



Channel Islands



Habitats

- Kelp forests
- Rocky intertidal
- Sandy beaches
- Seagrass meadows
- Pelagic, open ocean
- Deep rocky reefs

Key Species

- California sea lion
- Elephant & harbor seals
- Blue, gray & humpback whales
- Dolphins
- Blue shark
- Brown pelican
- Western gull & Ashy Storm petrel

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary encompasses the waters surrounding San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa, and Santa Barbara Islands. A fertile combination of warm and cool currents results in a great variety of plants and animals, including: large nearshore forests of giant kelp, flourishing populations of fish and invertebrates, and abundant and diverse populations of cetaceans, pinnipeds, and marine birds.

Research Activities

The sanctuary supports oceanographic, seabird, marine mammal, kelp forest, and intertidal research by local, state, and federal agencies. Part of their on-site assistance for regional research projects includes a 65-foot research vessel, the R/V *Shearwater*. Today the sanctuary holds a research bibliography with over 4,000 scientific references, cosponsors research symposia and provides a geographic information system database for the research community.

Education Activities

Interpretive exhibits, signs and displays, programs and curriculum for teachers and students are part of the Channel Islands sanctuary educational activities. Sanctuary publications include newsletters, brochures, posters, and educational resource directory. Throughout the year, the sanctuary offers public programs, lectures, and events. Its internship and volunteer programs are an important part of sanctuary operations.



Location
About 25 miles off the coast of Santa Barbara, California

Protected Area
1,658-square miles

Designation
September 1980

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Above: California sea lions; left to right: fishing boat at sunset in the Santa Barbara Channel; education program students; garibaldi

