

NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary has set the dates for its 2006 Ocean Film Festival as September 22, 23, 24.

The Gray's Reef Ocean Film Festival presents ocean-themed films to educate, inspire and foster a spirit of ocean stewardship with films that explore our relationship to the sea, the coastlines and the estuarine environments and our national marine sanctuaries.

The festival is put on solely by Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. There is no charge to the public to attend any of the films screened.

The sanctuary is now accepting entries from film makers for the Gray's Reef 2006 Ocean Film Festival. There is no fee to enter a film for consideration for the festival. See www.graysreef.noaa.gov or <http://www.withoutabox.com/v2/> for information on entering a film in the festival.

Gray's Reef was designated as a National Marine Sanctuary in January 1981. It is one of the largest near shore live-bottom reefs off the southeastern United States, encompassing approximately 17 square nautical miles. The area earned sanctuary designation in 1981. GRNMS consists of a series of sandstone outcroppings and ledges up to ten feet in height, in a predominantly sandy, flat-bottomed sea floor. The live bottom and ledge habitat support an abundant reef fish and invertebrate community. Loggerhead sea turtles, a threatened species, also use Gray's Reef year-round for foraging and resting, and the reef is within the known winter calving ground for the highly endangered Northern Right Whale.

For more information, call (912) 598 2345.

