLOWS BAY-POTOMAC RIVER

At low tide, the remnants of more than 100 World War I-era wooden steamships emerge above the waterline. Paddling and boating are great ways to view the ships and the osprey, blue heron, and bald eagles that live among them.



FLORIDA KEYS

Mangroves, seagrass beds, and coral reefs make this a prime fishing and snorkeling destination. Visitors are encouraged to book with Blue Star operators that uphold responsible recreation practices.

Photos (top to bottom, left to right): Ari Friedlaender/Duke University; NOAA; NOAA; Matt McIntosh/NOAA; NOAA; NOAA; Emma Hickerson/NOAA; Greg McFall/NOAA

RESPECT, PROTECT, ENJOY



Spending time in outdoor spaces has become more important than ever. From seasoned outdoor enthusiasts, to families heading out to their blue space for the first time, we could all use a quick reminder about how to stay safe while having fun!

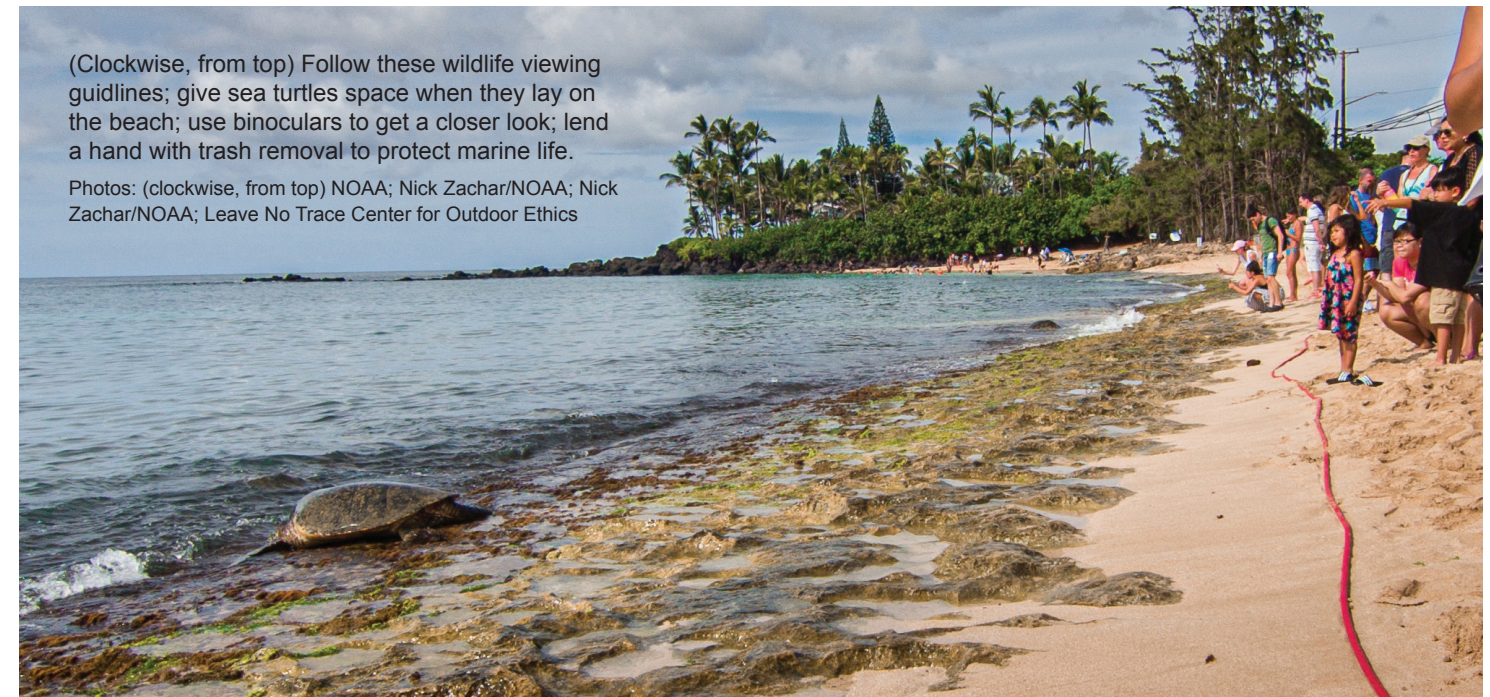
Plan ahead, avoid crowded or closed areas, and build an inclusive outdoors where everyone is welcome. Give wildlife plenty of space, be aware of local regulations, and use your zoom lens or binoculars if you want that close-up view! By practicing these simple principles, you set a positive example for others to do their part.

