



Gray's Reef



Habitats

Calcareous sandstone ledges

Sand bottom communities

Tropical/temperate reef

Key Species

Northern right whale

Loggerhead sea turtle

Grouper

Black sea bass

Angelfish

Vase sponge

Ivory bush coral

Sea whips

Gray's Reef National Marine

Sanctuary one of the largest near-shore sandstone reefs in the southeastern

United States, is located Just off the coast of Georgia, in waters 20 meters

deep. The area earned sanctuary designation in 1981, and was recognized

as an international Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1986. Gray's Reef consists

of sandstone outcroppings and ledges up to three meters in height, with sandy,

flat-bottomed troughs between.

Because of the diversity of marine life,

Gray's Reef is one of the most popular

sport fishing and diving destinations

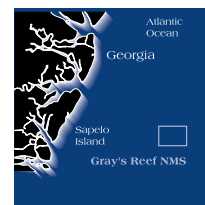
along the Georgia coast.

Research Activities

The sanctuary's research activities combine long-term monitoring of environmental conditions and processes and on-site projects by regional researchers. It also conducts reef fish tagging and assessment, benthic invertebrate monitoring and geoarchaeological surveys.

Education Activities

Community outreach marine programs, seminars, and presentations along with education publications and exhibits offer the community an opportunity to learn more about the vulnerable ocean ecosystems. The sanctuary's marine science curriculum is geared to elementary, middle, and high school students. Programs are conducted statewide through the Georgia Distance Learning Network.



Location
20 miles east of Sapelo Island, Georgia

Protected Area
23-square miles

Designation
January 1981

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Above: loggerhead sea turtle; left to right: banded tulip shell; feathered hydroid; common seastars

