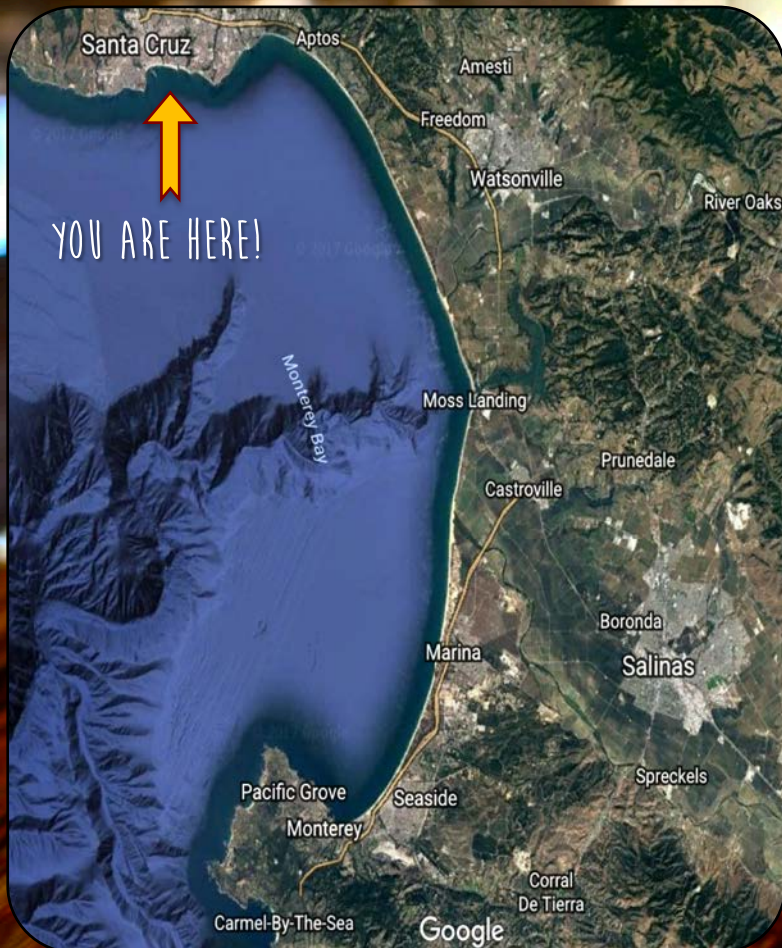


SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



EXPLORE THE COAST AND ITS PROTECTED AREAS

WELCOME TO SANTA CRUZ!



LOCATED ON THE NORTHERN END OF THE MONTEREY BAY, SANTA CRUZ IS FAMOUS FOR ITS NATURALLY CAPTIVATING LANDSCAPE INCLUDING REDWOOD COVERED MOUNTAINS AND PRISTINE SANDY BEACHES.

THERE ARE ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION!

THE MONTEREY BAY: A SPECIAL PLACE

A UNIQUE COMBINATION OF GEOLOGY, WEATHER PATTERNS,
AND CURRENTS MAKES MONTEREY BAY ONE OF
THE MOST PRODUCTIVE OCEAN ECOSYSTEMS ON EARTH.

EACH YEAR, ANIMALS
TRAVEL THOUSANDS OF
MILES TO REACH ITS
RICH FEEDING GROUNDS!

WINDS DRIVE A PROCESS CALLED UPWELLING
THAT BRINGS COLD, NUTRIENT-RICH WATER UP
FROM THE DEEP WHERE IT FUELS A VIBRANT FOOD WEB:
FROM TINY PLANKTON TO SQUID AND SARDINES
TO WHALES AND GREAT WHITE SHARKS!

THE SUBMARINE CANYON IN
MONTEREY IS A STEEP-SIDED
VALLEY CUT INTO THE SEABED
OF THE CONTINENTAL SLOPE.
MONTEREY CANYON IS ONE OF
THE DEEPEST IN THE WORLD
WITH DEPTHS OF 11,800 FEET!