Recreating responsibly is about people, places, and wildlife. Learn more and show your commitment to wildlife by taking the pledge for [#WildSanctuaries](https://www.noaa.gov/wildlife-viewing) at sanctuaries.noaa.gov/wildlife-viewing.

Check out the Recreate Responsibly guidelines for getting outside to keep yourself healthy and to maintain access to our beloved natural spaces at recreateresponsibly.org and [#RecreateResponsibly](https://www.recreate.gov).



When you hang back and enjoy the view, you maximize your chances of seeing natural behaviors.
Photo: California State Parks



(Clockwise, from top) Follow these wildlife viewing guidelines; give sea turtles space when they lay on the beach; use binoculars to get a closer look; lend a hand with trash removal to protect marine life.
Photos: (clockwise, from top) NOAA; Nick Zachar/NOAA; Nick Zachar/NOAA; Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics



VISITING SANCTUARIES

Visiting one of our discovery centers or an exhibit at our partner venues is an excellent way to learn more about the natural and cultural treasures protected in your National Marine Sanctuary System.



Opposite page (left to right, from top): Mokuapāpapa Discovery Center, Hilo, Hawai'i; Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center, Key West, Florida; Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, Alpena, Michigan; Greater Farallones Visitor Center, San Francisco, California; Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center, Kīhei, Maui, Hawai'i.
Above: (top) Kaua'i Ocean Discovery, Līhu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i; (bottom) Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Exploration Center, Santa Cruz, California.

