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Historic steamboat *Portland* discovered in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

NOAA confirmed the final resting place of New England's most sought after and mysterious wreck, the steamship *Portland*. All 192 passengers and crew were lost in the Nov. 27, 1898 storm. The wreck is located within NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, off the coast of Massachusetts.



Sidescan image of the steamship *Portland*. Photo: NOAA

In a late July and early August joint research mission, NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the National

Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut, mapped and shot video of the wreck lost in the "Portland Gale of 1898" ... [more](#)

[Stories from 2002](#)

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[Stories from 1999](#)

Nuclear sub gives Sanctuary Manager a better view of Civil War shipwreck

It isn't everyday that the world's only nuclear research submarine pays a visit to a National Marine Sanctuary. This visit was three years in the making.

--Dr. John Broadwater



Photo: Monitor Collection, NOAA

[Submerge yourself here](#)

Florida Keys Sanctuary Joins in Historic Coral Transplant at Grounding Site

In what some reporters described as a "historic transplant," Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Scientist Dr. Harold Hudson and Harbor Branch marine biologist Kevin Gaines took sea fans grown in captivity and re-seeded them on a portion of reef in the sanctuary damaged in a ship grounding. Other attempts have been tried before but not on this scale.

[Learn more](#)



Sea fans grown in captivity may one day provide new life to a reef damaged by a ship grounding. Photo: Larry Zettwoch

Gray's Reef Sanctuary holds its 4th Annual Ocean Fest



World famous Crabettes send the crowd scuttling about with their fabulous ocean polkas, roll out the barnacles, we'll have a barrel of bryozoans.

Photo: Reed Bohne

With gray skies that provided relief from an already unrelenting spring sun and a gentle breeze that kept the sand gnats away, conditions were just perfect for NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary fourth annual Ocean Fest. It was another super celebration of our ocean and coastal environment for Earth Day 2002.

[Share the fun!](#)

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's By-the-wind Sailors

Navigating the open oceans can be a difficult task, even for the most accomplished of seafarers. Natural sailors can steer astray at times, as is the case with these strange blue creatures that have been found littering central California coast beaches...

[More](#)



Photo: Kelly Newton

Fagatele Bay Sanctuary hosts visitors from Sustainable Seas Expeditions



On March 2nd, Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary staff welcomed a visit from the Sustainable Seas Expedition (SSE) crew.

[Learn more](#)

Photo: Nancy Daschbach

National Marine Sanctuary Program Honors Friends Lost on September 11

Under sun-filled sky, staff from the National Marine Sanctuary Program gathered aboard a former Coast Guard patrol boat, soon to be research vessel, to remember Joe Ferguson, the National Geographic

Society educator and sanctuary advocate who perished on September 11th. The waterside ceremony was held on February 20 at the University of Georgia, Marine Education Center and Aquarium dock on Skidaway Island, Ga.

[More](#)



Photo: Greg McFall/NOAA

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary & Underwater Preserves Manager Search

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is seeking a sanctuary manager for the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve in Alpena, Michigan. The closing date for applications is April 17, 2002.



Photo: Great Lakes Visual Research

[More](#)

NOAA Moves to Strengthen Protections for Northwestern Hawaiian Islands

In its efforts to maintain strong protections for the nation's largest coral reef, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) begin the process for designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as the nation's 14th national marine sanctuary.



Photo: Monterey Bay NMS

[To learn more](#)

In Memoriam

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States leaves a grieving nation joined together in a common bond to commemorate the dead and comfort the living.

We at the National Marine Sanctuary System were especially touched by this tragedy when we learned that among the victims of the hijacking and suicide crash of American Airlines Flight 77 were

students, teachers, and sanctuary partners bound for a week-long field trip to Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

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Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE
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Feature Stories



Safety is Job One at Our National Marine Sanctuaries

By Gail Krueger and David Hall

The cry "Man overboard!" was heard at a number of NOAA's national marine sanctuaries last month. There was also a wave of fires, hurricanes, and even earthquakes. In each case the response was quick and no lives were lost.



These were only mock disasters, staged during the sanctuary program's first annual "Safety Week." But should such events actually occur sanctuary staff will be well prepared, thanks to an intense week of hands-on safety programs and drills.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's Karen Grimmer (left) and Deirdre Hall practice a "man overboard" drill aboard the sanctuary vessel SHARK CAT. Photo: Brad Damitz/MBNMS

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[Gray's Reef](#) [Shades of Gray](#)

At sanctuaries throughout the 14-site National Marine Sanctuary System, staff learned how to handle everything from heart attacks to hazardous waste spills.

Because many sanctuary staffers spend time on or under the water, boat and diver safety drills were an important part of the safety stand-down.

At several sanctuaries, staff members simulated boat evacuations by donning bright orange immersion, or "Gumby," suits and jumping into the water. Each orange-clad staffer then drifted toward a life raft or

Monitor
Cheesebox

sanctuary vessel and practiced climbing aboard.

Sanctuary staff also practiced various forms of “man overboard” drills. In each case, lessons were learned.

Monterey Bay

“We now know which sanctuary boat we have to use to get people out of the water and transport them to safety,” said Steve Baumgartner, operation manager for the lower region of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. “One particular boat worked out very well. We would definitely turn to that one first [in that situation].”

Olympic Coast
e-news

Gerry E. Studds
Stellwagen Bank
Soundings

“The entire program made me feel that I, too, could help in a dive or other emergency on either of the sanctuary’s boats,” said Becky Shortland, policy coordinator for Gray’s Reef Sanctuary. Shortland and other non-diving members of the Gray’s Reef staff often go out with researchers as assistants and observers on both research dives and routine patrols.

Thunder Bay
Beneath the Waves

Safety Week was not confined to boating safety drills, however. Staff throughout the sanctuary system, including its Silver Spring headquarters, reviewed emergency procedures, supplies and equipment.

“Our safety stand-down is about more than just safe boating,” said NOAA Capt. Ted Lillestolen, NMSP’s deputy director for facilities, vessels, aircraft and safety. “It’s a host of carefully-planned, comprehensive training exercises for all sanctuary program staff, regardless of where they work. We want to be sure that when people come to sanctuaries, they are in an environment that is as safe as we can make it.”

“This was a very important learning experience,” said Sarah Fangman, the Safety Week coordinator for Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. “I was really pleased to see how seriously my colleagues took this day of training. They were fully engaged, asked really important questions and offered fantastic ideas on how we could better prepare ourselves for emergency situations.”

“This has been a valuable opportunity for team-building as well as an important commitment to safety,” said Gray’s Reef Sanctuary Manager Reed Bohne.

While the sanctuary program plans to make Safety Week an annual event, Lillestolen and NMSP Director Daniel J. Basta say the sanctuary program won’t wait a year before updating emergency procedures and providing additional safety training to staff. “It will be an ongoing activity,” said Lillestolen.

