



Gulf of the Farallones



Habitats

- Coastal beaches
- Rocky intertidal
- Mud & tidal flats
- Salt marsh
- Esteros
- Pelagic, open ocean
- Deep benthos, continental shelf and slope

Key Species

- Dungeness crab
- California gray whale
- Stellar sea lion
- Common Murre
- Ashy Storm-petrel

Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary

includes nurseries and spawning grounds for commercially valuable species, at least 36 species of marine mammals, and 154 species of birds use the Sanctuary during breeding. One fifth of California's harbor seals breed within the sanctuary. The Farallon Islands are home to the largest concentration of breeding seabirds in the contiguous United States. The sanctuary boundaries include the coastline up to mean high tide, protecting a number of lagoons, estuaries, bays, and beaches for the public.

Research Activities

The Gulf of the Farallones sanctuary brings monitoring and restoration, assessment, and development in a variety of research activities. Its monitoring program studies rocky intertidal habitats within the sanctuary. In the Beach Watch program volunteers are trained to conduct shoreline monitoring. The sanctuary is helping to restore marshes in Bolinas Lagoon and Tomales Bay and working to reintroduce Common Murre populations to their historical breeding areas along the coast. Development of a Geographical Information System (GIS) is part of sanctuary research endeavors. Assessments of pollutants in seabirds and Stellar sea lions and Ashy Storm-petrel population studies have been carried out.

Education Activities

Each year the Sanctuary Explorers Camp holds a week-long summer camp for children. During the school year the sanctuary developed curriculum and teacher training to further marine education. Ongoing community outreach involve seminars, presentations, and publications of marine programs.



Location
Along the coast of California north and west of San Francisco

Protected Area
1,255-square miles

Designation
January 1981

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Above: Harbor seals; left to right : gray whale; kayakers and fishermen share Tomales Bay; Farallon Island