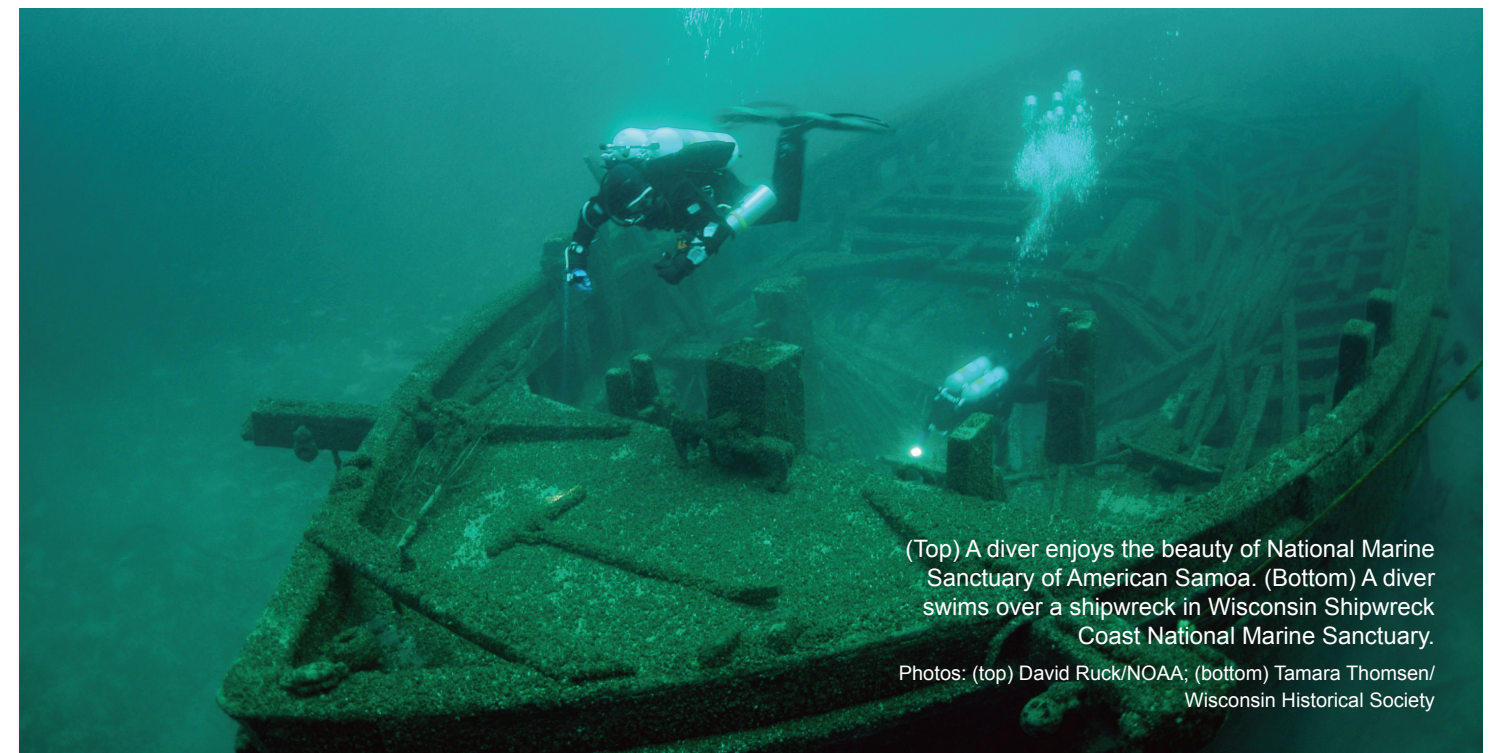
Photos: (opposite page, left to right from top) Dayna McLaughlin/NOAA; Craig Wanous/NOAA; NOAA; Dayna McLaughlin/NOAA; Dayna McLaughlin/NOAA; (above, top) Matt McIntosh/NOAA; (above, bottom) Matt McIntosh/NOAA



A diver enjoys the variety of life in Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.
Photo: Greg McFall/NOAA

DIVING HAPPENS HERE

Some of the best diving in the world can be found in your national marine sanctuaries. From coral reefs to shipwrecks, you'll find opportunities for divers of all experience levels. Take only pictures and leave only bubbles. Book your excursion with sanctuary recognized businesses when possible, like Blue Star operators. Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/bluestar/ today. Dive in!



(Top) A diver enjoys the beauty of National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa. (Bottom) A diver swims over a shipwreck in Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary.
Photos: (top) David Ruck/NOAA; (bottom) Tamara Thomsen/Wisconsin Historical Society



Surfers take in the sunset in Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.
Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA

CATCH A WAVE

Mavericks, California. Waimea Bay and Pipeline, Hawai'i. These names evoke images of the raw beauty of ocean swells exploding on solid reefs and crowds gathered to watch in awe as expert surfers take on world-class waves. From beginner waves to expert tubes, national marine sanctuaries provide opportunities for surfers of all skill levels. In these special places, you'll find some of the most famous surf spots in the world.



A child runs into the water to surf in Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.
Photo: Kate Thompson/NOAA

FISHING HAPPENS HERE

Recreational fishing is one of the most popular pastimes in the United States—and 98% of national marine sanctuary waters are open to recreational fishers. The adrenaline rush and thrill of reeling in a fish is exciting, but remember to recreate responsibly by packing out what you pack in, using barbless hooks, following local and federal regulations, and checking your surroundings before casting. Book your excursion with sanctuary recognized businesses when possible, like Blue Star operators. Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/bluestar/ today.

Below, clockwise from top: Fishing gives young people the opportunity to get out on the water and connect with their national marine sanctuaries; people fish among the wrecks in Malloys Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary; a child fishes from the beach in Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.