“We value the health and well-being of our employees, those who volunteer in our sanctuaries, those who visit them, and those who conduct research in them. That’s what’s driving this effort.” said Basta. “Like our other NOAA colleagues, we know that safety is our first responsibility.” -- [[Click here](#) for field site reports]

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Press Releases



[Jan. 7, 2005](#) --Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, managed by the U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is seeking applicants for four Sanctuary Advisory Council seats.

[Jan. 3, 2005](#) --The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) is seeking applicants to fill sanctuary advisory council seats representing research, conservation, maritime activity, education and community-at-large interests. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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January 2005

Natural Events

Gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*) migrate south through the Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones, and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries. From December through February, the whales swim along the coastline and may be visible from shore as they head for the warm waters of Mexico's west coast lagoons for calving and mating.

January is the peak month for Northern elephant seal pup births in the Monterey Bay and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries. Females give birth to a single pup within a week of hauling out on the beach. Pups will be nursed for three to four weeks before weaning.

In Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, rockfish spawning peaks this month.

Northern elephant seal (*Mirounga augustirostris*) pupping and breeding season on San Miguel Island in Channel Islands continues through February. On Anacapa and Santa Barbara Islands, California Brown Pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*) begin nesting through the month of February. The seals also breed on Southeast Farallon Islands and at nearby Pt. Reyes National Seashore.

Hammerhead sharks and spotted rays school around the East and West Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary, through early April.

In mid January, North Atlantic right whale return to Cape Cod Bay and the southern end of the Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary to feed on early bloom of copepods.

Winter gull migration begins.

Female northern right whales calve off the coast of Georgia and North Florida, Gray's Reef Sanctuary.

Alcids, such as razorbills and dovebies, overwinter at Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.



A portion of the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale population returns to Cape Cod Bay and Stellwagen Bank region to feed on patches of copepods.

Legions of seabirds feast on the abundant food resources present at Cordell Bank.

The winter months are excellent for tidepooling in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary because afternoon low tides expose marine algae and invertebrates. The low tides which began in November continue though February.

Minus tides in the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary permit intensive intertidal algae and invertebrate surveys at S.E. Farallon Island.

Sanctuary Events

Jan. 11 • Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
"FROM SHORE TO SEA" Speaker Series

Speaker to be announced

This speaker series is free and open to the public.

7pm at Chase Palm Park Center

236 E Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara, CA.

**Jan. 12 • Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
FROM SHORE TO SEA Speaker Series
Speaker to be announced**

This speaker series is free and open to the public.
7pm @ the Robert J. Lagomarsino Visitor Center
1901 Spinnaker Drive in the Ventura Harbor.

**Jan. 14 • Monterey Bay Sanctuary Research Activity Panel (RAP)
Meeting, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., USGS office, Santa Cruz. For more
information contact Andrew Devogelaere at (831) 647-4213. [Click here](#)
for more information.**

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SANCTUARY WATCH



Four times a year, the National Marine Sanctuary Program publishes a national newsletter in print and electronic format to keep our colleagues, collaborators and constituents informed about the many program activities and accomplishments that take place within our 13 national marine sanctuaries.

[Click here](#) for instructions on how to receive an html formatted e-mail version of the Sanctuary Watch newsletter.

Please e-mail the [editor](#) if you would like to be added to the mailing list or to receive a hard copy of the newsletter.

If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader, [please download](#) the free program.

Links to additional Sanctuary Newsletters

[Florida Keys Sounding Line](#)

[Gray's Reef Shades of Gray](#)

[Humpback Whale Ke Leo O Ke Kohola](#)

Sanctuary Watch Vol. 5 No. 3 Fall 2004 - Special Issue: Diving into Education

- Sanctuary Education Programs for Teachers and Students
- Critter Files: Black-footed Albatross
- Newsplash
- Star of the Sea: Kim Rusk
- Sanctuary Voices: Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education

[\[Download Sanctuary Watch Vol. 5 No. 3 -- pdf document, 2.2 MB\]](#)

Monitor

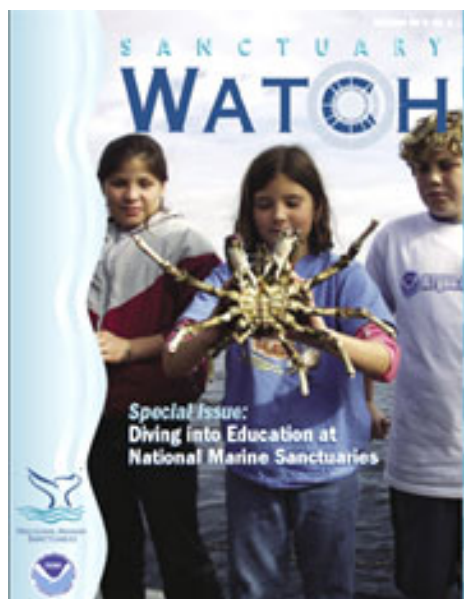
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Sanctuary Watch Fall 2004

Sanctuary Watch Vol. 5 No. 2
Summer 2004

- Olympic Coast Sanctuary Celebrates 10 Years of Stewardship
- Critter Files: Sea Otter
- Studying Humpback Whales Across North America
- Star of the Sea: Stephanie Harlan
- Sanctuary Voices: U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy

[Download [Sanctuary Watch Vol. 5 No. 2](#) -- pdf document, 2.9 MB]



Sanctuary Watch Summer 2004

Sanctuary Watch Vol. 5 No. 1
Spring 2004

- Spotlight on Exploration
- Sound Science
- Hunt for the *Alligator*
- James Christley: Star of the Sea
- Warty Sea Slug
- Sanctuary Voices: Reaching Out to Boaters

[\[Download Sanctuary Watch Vol. 5 No. 1 -- pdf document, 2.5 MB\]](#)

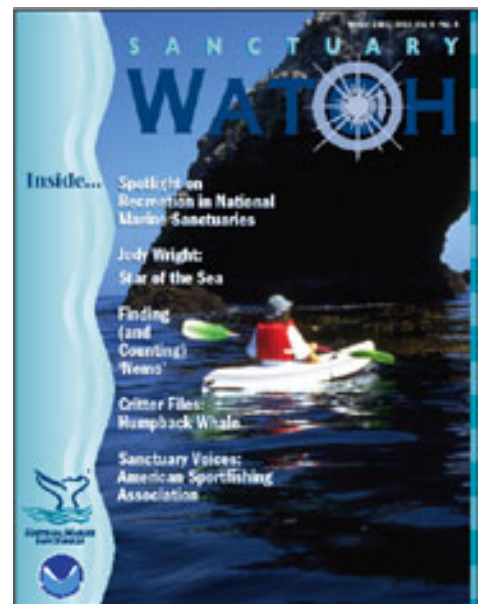


Sanctuary Watch Spring 2004

Sanctuary Watch Vol. 4 No. 4 Winter 2003

- Sanctuaries: Something for Everyone
- Paddling Through Paradise
- Sanctuaries are for the Birds
- Finding (and Counting) 'Nemo'
- Critter Files: Whale Watching/
Humpback Whale
- Sanctuary Voices: American
Sportfishing Association