COASTAL PLACES TO VISIT IN SANTA CRUZ

AÑO NUEVO STATE PARK

EASTOKES PRODUCTIONS / SANTA CRUZ, CA / ERLYN STOKES / (C)

NATURAL BRIDGES STATE BEACH

EASTOKES PRODUCTIONS / SANTA CRUZ, CA / ERLYN STOKES / (C)

TWIN LAKES STATE BEACH

© Don DeBold

SEACLIFF STATE BEACH

© Don DeBold

MARINE RECREATION IN SANTA CRUZ



SURF



WHALE WATCH



TIDEPool



KAYAK

what are marine protected areas



Over 100 years ago, the United States protected our natural wonders by creating National Parks. Now, California is doing the same for our ocean through the Marine Life Protection Act. Marine protected areas are underwater parks where sea life can thrive.



What can I do in MPAs?

Like National Parks, MPAs are open to the public for education, research and appreciation. They offer great opportunities for diving, kayaking, surfing and wildlife viewing.

Who decided where to put MPAs?

Areas were selected based on the best available science and input from the community. The process was a collaboration between divers, fishermen, conservationists, and members of the public. Recommendations were reviewed by experts before adoption by California's Fish and Game Commission.

How do MPAs work?

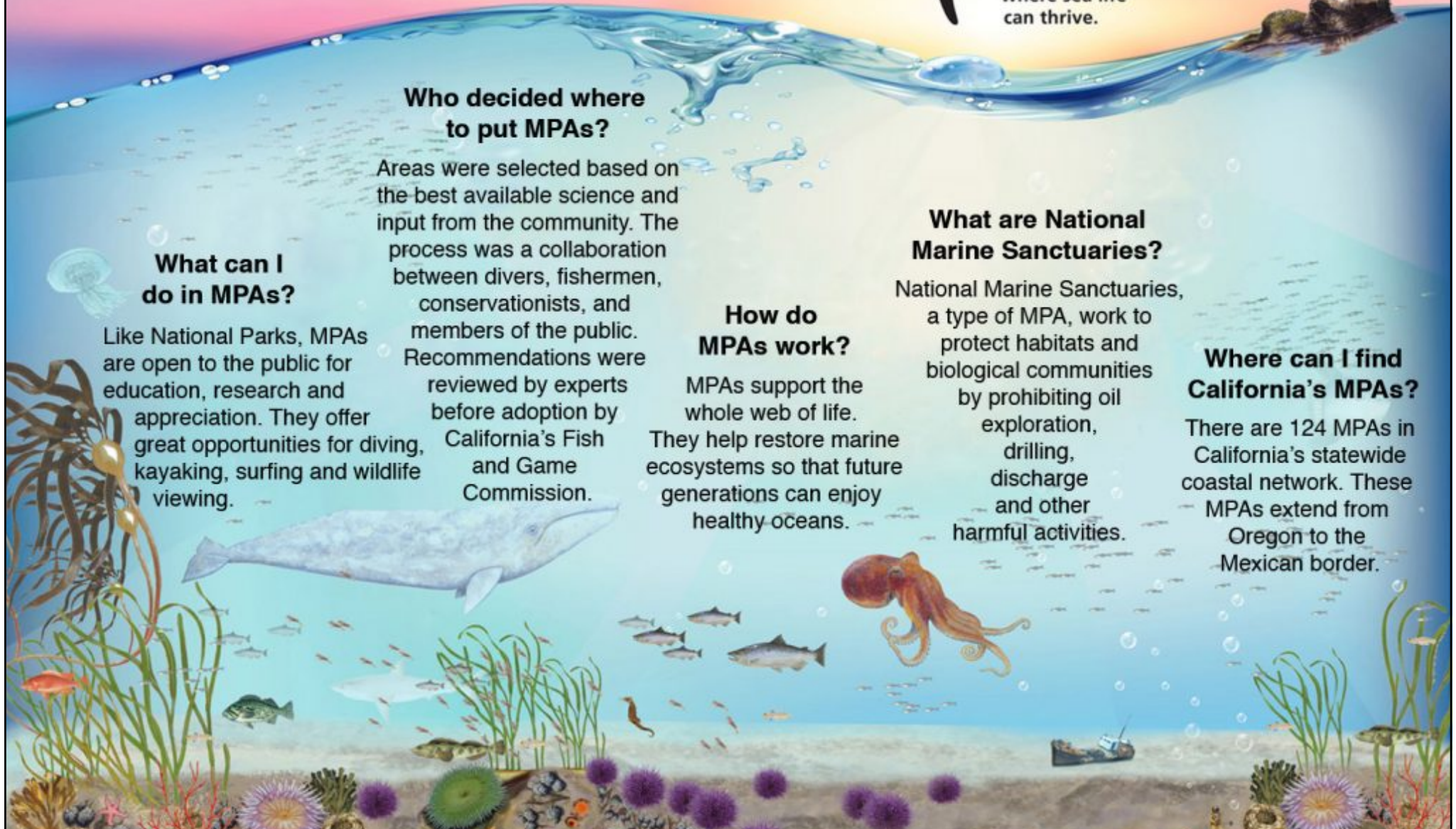
MPAs support the whole web of life. They help restore marine ecosystems so that future generations can enjoy healthy oceans.