Photos: (below, clockwise from top) Sanctuary Classic; Matt McIntosh/NOAA; Matt McIntosh/NOAA



Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is a popular fishing destination for all ages.
Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA



PADDLE AWAY

Kayaking and canoeing are unique, interactive ways to enjoy all that national marine sanctuaries have to offer. Paddlers of all skill sets can experience the beauty of the sanctuaries on guided tours or self-guided adventures. While paddling, be sure to admire wildlife from a distance. Paddle away to start your new adventure!

Visitors launch a kayak in Malloys Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary.

Photo: David J. Ruck/NOAA



Kayakers partake in Get Into Your Sanctuary activities in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Photo: Matthew Stout/NOAA



Kayakers paddle through Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Photo: Chuck Graham

AMAZING WILDLIFE LIVES HERE



Where else can you encounter the majestic animals of the ocean in their natural habitats? In your national marine sanctuaries, you can spot whales, dolphins, seals, sea lions, birds, sea otters, manta rays, and more. While viewing these spectacular creatures, please hang back to enjoy the view.



(Top) View amazing wildlife in Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. (Bottom) Northern gannets can be seen in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.
Photos: (top) Justin Holl/NOAA; (bottom) Peter Flood



Humpback whales visit Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary each year to feed.

Photo: Douglas Croft



SNORKELING HAPPENS HERE



Sometimes a mask, fins, and snorkel are all you need to experience the beauty of national marine sanctuaries. Whether you're exploring shallow-water shipwrecks or coral reefs, snorkeling can be the perfect way to explore a sanctuary or watch wildlife from a distance. Take only pictures and leave only bubbles. Book your excursion with sanctuary recognized businesses when possible, like Blue Star operators. Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/bluestar/ today.



The waters of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary are perfect for beginner snorkelers.

Photo: Matt McIntosh/NOAA



Shallow shipwrecks in Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary can be easily explored by snorkeling.

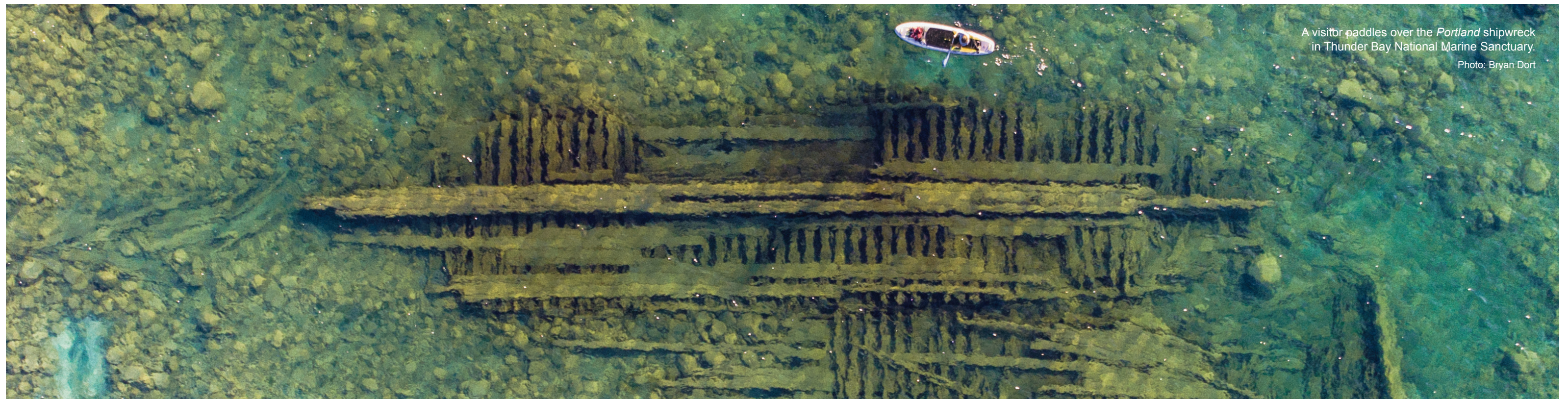
Photo: David J. Ruck/NOAA

STAND UP AND PADDLE

Paddleboarding can transport you to the past while you investigate shipwrecks just beneath the surface. It can also be the perfect way to watch wildlife from a distance.