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Sanctuary Watch Winter 2003

Sanctuary Watch Vol. 4 No. 3 Fall 2003

- Seabirds Find a Home at Gray's Reef Sanctuary
- Revisiting the *USS Monitor*
- Critter Files: White Shark
- Gordon Bennett and Al Brooks: Stars of the Sea
- The 'Canaries' of Fagatele Bay Sing the Blues
- New Sanctuaries Managers

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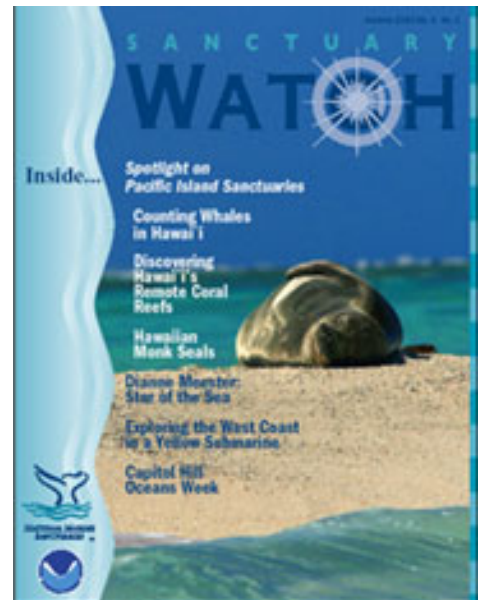


Sanctuary Watch Fall 2003

***Sanctuary Watch* Vol. 4 No. 2 Summer 2003**

- Spotlight on Pacific Island Sanctuaries
- Counting Whales in Hawai'i
- Discovering Hawai'i's Remote Coral Reefs
- Hawaiian Monk Seals
- Dianne Meester: Star of the Sea
- Exploring the West Coast in a Yellow Submarine
- Capitol Hill Oceans Week

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Sanctuary Watch Summer 2003

***Sanctuary Watch* Vol. 4 No. 1 Winter 2002/2003**

- Sanctuary Discoveries: *Pacbaroness*, *Portland*, Thunder Bay
- Sanctuary Watch Star of the Sea: Billy Causy, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
- New Vessel Helps Scientists, Students Study the Sea
- Monitor Expedition 2002
- Follow that Fish! Tagging Program Helps Researchers get to the Bottom of a Fishy Mystery
- U.S. Senator Breaux honored for work with Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary
- Channel Islands Sanctuary Explorer Ballard Take Students From 'Shore to Sea'



Sanctuary Watch Feb/April 2003

[\[Download Sanctuary Watch Vol. 4 No. 1 -- pdf document, 4.5 MB\]](#)

Sanctuary Watch Vol. 3 No. 6 December 2002/January 2003

- California Creates Marine Reserve in Channel Islands
- Sanctuary Managers Promote Program Around the Globe
- California Mystery Oil Spill Solved
- National Marine Sanctuary Program Joins in Korean MPA Planning Workshop
- Channel Islands Welcomes New Sanctuary Manager Christopher Mobley
- More explorations at the *Portland* site in Gerry. E. Studds



Spiny lobsters scuttling along the ocean floor now have additional protections in the Channel Islands.

Photo: Shane Anderson

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

- Sanctuary Staff John C. Halas and Andrea Hrusovsky Awarded NOAA's Bronze Medal 2002
- Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Park Manager Jeff Gray Joins Search for WWII Japanese Sub
- Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Field Station for Sensor Tests
- Scenes from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary 10th Anniversary
- "Rescuing "Beany," a California Baby Sea Lion
- Safe Havens in Half Moon Bay--the National Marine Sanctuary Program Celebrates its Newest California Field Office
- Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary Student ROV Competes for Florida Prize
- U.S. Reefs Receive International Protection
- National Aquarium Gets Sanctuary Facelift
- Sanctuary Reefs on Coral Reef Task Force Agenda
- December 2002/January 2003 Calendar Highlights

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Sanctuary Watch Archives

[Click here](#) for the Sanctuary Watch newsletter archives covering the years 2000 to 2002.

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Sanctuary Boat Captain Honored for Heroic Rescue

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently awarded its Gold Medal in Heroism to Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary NOAA Corp LCDR Mark H. Pickett for "exemplary courage and heroism" in saving the lives of two U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) employees after a capsizing of the Channel Islands Sanctuary vessel *R/V Ballena* on November 4, 2000.

[More](#)

Sanctuary Explorer Describes Life Below the Waves

Cathy Sakas, education coordinator for the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, and five other aquanauts spent nine days in Aquarius, an undersea laboratory off Key Largo in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

[Read about her adventures](#)

Sanctuary's Researchers Reach Deep Dives

A Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary research team, monitoring the effects of fiber-optic cables on the ocean floor, reaped additional benefits. Using *Delta*, a two-person submersible, scientists conducted 55 dives throughout the mission.

Sanctuary News

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[Learn more](#)

National Marine Sanctuary System's New Director

On January 10, 2001, Dr. James D. Baker, the NOAA's Administrator and Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, named Daniel J. Basta as Director of the National Marine Sanctuary System.

[More on Dan Basta](#)

Great Lakes Marine Sanctuary Manager Search

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, the nation's newest marine sanctuary, began a search for a sanctuary manager to help in the protection of a nationally significant collection of over 100 shipwrecks, spanning over a century of Great Lakes shipping history.

[For more details](#)

Sanctuary scientists discover shipwreck

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary archaeologists and staff have located the steel hull of the *Temple Bar*, wrecked among the Quillayute Needles in 1939.

[More on the Olympic Coast wreck](#)

'Elye'wun's Historic Channel Crossing

It's been more than 125 years since a Chumash tomol was paddled across the rough waters of the Channel Islands. On September 8, NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) staff members, aboard the NOAA support research vessel *Xantu*, were witness to an historic tomol crossing reports the sanctuary's Cultural Resources Coordinator Robert Schwemmer.

[Learn more](#)

January 8, 2002

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New National Marine Sanctuary Designated in Great Lakes

The new Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve was designated on October 7, 2000 in Alpena, Michigan. This new sanctuary is the first marine sanctuary in the Great Lakes, the first one in freshwater, and only the second designated to protect underwater cultural resources!

[Learn more about our newest sanctuary](#)

[Stories from 2001](#)

[Stories from 2000](#)

[Stories from 1999](#)

Agreement reached on Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary

[Designation planned for Great Lakes sanctuary](#)

Snapshot day Volunteers Test Monterey Bay Sanctuary Waters

On Earth Day 2000, local citizens celebrated the event along California's Central Coast by participating in the first annual Monterey

Bay National Marine Sanctuary "Snapshot Day," a sanctuary-wide watershed monitoring event designed to increase public awareness of water quality issues affecting sanctuary watersheds.