What are National Marine Sanctuaries?

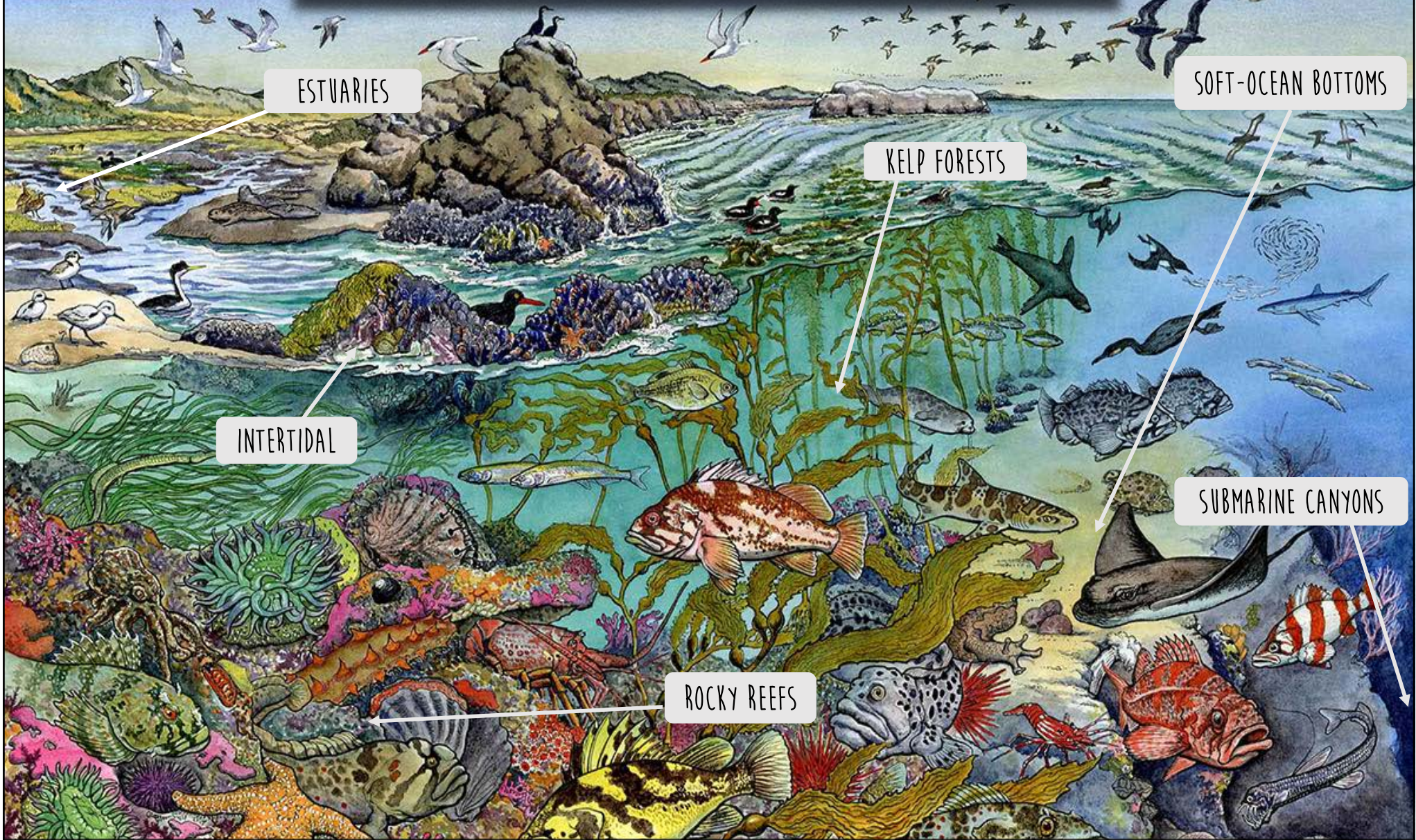
National Marine Sanctuaries, a type of MPA, work to protect habitats and biological communities by prohibiting oil exploration, drilling, discharge and other harmful activities.

