



Stellwagen Bank



Habitats

Sand & gravel bank

Muddy basins

Boulder fields

Rocky ledges

Open ocean

Key Species

Northern right whale

Humpback whale

Atlantic White-sided dolphin

Wilson's Storm Petrel

Northern Gannet

Sand lance

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

sits at the mouth of Massachusetts Bay between Cape Ann and Cape Cod. The 824-square mile sanctuary encompasses mud-filled basins, rock ledges and boulder fields and the gravel and coarse sand bank which was formed by the retreat of glaciers from the last Ice Age. The bank's position at the mouth of Massachusetts Bay forces an upwelling of nutrient-rich water from the Gulf of Maine—leading to high productivity and a multilayered food web with species ranging from single-celled phytoplankton to the great whales.

Research Activities

Sanctuary projects include a side-scan sonar survey, a geological characterization with the U.S. Geological Survey, and a fishery habitat research program. The Aquanaut Program of the National Undersea Research Center at University of Connecticut uses the sanctuary as a site for student research on benthic communities and acoustics.

Education Activities

The sanctuary serves as a whale migration resource center for *Journey North*, an Internet-based education program and offers a comprehensive Stellwagen Bank Information Center with the U.S. Geological Survey at <http://vineyard.er.usgs.gov>. Sanctuary educational activities include an annual week-long MimiFest for grades 4-8, curriculum design, and professional development workshops. The sanctuary also maintains interpretive kiosks, a traveling photo exhibit, sanctuary videos, and a new CD-ROM on the food web.



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

Protected Area
842-square miles

Designation
November 1992

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Above: Wolffish takes cover; left to right: Northern lobster; Stellwagen's bounty ranges from this minute diatom to huge humpback whales