[Volunteers help to protect Monterey Bay waters](#)

Students join scientists in Gray's Reef Sanctuary Research

Braving howling wind and high seas four high school students-at-sea from Gray's Reef's Student Ocean Council assisted scientists Dr. Jeff Hyland, Cindy Cooksey and Len Balthis from NOAA's ORCA Lab in Charleston, South Carolina in a mission to Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

[Learn more about their discoveries.](#)

Joining Forces on Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Programs

NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary in the National Ocean Service (NOS) and the Southwest Region of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recently embarked on a joint effort to promote public awareness and support for conserving threatened salmon and steelhead in the California Central Coast area.

[Read more about the partnership.](#)

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Announces Diving Photo Contest

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary announces a new diving photo contest for coastal and underwater enthusiasts starting on May 2 and ending on September 1, 2000. Contest winners will have their work prominently featured in a new brochure being developed by the Sanctuary and members of its Diver Partnership Program.

[Learn more about it.](#)

NOAA's Marine Sanctuaries Celebrate Earth Day

From the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, the national marine sanctuaries will be celebrating Earth Day, reminding us of the important connections between land and sea.

[Join the fun.](#)

Sustainable Seas Expeditions in Hawaii

Over 400 students in Hawaii were fortunate to get a closer look at the Sustainable Seas Expeditions (SSE) during its two week visit to the Hawaiian Islands Humpback National Marine Sanctuary.

[Learn more about their ocean adventures.](#)

Sanctuary Assists in Alaska Airlines Flight 261

On January 31, 2000 Alaska Airlines Flight 261 went down about three miles from Anacapa Island in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. More about the recovery efforts within the sanctuary is available at <http://www.nos.noaa.gov/news/flt261/flight261.html>

Sanctuaries Join to Aid Samoan Coral Reef

Coral reefs threatened by the removal of grounded vessels in Pago Pago Harbor, American Samoa are now a little bit safer through the efforts of the Florida Keys and Fagatale Bay National Marine Sanctuaries and NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration.

[More about the coral recovery](#)

DOC Silver Medal awarded to Sanctuary Staff

Managers of National Marine Sanctuaries are no strangers to putting out fires. NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Manager Lieutenant Commander Ed Cassano quickly moved from fighting metaphorical fires to actual firefighting when he joined sanctuary staff and others in the Santa Barbara community to fight an intense fire engulfing a historic seaside wharf.

[More about the award](#)

Sustainable Seas Expedition 2000

After a successful year conducting more than 150 submersible dives in nine of NOAA's national marine sanctuaries, Sustainable Seas Expedition explorers are looking to 2000 with renewed energy and enthusiasm in their quest to learn more about these unique protected areas.

[Learn more about SSE 2000](#)

New *Monitor* Exhibit Opens

A nearly full-scale replica of the *Monitor's* famous revolving turret is the centerpiece of a dramatic new exhibition on the USS *Monitor* and the *Monitor* Sanctuary that opened at The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia, on September 25.

[More about the *Monitor*](#)

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September 17, 2001

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Sanctuaries seek protection of maritime history

Advances in diving gear, navigational electronics, and aquatic robots are bringing historical sunken vessels within the reach of marine archaeologists and recreational divers alike. Concerned recreational divers are now joining with scientists to take an active role in preserving and documenting underwater maritime history and educating others as to the importance of conserving it.

[More about NOAA's role](#)

[Stories from 2001](#)

Ocean Report offers support to U.S. sanctuaries

[Stories from 2000](#)

On September 2, Vice President Al Gore announced new actions to help preserve and protect our nation's oceans and coasts in a special report given at the New England Aquarium in Boston. One proposal in the "The Ocean Report would enlist commercial fishermen and divers in research efforts at the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary in California.

[Read more about "The Ocean Report"](#)

[Stories from 1999](#)

NOAA's Shipwreck Trail

Sanctuary News

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Weather and war, uncharted waters and human error enacted a deadly toll on seagoing vessels traveling the waters now contained within the boundaries of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuaries. The new Shipwreck Trail offers a thematic map of significant, accessible, commonly-dived shipwrecks and artificial reefs through the sanctuary's waters.

[For more on the new diving adventure](#)

Monitor Mission 1999

A joint Navy and NOAA expedition completed part one of a two-part mission this summer to salvage and shore up the historical remains of the *Monitor*, the famous Civil War ironclad that foundered and sank in a storm 137 years ago.

[For more on the *Monitor* mission including daily updates.](#)

From vessel grounding to reef recovery

On August 10, 1994, the R/V *Columbus Iselin*, a research ship studying the currents on the Florida Straits, smashed through a coral reef colony in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The damaged area, Looe Key, contains some of the most aesthetically valuable and heavily visited reefs in the continental U.S. part of the Florida Reef Tract, it is the third largest barrier reef in the world. Now five-years later, the Looe Key reef restoration has begun.

[For more on the Columbus Iselin reef restoration](#)

One fish, two fish, rockfish, bluefish!

For two weeks in July, the annual Great American Fish Count sends recreational divers and snorkelers into the water to help scientists learn more about fish diversity and populations. Waters include five

national marine sanctuaries: Channel Islands and Monterey Bay, California; Flower Garden Banks, Texas; Florida Keys, Florida; and Gray's Reef, Georgia.

[For more on the Great American Fish Count](#)

First Great Lakes sanctuary moves closer to designation

Shipwrecks spanning more than a century of Great Lakes shipping -- early wooden sailboats to steel-hulled lakes steamers -- may soon receive protection as part of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary system. An important step in the designation process of Thunder Bay, Michigan, took place recently with the publication of a Final Environmental Impact Statement and Management Plan.

[For more on the proposed Thunder Bay Sanctuary](#)

Sustainable Seas Expeditions head east

In early July, the Sustainable Seas Expeditions move to the East Coast where aquanauts will explore the rich boulder reefs and sandy plains of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. The sanctuary, 25 miles east of Boston, Mass. protects 842-square miles of open ocean.

[Learn more about SSE](#)

Sustainable Seas Expeditions

After a year of planning, the Sustainable Seas Expeditions kicks off its unprecedented deep sea exploration of NOAA's twelve national marine sanctuaries this month.

[For more on Sustainable Seas Expeditions](#)

New Navigation System Protects Florida's Coral Reefs

In early March the federal government installed state-of-the-art navigational aids in NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to help ships avoid grounding on fragile, threatened coral reefs.

[For full story](#)

Sanctuary educators praised for environmental work

Sarah Mitchell and Becky Shortland of NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary were honored recently in a *Savannah Morning News* series for their positive and significant roles in preserving ocean and coastal environments.