(Top, left) Paddlers float along the lush shoreline and coastal communities of National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa.
 (Top, right) Northern elephant seals watch a paddleboarder pass by in Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Photos: (top, left) Ropate Delana/NOAA;
 (top, right) Robert Schwemmer/NOAA



A visitor paddles over the *Portland* shipwreck in Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.
 Photo: Bryan Dort

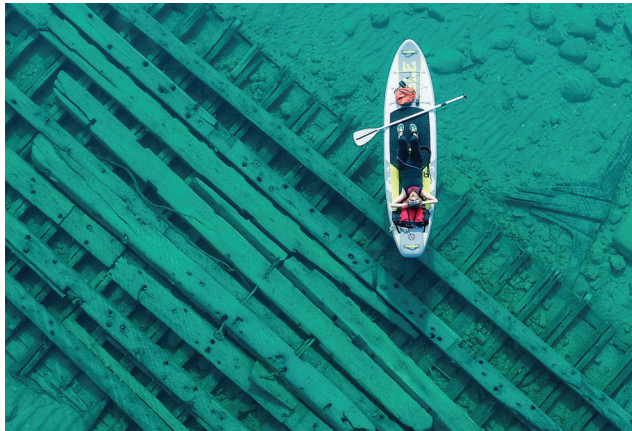
SPLASH, EXPLORE, RELAX

Dip your toes in! The waters and coastlines of national marine sanctuaries are waiting for you. Whether swimming for sport or sheer enjoyment, or exploring the tide pools along the coastlines, national marine sanctuaries offer opportunities for all.

Children swim in the tropical waters of National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa.
Photo: David J. Ruck/NOAA



Below, left to right: Hiking, Monterey Bay NMS; relaxing, Thunder Bay NMS; beach exploration, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS; tidepooling, Olympic Coast NMS; jumping for joy, Monterey Bay NMS.
Photos: Allison Formica; Bryan Dort; Matt McIntosh/NOAA; David J. Ruck/NOAA; David J. Ruck/NOAA





Boaters enjoy the towering coastline of the Channel Islands while sailing through Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Photo: Robert Schwemmer/NOAA

BOATING HAPPENS HERE



Visitors to national marine sanctuaries interested in staying above the waterline can enjoy the scenic surroundings, wildlife viewing opportunities, and fishing spots accessible by boat. We welcome you to venture out, while being conscious and respectful of other boaters and marine life. Stow gear and trash securely onboard. Plan ahead, wear a life jacket, and review navigational maps and marine forecasts to make for a safe and pleasant experience on the water!



Above: (top) Visitors can fly fish in the deep waters of Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary; (bottom) a family explores the mangrove-fringed shorelines in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

Photos: (top) Sepp Haukebo; (bottom) David J. Ruck/NOAA

MEMORIES HAPPEN HERE

Planning an adventure or dreaming of your next vacation? Look no further than your national marine sanctuaries! These jewels of the ocean and Great Lakes hold possibilities for everyone. Discover the ocean and Great Lakes, and yourself, in national marine sanctuaries. Not sure how to start? Book your excursion with sanctuary recognized businesses when possible, like Blue Star operators. Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/bluestar/ today. Recreate responsibly.

Below: (left) camping, Olympic Coast NMS; (right) boogie boarding, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS
Photos: (left) Matt McIntosh/NOAA; (right) David J. Ruck/NOAA



Above, left to right: child kayaking, Channel Islands NMS; windsurfing, Monterey Bay NMS; diving, Flower Garden Banks NMS; whale watching, Stellwagen NMS.

Photos: Claire Fackler/NOAA; Robert Schwemmer/NOAA; Emma Hickerson/NOAA; Matt McIntosh/NOAA

SENTINELS OF THE SANCTUARIES

For centuries, lighthouses have served as beacons, guiding mariners away from danger and marking the way to safe harbor. From the Point Arena Lighthouse overlooking Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary to the lighthouses of the Outer Banks Maritime Heritage Trail near Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, lighthouses all across the nation tell the story of our seafaring history.