Where can I find California's MPAs?

There are 124 MPAs in California's statewide coastal network. These MPAs extend from Oregon to the Mexican border.



MPAS: PROTECTING A VARIETY OF HABITATS



IN ORDER TO BENEFIT CALIFORNIA'S MARINE AND ESTUARINE ENVIRONMENTS, THE MPA NETWORK CONTAINS REPRESENTATIVE HABITATS FOUND THROUGHOUT COASTAL WATERS, INCLUDING ESTUARIES, INTERTIDAL ZONES, ROCKY REEFS, KELP FORESTS, SOFT-OCEAN BOTTOMS AND SUBMARINE CANYONS.

WHY DO WE NEED MPAS?

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS PRESERVE ENTIRE ECOSYSTEMS
RATHER THAN A SINGLE SPECIES.

THEY BOOST FISH ABUNDANCE, LOCAL DIVERSITY,
AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, WHILE
PROMOTING MARINE RECREATION AND RESEARCH!

THIS MEANS MORE FISH AND HEALTHIER ECOSYSTEMS
TO BE ENJOYED BY GENERATIONS TO COME!

WHAT CAN YOU DO IN YOUR MPA?

STATE MARINE RESERVES

CAN SWIM, DIVE, SAIL, SURF, SNORKEL, KAYAK, TIDE POOL, AND EXPLORE!

CANNOT TAKE, HARM, OR PURSUE ANYTHING -LIVING OR NONLIVING- FROM THESE AREAS.

STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREAS

CAN TAKE CERTAIN SPECIES RECREATIONALLY/COMMERCIALY WITH A LICENSE.

CAN ALSO SWIM, DIVE, SAIL, SURF, SNORKEL, KAYAK, TIDE POOL, AND EXPLORE!

MULTI-USE AREA NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

CAN TAKE MOST SPECIES RECREATIONALLY/COMMERCIALY WITH A LICENSE.

CAN ALSO SWIM, DIVE, SAIL, SURF, SNORKEL, KAYAK, TIDE POOL, AND EXPLORE!

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF MPAS, AND THEIR PROTECTIONS CAN EVEN OVERLAP!