[Praise for Gray's Reef Marine Sanctuary educators](#)

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary honored as conservation accomplishment of the century

As the 20th century draws to a close, The Audubon Society, the nation's first bird preservation organization, took the opportunity to reflect back on the greatest conservation accomplishments of the past 100 years.

[For full story](#)

Coast Guard pilots help sanctuary protect coral reefs

NOAA's Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary staff Shelley Du Puy and Emma Hickerson once had to travel eleven hours to reach sanctuary boundaries located 100 miles off the coasts of Texas and Louisiana. Now U.S. Coast Guard pilots help sanctuary staff reach the sanctuary in 45 minutes.

[For more "eyes in the sky"](#)

September 17, 2001

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Historic Steamboat Portland Discovered in Stellwagen National Marine Sanctuary

August 29, 2002 — NOAA confirmed the final resting place of New England's most sought after and mysterious wreck, the steamship Portland. All 192 passengers and crew were lost in the Nov. 27, 1898 storm. The wreck is located within NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, off the coast of Massachusetts.



In a late July and early August joint research mission, NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the National Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut, mapped and shot video of the wreck lost in the "Portland Gale of 1898." The video and side-scan images from the mission provide visual documentation to earlier work by American Underwater Search and Survey.

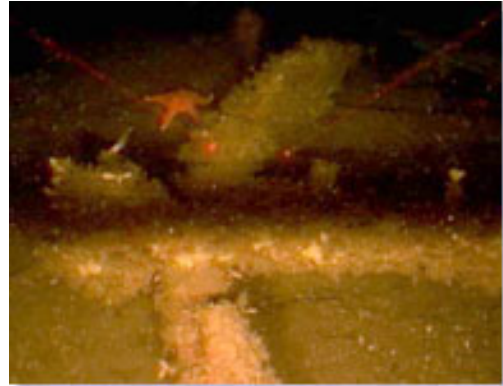
NOAA side scan sonar image view of the Portland as it rests at the bottom of the ocean. Click image for larger view. Photo: NOAA

"We are excited to be able to bring some closure to one of New England's most mysterious shipwrecks," said Craig MacDonald, NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary superintendent. "The story of the Steamship Portland and its fatal last run from Boston to Portland, Maine, has intrigued maritime historians for years due to the wide-ranging reported sightings of the ship during the storm. This mission allows us to start putting some answers to the questions about

its loss."

The location of the wreck within the sanctuary's boundaries provides protection unavailable in other federal waters off Massachusetts. Sanctuary regulations prohibit moving, removing or injuring, or attempting to move, remove or injure any submerged cultural or historical resources, including artifacts and pieces from shipwrecks. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to civil penalties.

"While the Sanctuary has been most associated with whales and whale watching, it also serves as a steward of the submerged historical and cultural resources within its boundaries," said MacDonald. "We are extremely proud that our first dedicated mission to search and explore has produced such exciting results. Future missions hold promise for similarly rewarding finds."



Underwater image of *Portland* anchor. Click image for more photos of the *Portland*. Photo: NOAA

The expedition to confirm the location and identity of the Portland involved many organizations and a range of technologies. Discovery of the wreck site was first reported in 1989 by a team from a Massachusetts firm that specializes in locating lost objects at sea. John Fish and Arnold Carr of American Underwater Search and Survey announced their find but were unable to produce high quality photographs for evaluation and verification.

Production of a high quality map of the region by the U.S. Geological Survey, using multi-beam and side-scan sonar technologies, indicated more than 50 anomalies in the sanctuary, including a target at the Fish/Carr site. The detailed map allowed scientists and marine archaeologists to deploy other imaging equipment to get more detailed close-up views on the July and August research cruises.

"Side-scan images from the research vessel Connecticut and the NOAA ship Ferrel showed that the wreck sits upright on the seafloor, with its hull largely intact but much of its superstructure gone," said primary investigator Ben Cowie-Haskell of the sanctuary. Wreckage from the vessel found along Cape Cod beaches in the days after its loss included pieces from its upper decks. "All passengers and crew were lost, but the exact number has never been determined due to the lack of a passenger list on shore," said Haskell. "The latest estimate is

192 individuals lost, with only 38 bodies recovered as they washed up on Massachusetts beaches between Truro and Monomoy."

Remotely operated vehicle (ROV) operations from the *R/V Connecticut* in July produced high quality video footage of the wreck that showed some of the distinctive features of this type of coastal passenger steamship, including a steam release vent, rudder assembly, paddle guard, paddle wheel hub and overall length. The observation of these features positively identifies this wreck as the Portland as there are no other coastal steamers of this type reported to have been lost in Massachusetts Bay.

Abundant and colorful marine growth, including anemones, tunicates and sponges, cover much of the ship; and cod, redfish, cusk and other fish swim about the wreck. The ROV was able to make these close-up inspections due to the installation of a dynamic positioning system on board the ship which allowed for precision maneuvering, according to Ivar Babb, director of the National Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut.

Although artifacts displaying the ship's name could not be found, a team of independent marine archaeologists confirmed the identification based on the evidence provided by the side-scan and video images.

Congress designated the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in 1992 as "an area of special national significance." Virtually the size of the state of Rhode Island, the sanctuary stretches between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in federal waters off of Massachusetts. The sanctuary is renowned as a major feeding area for marine mammals, particularly humpback whales, and supports an ecosystem of diverse wildlife.

To learn more about Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov/>.

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Nuclear sub gives Sanctuary Manager a better view of Civil War shipwreck



The SSV *Carolyn Chouset* and the NR-1 submarine prepare to visit the famed Civil War wreck. Photo: Monitor Collection, NOAA

It isn't everyday that the world's only nuclear research submarine pays a visit to a National Marine Sanctuary. This visit was three years in the

making.

--Dr. John Broadwater, Manager
Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (NMS)

On Saturday, March 23, at approximately 3 p.m., Dr. John Broadwater and Program Specialist Jeff Johnston boarded the U.S. Navy nuclear-powered Deep Submersible Submarine NR-1 for an extensive imaging survey of the wreck of the USS *Monitor*. NOAA and the United States Navy had tried to conduct this survey for several years, but the sub has always had to cancel before, due to scheduling or equipment problems. Surface conditions at the Sanctuary were almost ideal, although visibility on the wreck site was limited.

Dr. Broadwater and Jeff Johnston report:

The dive lasted from 3:30 p.m. on March 23 to 9:00 a.m. the following morning. At the beginning of the dive, the NR-1 made at least a dozen slow and controlled passes over the Monitor, recording the site on high definition black and white digital video from two down-looking cameras mounted side-by-side. Although the poor visibility will certainly affect the quality, 100% coverage of the entire wreck was obtained.

Later in the evening, visibility continued to deteriorate, so the sub switched to a 600 kHz side scanning sonar, making scores of passes over the Monitor from every possible angle and direction. Many of the sonar images are excellent, especially those taken at very low altitude-- a view not possible with surface-towed sonars.