(Left to right) Point Arena Lighthouse, Greater Farallones NMS; Thunder Bay Island Manitowoc North Breakwater Lighthouse, Thunder Bay NMS; Lighthouse, Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast NMS; Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, North Carolina, Monitor NMS; American Shoal Lighthouse, Florida Keys NMS

Photos: (left to right) Matt McIntosh/NOAA; David J. Ruck/NOAA; Matt McIntosh/NOAA; Captain Albert E. Theberge/NOAA; Shawn Verne

WHERE WILL YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE TAKE YOU?

National marine sanctuaries work with tour operators to promote responsible and sustainable diving, snorkeling, fishing, and boating practices to reduce the impact of these activities on ecosystems and wildlife. Book your excursion with sanctuary recognized businesses when possible, like Blue Star operators. Visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov/bluestar/ today. The ocean and Great Lakes are calling you to explore and enjoy. Which national marine sanctuary will you visit next?



Monitor National Marine Sanctuary's ANCHOR (Appreciating the Nation's Cultural Heritage and Ocean Resources) operators promote sustainable boating and diving practices, such as respectfully interacting with shipwrecks as both maritime heritage resources and as thriving artificial reefs.

Photo: Bruce Sudweeks



Blue Star tour operators in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary are committed to promoting responsible and sustainable diving, snorkeling, and fishing practices to reduce the impact of these activities on ecosystems in the Florida Keys.

Photo: Nick Zachar/NOAA





Whether you're already an avid outdoors person looking for a new adventure or you've never been kayaking, fishing, or taken advantage of our amazing underwater parks, "Get Into Your Sanctuary" days are perfect for YOU! This annual nationwide celebration showcases recreational opportunities for all types of outdoor enthusiasts.

Share your adventures in national marine sanctuaries through our annual Get Into Your Sanctuary photo contest. Through photography, show the world your special ocean and Great Lakes treasures through your eyes. Learn how you can submit your photos at sanctuaries.noaa.gov/photocontest.html. We look forward to hearing about (and seeing) your memories and adventures!

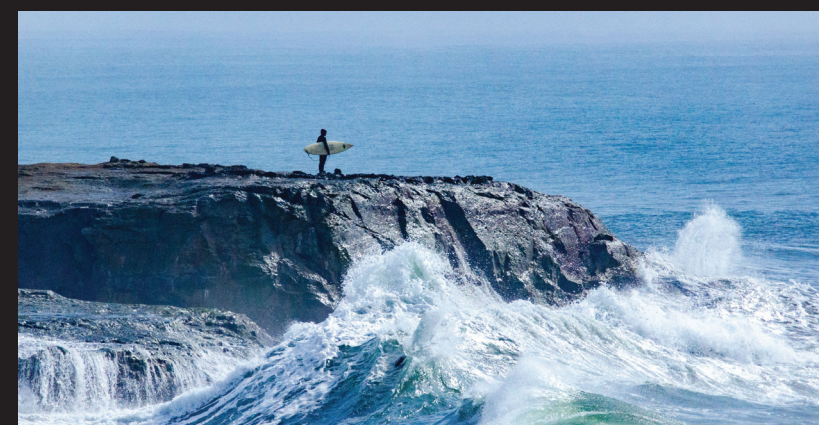


(Background) Bryan Dort, Winner, 2018 Sanctuary Portraits: A paddleboarder floats over the shipwreck of the steamer *Albany* in Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

(Right, top) Bruce Sudweeks, Winner, 2020 Sanctuary Recreation: "My granddaughter is being taught to enjoy and respect the ocean," in Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.

(Right, middle) Olivia Williamson, Winner, 2019 Sanctuary Recreation: A scuba diver catches a glimpse of a green sea turtle in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

(Right, bottom) Douglas Croft, Winner, 2017 Sanctuary Portraits: A surfer contemplates the swell at Lighthouse Point in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.



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