COASTAL PROTECTED AREAS OF SANTA CRUZ



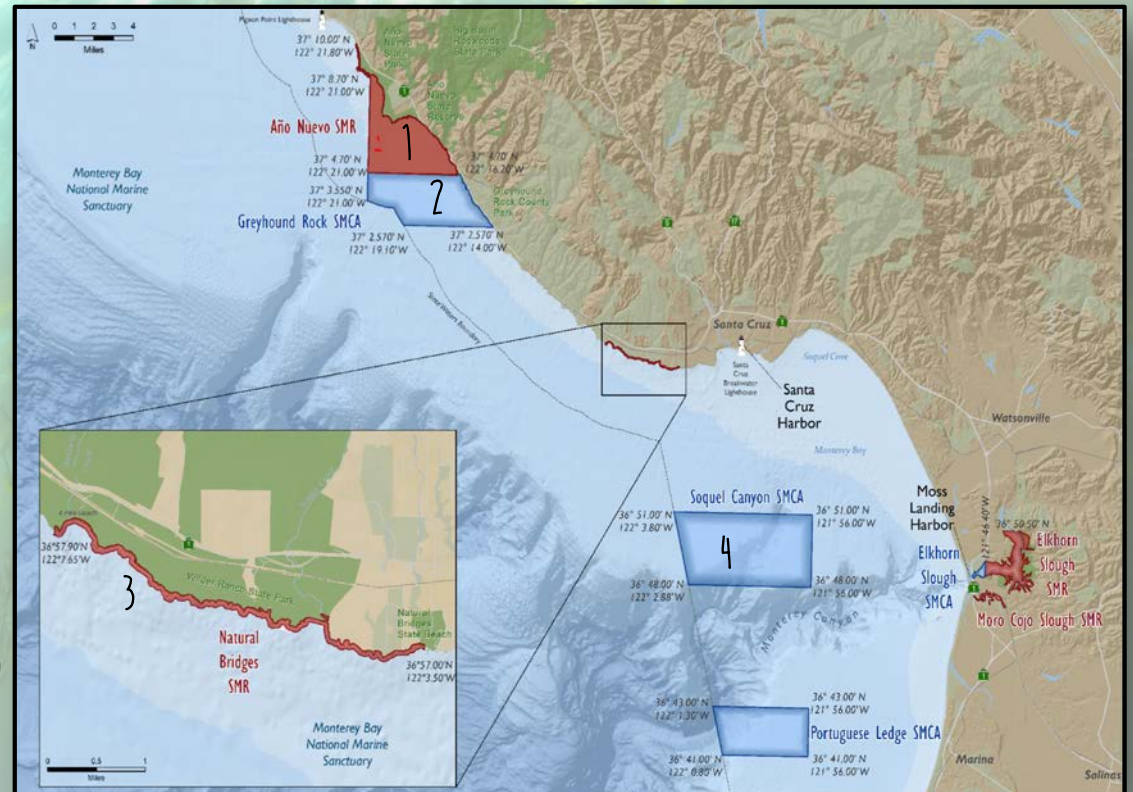
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY STATE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (MPAS)

STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA (SMCA)

STATE MARINE RESERVE (SMR)



1. AÑO NUEVO SMR (SAN MATEO COUNTY)
2. GREYHOUND ROCK SMCA
3. NATURAL BRIDGES SMR
4. SOQUEL CANYON SMCA (MONTEREY COUNTY)



STATE MARINE PROTECTED AREA

PERMITTED CONSUMPTIVE USES

AÑO NUEVO & NATURAL BRIDGES STATE MARINE RESERVES

TAKE OF ALL LIVING MARINE RESOURCES, INCLUDING SHELLS AND ROCKS, IS PROHIBITED.

TAKE OF ALL MARINE RESOURCES IS PROHIBITED EXCEPT:

GREYHOUND ROCK STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA

RECREATIONAL TAKE OF GIANT KELP BY HAND HARVEST ONLY, MARKET SQUID & SALMON BY HOOK-AND-LINE, FROM SHORE ONLY, OTHER FINFISH.
COMMERCIAL TAKE OF GIANT KELP BY HAND HARVEST ONLY, SALMON, AND MARKET SQUID.