At about 9:30 a.m. on March 24, the Sanctuary staff left the sub to allow the Navy's sub scheduler to board for a short dive. During that dive, which ended just before 1:00 p.m., visibility improved to approximately 25-30 feet, giving NR-1 an opportunity to make additional high definition color video passes.

The survey was very worthwhile. The video images should be sufficient to allow the Monitor Sanctuary to generate a complete photomosaic of the wreck, and the sub's commanding officer volunteered to seek help from their data processing team at Woods Hole to produce the mosaic.

The C.O. also expressed interest in surveying shipwrecks in other

sanctuaries as "targets of opportunity" while they are en route to scheduled projects. The Monitor NMS staff will work with Sanctuaries Submerged Cultural Research Working Group to come up with a list of candidate sites.

Spending the night on the world's only nuclear research submarine was an incredible experience! The C.O. and the rest of the NR-1 crew were extremely professional and friendly, making us feel at home and telling us, "The sub is yours through tomorrow, so what do you want to do first? " Well after they finished laughing at our request to drive NR-1, we got down to work. We were given a quick tour of 30 foot long by 6-foot wide work area we were allowed access and the vessel began its trip to the bottom.

The accommodations on board are far from luxurious. There are only four racks for the 13 man crew (which included us), a two seater work table that also serves as the mess deck and everywhere else racks and racks of computers and electronic equipment along the bulkhead and pipes, conduits and valves bristling from the overhead. Every nook and cranny was packed with stores or equipment and the stereotypical thoughts of crowded U-boats immediately came to mind. As the evening wore on, and the watches changed, crewmembers came forward to the "mess deck" to fix their meals and prepare their racks.

Once the four "coffin racks" were filled, pads were rolled out on the narrow deck and sailors slept in the walkway and care was needed when moving about in darkened environment not to step on a sleeping sailor.

The trip was a complete success and opportunity that we will never forget! We obtained a tremendous amount of data and even received cards certifying that we are "honorary crew members" of the NR-1

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May 23, 2002

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Florida Keys Sanctuary Joins in Historic Coral Transplant at Grounding Site



Sea fans grown in captivity may one day provide new life to a reef damaged by a ship grounding. Photo: Larry Zettwoch

In what some reporters described as a "historic transplant," Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Scientist Dr. Harold Hudson and Harbor Branch marine biologist Kevin Gaines took sea fans grown in

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captivity to re-seed them on a portion of reef in the sanctuary damaged in a ship grounding. Other attempts have been tried before but not on this scale.

Over a decade ago, in 1989, the 155-foot Alec Owen Maitland struck a coral reef off Key Largo and ground away a broad swath, 200 feet long and 40 feet wide, of a vibrant colony of sea fans, sponges and hard corals.

In early April, marine biologists attached 20 sea fans to concrete slabs placed on the reef in 8 feet of water. The sea fans were anchored with a mixture of cement and plaster that hardens underwater.

"It is incredibly exciting to be working in the field of coral reef management at a time when we can actually witness, firsthand, the science of coral propagation being applied in the field to repair injured resources," said Bill Causey, superintendent of the Florida Keys Sanctuary. "We are experiencing a time in the 400 million year history of coral reefs when they need all the help we humans can provide, especially when when activities influence their death."

The Keys sea fans were grown at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution. Over the next few months, scientists will monitor the sea-fan cuttings, measuring about 3 inches tall and 3 inches wide to see how they withstand storms and the possibility of attacks by a resident killer fungus that has eaten vast sections of coral reefs.

"While the transplanting of tank reared sea fans at a vessel grounding site is an exciting accomplishment, we can't assume humans now have the ability to 'rebuild coral reefs,'" said Causey. "This science and technology is at a very early stage, and we don't the public to misinterpret this progress with the long-term need to be vigilant in protecting and conserving coral reefs at the local, regional, and global levels."

To learn more about the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov/>.

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June 7, 2002

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Gray's Reef Sanctuary holds its 4th Annual Ocean Fest



University of Georgia Octopus and Horseshoe Crab creatures discuss marine policy with seated Oceanfest patrons. Photo credit: Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

With mottled gray skies that provided relief from an already unrelenting spring sun and a gentle breeze that kept the sand gnats away, conditions were just perfect for NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary fourth annual Ocean Fest. It was another super celebration of our ocean and coastal environment for Earth Day 2002.

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Ocean Fest brings together marine conservation organizations from coastal Georgia to provide a focus on natural resources of our coastal environment and support ocean science education in Georgia. Its also a rousin' good time. Gray's Reef Sanctuary organizes the annual event on Savannah's historic riverfront with the support and sponsorship of over a dozen other groups.

Two bands provided music for the five hour long afternoon event drawing locals and tourists alike to the Savannah River to see what all the fuss was about. Once there the more than 2000 folks who visited were treated to the interactive exhibits of organizations that supported ocean and watershed educational programs. And the bands rocked on while the children danced and played along.

Even though there are no snakes at Gray's Reef. there were on River Street, and folks wanted to touch them. Some of the organizations that brought fresh water creatures were representing watershed programs and were certainly appropriate for our event. Turtles, fresh and saltwater varieties, as well as bones and jaws and skulls of some larger sea creatures also drew the crowd's attention. Live fish, anemones and urchins rounded the briny menageries. The smaller set engaged in plenty of art activities in which they painted sea creatures on paper plates with a popsicle stick attached. The end product was a *fashionably* decorated fan, just right for pint-sized hands to keep future sand gnats at bay. With the help of volunteers from the Savannah College of Art and Design, many little cheeks sported dolphins, octopus, fish and even some flowers.....sea flowers? Another set of our invaluable volunteers set up a display of the creative and colorful entries submitted to Gray's Reef's Kid's Art and Poetry contest. Students from local elementary schools competed for prizes that will be awarded in separate ceremonies at their schools. Ribbons festooned the winning entries.

Of the 200 event goers nearly a fifth toured the Skidaway Institute of Ocean-ography's research vessel the Savannah that was docked just down river from the event. Stationed in strategic places around the 92' ship the crew and scientists proudly answered questions about their brand new and well equipped floating oceanographic lab.

But no sooner had the first strains of "Paper Back Writer" reverberated down River Street to begin Ocean Fest, the last tunes of the day heralded its end. Reed Bohne, Gray's Reef Sanctuary Manager, closed our fourth annual event by thanking the exhibitors for educating and informing, the entertainers for making us smile and sing and

dance, and the crew of the Savannah for hosting tours, making this another successful Ocean Fest. It was a day well spent in celebration of Earth Day for the Ocean Planet.

--Cathy Sakas
Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary
Education Coordinator

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May 22, 2002

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Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's By-the-wind Sailors



Velella velella coat the beach adjacent to Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Photo: Kelly Newton

Navigating the open oceans can be a difficult task, even for the most accomplished of seafarers. Natural sailors can steer astray at times, as is the case with these strange blue creatures that have been found littering central California coast beaches adjacent to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary in recent months.

