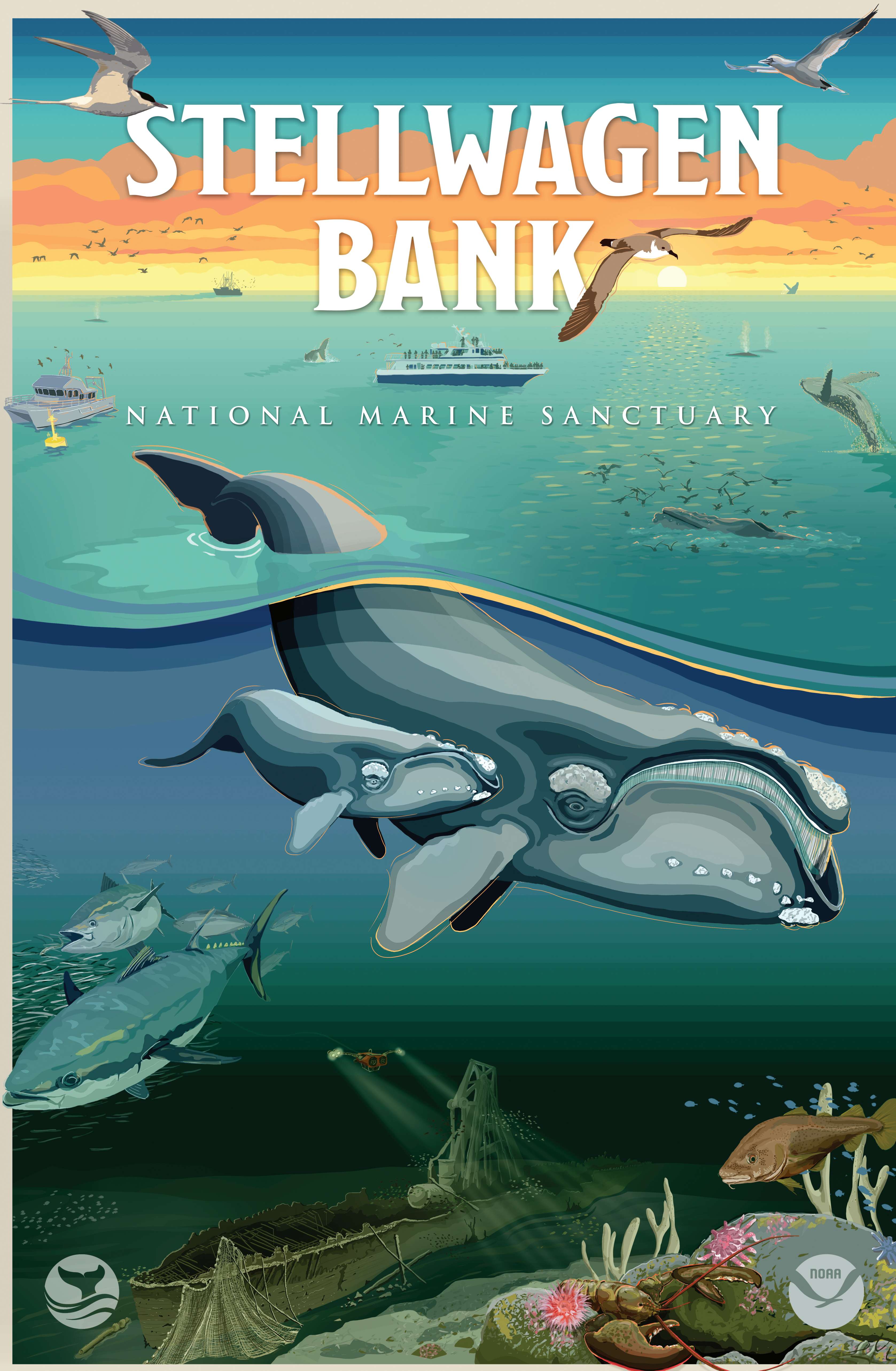


# STELLWAGEN BANK

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY







Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, a wild ocean place near an urban world, sits east of Boston, Massachusetts between Cape Ann and Cape Cod. Historically important as a fishing ground, New England's only national marine sanctuary now reigns as a premier whale watching destination and continues to support commercial and recreational fishing. It serves as an important stopover location for migrating birds and a seasonal destination for both summer and winter species. Its shipwrecks serve as time capsules of our nation's maritime history.

## LOCATION



## QUICK FACTS

### LOCATION

25 miles east of Boston, 3 miles southeast of Cape Ann and 3 miles north of Cape Cod

### PROTECTED AREA

842 square miles

### DESIGNATION

November 1992

### HABITATS

- Boulder reefs
- Gravel fields
- Muddy basins
- Open ocean
- Rocky ridges
- Sandy banks
- Shipwrecks

### KEY SPECIES

- American lobster
- Atlantic bluefin tuna
- Atlantic cod
- Atlantic white-sided dolphin
- Great shearwater
- Humpback whale
- North Atlantic right whale
- Northern sand lance
- Sea scallop
- Wilson's storm petrel

## ABOUT THE ARTWORK

The sanctuary's main geologic feature, Stellwagen Bank, sits over a complex layered seabed, supporting life, from the red anemones that attach to hard substrate to the sand lance and sand dollars inhabiting the sand beds. Water movement around and over Stellwagen Bank helps bring nutrients that fuel an abundance of life, including cod, tuna, humpback whales, and a variety of seabirds. One of the world's most endangered large whales, the North Atlantic right whale, visits the sanctuary during the winter and spring to feed.

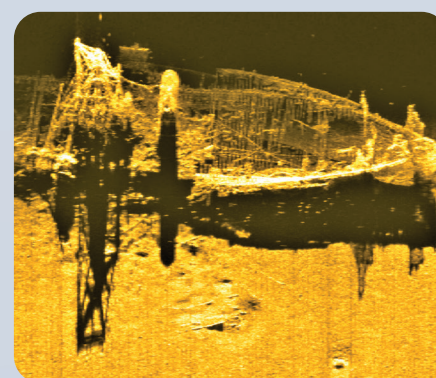


### MONITORING NOISE

The sanctuary has pioneered the monitoring of noise in national marine sanctuaries by establishing a network of passive acoustic listening devices.

### HISTORIC SHIPWRECK PROTECTION

The sanctuary is the resting place of over 50 historic shipwrecks including the world-renown steamship *Portland*, which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



### HUMPBACK WHALE (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)

The charismatic humpback whale transfixes whale watchers every year while they feed and teach their calves how to feed.

### SAND LANCE (*Ammodytes dubius*)

Many marine mammals, seabirds, and fish rely on the sand lance, a pencil-sized forage fish, for food.



### AMERICAN LOBSTER (*Homarus americanus*)

Lobsters support an important commercial fishery in the sanctuary and are important scavengers on the seafloor.

### GREAT SHEARWATER (*Puffinus gravis*)

Sanctuary researchers have documented shearwaters migrating over 37,000 miles in one year from Stellwagen Bank to the far South Atlantic Ocean and back.



## BELOW

Sanctuary researchers have been conducting the longest running whale tagging research program in the world. For the past 22 years, researchers from around the world gather to tag whales (humpback, fin, sei, and right whales) with shoe-sized digital tags that adhere harmlessly to the whale's back with suction cups. The tags stay on for 24–48 hours collecting data on the behavior and movements of the whale, which enables managers to protect these species.



## 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)



Legend:   
 ○ National Marine Sanctuary   
 ▲ Marine National Monument   
 ■ Proposed National Marine Sanctuary   
 Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.