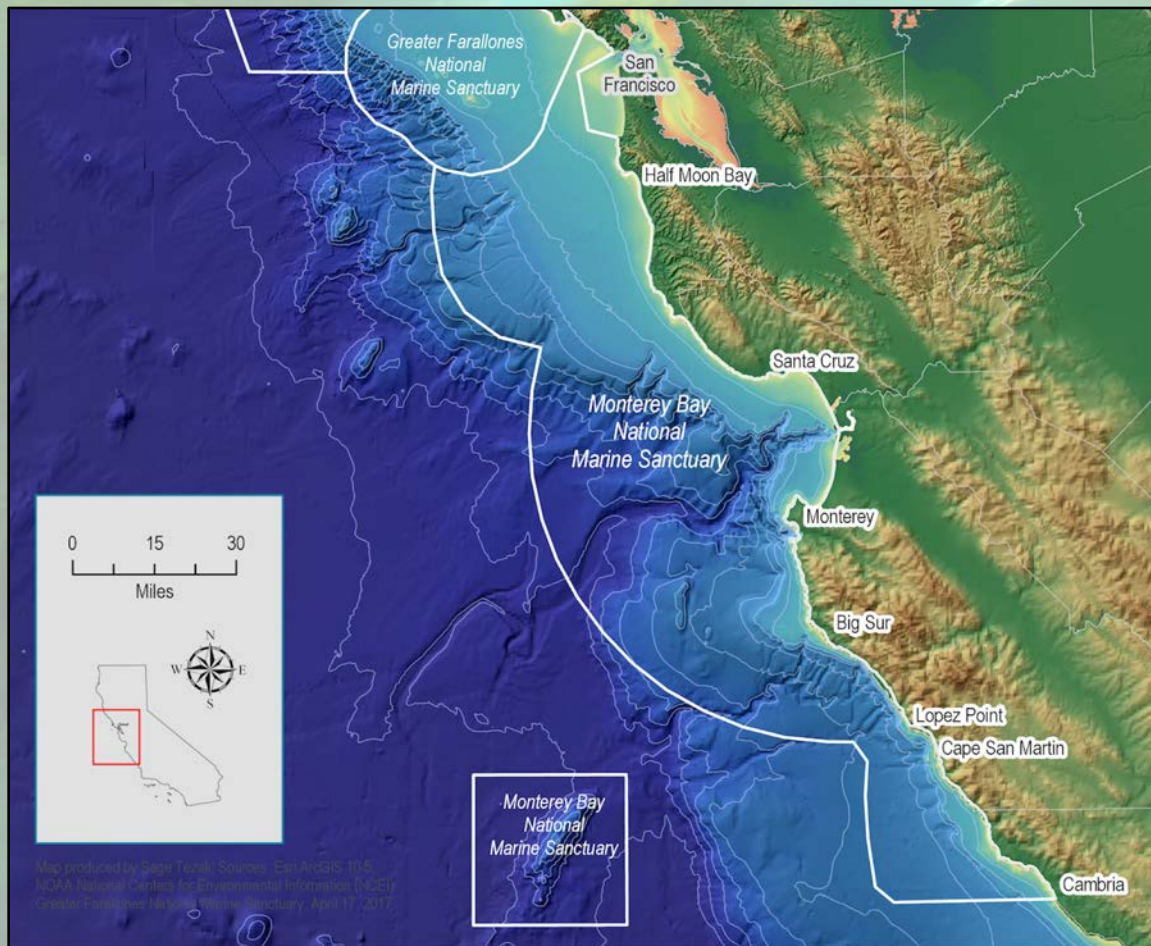
SOQUEL CANYON STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA

THE COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL TAKE OF PELAGIC FINFISH IS ALLOWED.



THE MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

LIKE NATIONAL PARKS ON LAND, NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES PROTECT LARGE AREAS OF THE OCEAN.



THE MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY IS THE LARGEST FEDERALLY PROTECTED OCEAN AREA IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES!

IT STRETCHES FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO THE BIG SUR COAST.

SANTA CRUZ WORLD SURFING RESERVE

SANTA CRUZ WORLD SURFING RESERVE BOUNDARY



CARTOGRAPHER: GREG BENOIT.

OVER 20 DIFFERENT SURF BREAKS ARE CITED WITHIN THE SANTA CRUZ WORLD SURFING RESERVE, INCLUDING PLEASURE POINT AND STEAMER LANE. THESE BREAKS ARE RATED FROM "EXPERT" TO "BEGINNER", SO SURFERS OF ALL AGES AND LEVELS CAN FIND A SUITABLE WAVE IN THE AREA.

SANTA CRUZ PROUDLY CLAIMS TO BE THE LOCATION OF THE FIRST BOARD SURFING EVER IN NORTH AMERICA.

A photograph of a coastal scene with waves crashing onto a sandy beach. The sky is bright and hazy, suggesting a sunny day. The water is a mix of deep blue and white foam from the waves. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, enclosed in a black rectangular border.

OCEAN RECREATION IN SANTA CRUZ:

*WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO SEE WHILE
ON THE COAST & IN THE WATER*

TOUCH GENTLY...
STEP LIGHTLY...

TIDE POOL TREASURES

ADMIRE, EXPLORE, LEARN
BUT PLEASE DON'T TAKE.