This event is the first for the Monterey Bay region in several years, but the magnitude of this event is compensating. Because of the rarity of events like these, there is little information available about them, but that is going to change soon.

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"Events like this may be significant and are of great interest to the general public, but since they are rare they are not well documented. We plan to have a section of the SIMoN website dedicated to tracking these types of unusual and fascinating events," said Bill Duoros, superintendent of the sanctuary.

By-the-wind sailors, known as *velella velella* to the scientific community, are relatives of the jellyfish, being in the same class, but differing in phylum. These mystical creatures tend to stay far offshore in warm, tropical waters around the world. Traveling together, massive groups of these animals can be mistaken for oil slicks on the surface of the water.

The main body of these creatures contains air pockets helping them float on the ocean's surface, while their rigid sailboat like fin allows the wind to steer them to and fro. Tissues within their bodies contain blue pigments causing their blue coloration.

Understandably, by-the-wind sailors have a difficult time steering when the southwestern winds pick up in spring and they are uncontrollably pushed towards the shore. Once stranded on the beach, they decompose, leaving only a small cartilage structure, which will eventually be carried away in the same manner of its arrival, by the winds.

--Amanda Cunningham

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May 23, 2002

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Fagatele Bay Sanctuary hosts visitors from Sustainable Seas Expeditions



Fagatele Bay, a fringing coral reef ecosystem, nestles within an eroded volcanic crater on the island of Tutuila.

Photo: Nancy Daschbach

On March 2nd, Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary staff welcomed a visit from the Sustainable Seas Expedition (SSE) crew--a marine biologist, a photographer, a marine advocate, and an educator--for a week of teaching, diving, lectures and learning.

The week of festivities included education and outreach both within the Sanctuary Program and outside. Marine Biologist Dr. Sylvia Earle, National Geographic Society's Explorer-in Residence and SSE Project Manager, and her team of seven explored American Samoa with Fagatele Bay Sanctuary as backdrop.

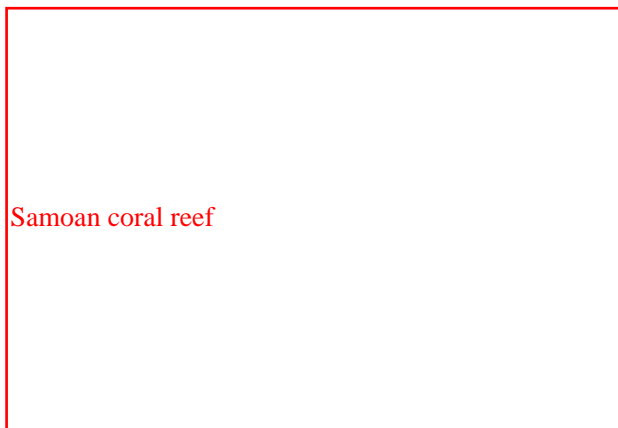
"Fagatele Bay's SSE mission succeeded in bringing a variety of activities to our island," said Sanctuary Manager Nancy Daschbach. "Teacher workshops, bathymetric mapping, photography and videography and nightly presentations provided interesting events for the public."

Dr. Earle was accompanied by several very accomplished people who contributed to the outreach efforts. Francesca Cava, a project manager for SSE, presented three teacher workshops on ocean literacy with over 40 students and teachers in attendance. Kip Evans, an talented National Geographic Society photographer, conducted a presentation on underwater photography at American Samoa community College. Lad Akins, the Director of the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF), a

community-based fish censusing program, gave an evening presentation to teach those assembled about the work that REEF does in protecting coral reefs.

Dr. David Naar from the University of South Florida, who heads the SSE mapping project, and Dr. Dawn Wright from Oregon State University, who developed a Geographic Information System (GIS) for Fagatele Bay, led discussions and presented information on GIS and mapping and met with GIS governmental people to discuss mapping efforts in America Samoa.

Scripps Oceanography Institute's ship, the *Revelle*, aided in several mapping trips. The crew, students, teachers and government GIS staff were able to go out on day long GIS mapping expeditions to learn and collect information.



Samoan corals are still recovering from a devastating crown-of-thorns starfish attack in the late 1970s. Photo: Mike White

"The Samoan title *Penina O Le Vasa* or Pearl of the Ocean is a generous display of appreciation for [Dr. Earle's] efforts to protect the ocean's resources," said Daschbach. "That appreciation is shared by the Sanctuary, and extends to all the SSE members for their hard work".

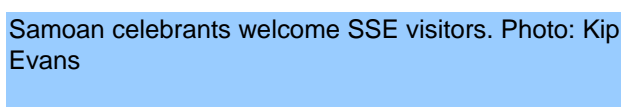
Other government officials present for the ceremony included the Chief Justice of American Samoa, Michael Kruse, and Lutu Fuimaono, the President of the Senate.

On the crew's final day, Dr. Earle participated in a student symposium and spoke to the island's children about marine issues as she showed video clips of the ocean world she spends so much time in. A kava ceremony in Dr. Earle's honor completed the day's event.

For more information about the nation's sanctuary in American Samoa, visit <http://www.fbnms.nos.noaa.gov/>.



Samoa school children



Samoan celebrants welcome SSE visitors. Photo: Kip Evans

On their sixth day in American Samoa, Governor Tuaese Sunia organized a reception in honor of the visitors. The Lt. Governor Togiolo Tulafono attended the event and bestowed Dr. Earle with the new honorary title *Penina o les Vasa* or "Pearl of the Ocean."



Photo: Nancy Daschbach

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June 5, 2002

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National Marine Sanctuary Program Honors Friends Lost on September 11

Under a sun-filled sky, staff from the National Marine Sanctuary Program gathered aboard a former Coast Guard patrol boat, soon to be research vessel, to remember Joe Ferguson, the National Geographic Society educator and sanctuary advocate who perished on September 11th.



Photo: Greg McFall/NOAA

The waterside ceremony was held on February 20 at the University of Georgia, Marine Education Center and Aquarium dock on Skidaway Island, Ga.

Five months earlier, on an equally sunny day, Joe Ferguson, director of the National Geographic Society Education and Outreach Program and Ann Judge, director of the Society's travel office, were escorting teachers and students for a week-long field trip to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. The students and their teachers, all from Washington, D.C., had been selected to participate in one of the exploration education events. Teacher James Debeuneure and

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student Rodney Dickens were representing Ketcham Elementary School; teacher Sarah Clark and student Asia Cottom were from Backus Middle School; and teacher Hilda Taylor and student Bernard Brown were from Leckie Elementary School. All the students were 11-year-old sixth graders. The group was among those aboard American Airlines Flight 77 when it was crashed into the Pentagon.

The Santa Barbara, California workshop had been planned, with Ferguson's help, to introduce the Washington, D.C. students to the Sustainable Seas Expeditions, a project of underwater exploration and discovery with a special emphasis on the nation's 13 national marine sanctuaries. SSE was jointly conducted by National Geographic Society and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sanctuary.

In 1999, SSE had spent two weeks exploring NOAA's Gray's Reef Marine Sanctuary. Soon after September 11, Sanctuary Manager Reed Bohne requested that Georgia's Gray's Reef Sanctuary dedicate their new research vessel the *R/V Joe Ferguson*.

At the naming ceremony, Bohne remembered Ferguson's dedication to science and his passion for introducing children, unfamiliar with the ocean, to all its wonders.

The staff at Gray's Reef felt it was important to name the vessel in Joe's honor in recognition of all he has done to educate students about the marine environment and America's ocean treasures," said Bohne.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program Director Daniel J. Basta traveled to Georgia to join sanctuary managers from around the country in honoring Ferguson.

The new vessel will greatly improve our research capabilities and allow the staff to spend more time on the water protecting sanctuary resources," said Basta. Naming the vessel in Joe's honor is our small gesture to remember those that were lost on Sept. 11."

The former patrol boat, converted now for scientific and educational programs, will be the primary research vessel the sanctuary. With a cruising speed of 26 knots, sanctuary staff plan to use the vessel to support patrols of sanctuary water, maintenance of buoys, reef fish and habitat assessments, and water quality monitoring. The *R/V Joe Ferguson* will also be used to assist local scientists in individual projects. The vessel will be re-powered with new engines and made

ready for full use later this Spring.

"This was the first, but it won't be the last time we remember and celebrate the brave students and educators who died on September 11," said Basta. "We are grateful for Joe's dedication in sharing our national marine sanctuaries with others. His work will not be forgotten."

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March 26, 2002

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Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary & Underwater Preserves Manager Search

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is seeking a sanctuary manager for the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve in Alpena, Michigan. Designated in October 2000,



(Photo: Great Lakes Visual Research)

Thunder Bay is a 448-square mile sanctuary dedicated to protecting a nationally significant collection of shipwrecks. It is one of thirteen sanctuaries in NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program and the first in the Great Lakes.

Working with the State of Michigan as an equal partner, the manager will be responsible for directing the cultural resource protection, education, research, and recreation enhancement programs for the sanctuary. The manager will coordinate with federal, state, regional and local government agencies; research and education communities, user groups; and businesses.

The applicant's work experience must include knowledge of the

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management of historic shipwrecks and other underwater cultural resources; leadership and management skills; and ability to conduct effective outreach to communities. The salary range for the position is \$64,542 - \$83,902. The closing date for applications is April 17,2002.

All applications must be made on-line. To apply for the job or to view the vacancy announcement: 1. Go to www.jobs.doc.gov/ 2. Click on "Search." 3. Click on "National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration" 4. The vacancy announcement is HNOS02.061JMM (or do a sort by location and look for "Alpena")

For additional information on the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, visit www.glerl.noaa.gov/glsr/thunderbay.

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March 28, 2002

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NOAA MOVES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS FOR NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

In its efforts to maintain strong protections for the nation's largest coral reef, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) begin the process for designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as the nation's 14th national marine sanctuary.

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The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands is home to 7,000 marine species including the endangered monk seal, threatened green sea turtle, and the endangered leatherback and hawksbill sea turtles. Its waters are one of the most pristine in the world.

In December 2000, President Bill Clinton's Executive Order

Nearly the entire world population of endangered Hawaiian monk seals make their home in this remote island chain. Photo: Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale NMS

13178 established the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve in

response to the serious decline in coral reefs around the world. While the United States has only three percent of the world's coral reefs, approximately 70 percent of them are in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

The Executive Order called for a Reserve Operation Plan, which provides a guide for management of the Reserve during a sanctuary designation process. The draft plan, which addresses priority issues such as marine debris, cultural resources, and enforcement, is now available for public review and comment for sixty days. The final plan is expected shortly thereafter.

"The National Marine Sanctuaries are our nation's best vehicles for marine protection, in terms of ecosystem management, research, education and enforcement," said Robert Smith, NOAA's Reserve Coordinator for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Reserve. "Public input is critical to planning for the future of this remote and fragile marine wilderness. From the outset, the public will be participants in considering how best to conserve biological, historical and cultural resources of global significance for future generations."

The new sanctuary proposal begins with a public scoping process that invites information and comments from the public on the range and significance of issues related to the designation and management of the proposed sanctuary. The results of this scoping process will assist NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program in drafting a management plan and an environmental impact statement. Scoping will be held for 60 days with public meetings beginning in April 2002.

Comments on the proposed sanctuary designation and draft Reserve Operations Plan may be submitted to NOAA at any of the public scoping meetings, or via these online forms:

[Sanctuary Designation Comment Form](#)

[Draft Reserve Operations Plan Comment Form](#)

You may also submit comments in writing to the following address:

Aulani Wilhelm, 6700 Kalaniana'ole Highway, #215, Honolulu, Hawaii 96825 or via e-mail at nwhi@noaa.gov.

A list of scoping meetings is available at <http://hawaiireef.noaa.gov/sanctuary/designation.html>.

To learn more about the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov>.

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NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARIES



In Memoriam

Bernard Brown

Sarah Clark

Asia Cottom

James DeBeuneure

Rodney Dickens

Joe Ferguson

Ann Judge

Hilda Taylor

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States leaves a grieving nation joined together in a common bond to commemorate the dead and comfort the living.

We at the National Marine Sanctuary System were especially touched by this tragedy when we learned that among the victims of the hijacking and suicide crash of American Airlines Flight 77 were students, teachers, and sanctuary partners bound for a week-long field trip to Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

The workshop in Santa Barbara, California was planned to introduce

the students to the Sustainable Seas Expeditions, a five-year project of deepwater exploration and public education conducted by National Geographic and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

We will also remember who perished in the Pentagon crash--three gifted Washington, D.C. six-graders, their teachers and the National Geographic Society educators who accompanied them.

**Backus Middle School
Student Asia Cottom
Teacher Sarah Clark**

**Leckie Elementary School
Student Bernard Brown
Teacher Hilda Taylor**

**Ketcham Elementary School
Student Rodney Dickens
Teacher James Debeuneure**

**The National Geographic Society
Ann Judge, Director of the Society's travel office
Joe Ferguson, director of the Geography Education Outreach
Program.**

Many of our education coordinators have worked with Ann and Joe to bring marine conservation to students and teachers. We have appreciated the Society's efforts in finding the right candidates for the National Geographic Society-funded education series that brought young students, many of whom had never seen the ocean, to our national marine sanctuaries.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the victims. Over the coming months, we will be looking for ways to remember these young adventurers and the teachers who were bringing new ocean worlds to them.

Daniel J. Basta

Director, National Marine Sanctuary Program

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