OCBRE STAR & SUNBURST ANEMONE



BLACK TURBAN SNAILS



STRIPED SHORE CRAB



AGGREGATING SEA ANEMONE



OPALESCENT NUDIBRANCH



MOSSY CHITON

GROUND FISH AND ROCK FISH
CAN LIVE UP TO 75
YEARS, BUT DON'T LAY
EGGS UNTIL THEIR TEENS.

BIG OLD FERTILE FEMALE FISH

IN MPAS, CERTAIN FISH GROW
LARGER AND PRODUCE MORE
EGGS. A 24 INCH ROCK FISH
LAYS UP TO 1.7 MILLION EGGS!



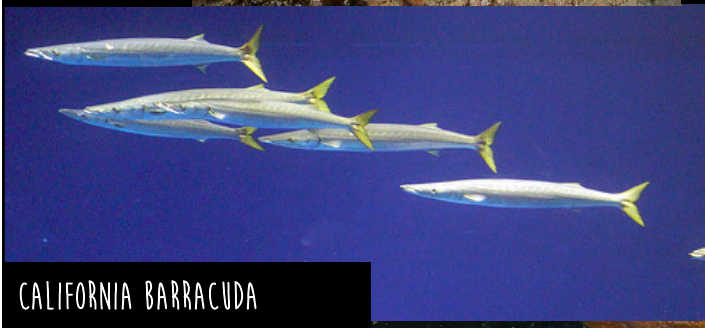
ROSY ROCKFISH



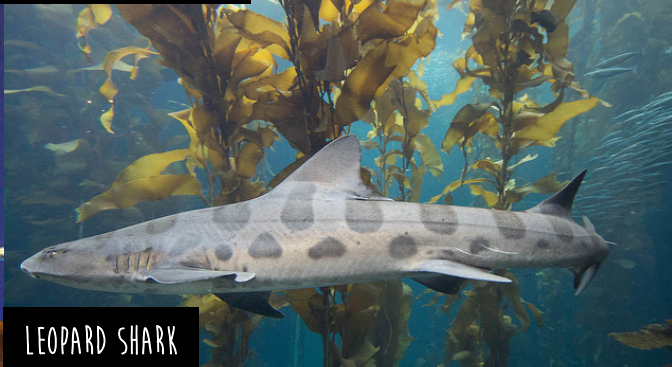
CALIFORNIA SHEEPHEAD



CABEZON



CALIFORNIA BARRACUDA



LEOPARD SHARK



BLACK AND YELLOW ROCKFISH



VERMILLION ROCKFISH



BAY PIPEFISH



CORALLINE SCULPIN

A BIRD WATCHER'S PARADISE...



WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER



BROWN PELICAN



BRANDT'S CORMORANT



LEAST TERN



SOOTY SHEARWATER



BLACK OYSTERCATCHER

HUMPBACK WHALES

COMMONLY SEEN: MARCH — NOVEMBER

HUMPBCKS CAN LIVE TO BE 100 YEARS OLD!

HUMPBCK BABIES, CALLED CALVES, CAN
DRINK 80 POUNDS OF MILK PER DAY!

MARINE MAMMOLOGISTS IDENTIFY
INDIVIDUAL HUMPBCK WHALES BY
THEIR UNIQUE TAIL FLUKES.

GRAY WHALES

COMMONLY SEEN:
JANUARY — MAY.

ANNUALLY, GRAY WHALES MIGRATE
10,000 MILES FROM FEEDING GROUNDS
IN ALASKA TO CALVING LAGOONS IN
BAJA CALIFORNIA - AND BACK!

GRAY WHALE SPOUTS ARE
UNIQUELY SHAPED LIKE A HEART!

GRAY WHALES USE THEIR POINTED MOUTH TO FEED ON BOTTOM DWELLING
CREATURES LIKE CRABS AND CLAMS, WHICH BENEFIT FROM MPAs.

BLUE WHALE

GENERALLY SEEN JUNE-OCTOBER, WHEN THEY
COME TO THE MONTEREY BAY TO FILL UP ON KRILL.

BLUE WHALES CAN GROW TO 100 FEET (30M) IN
LENGTH AND WEIGH AS MUCH AS 150 TONS-THE
WEIGHT OF 30 ELEPHANTS.

CALVES NURSE FOR 7-8 MONTHS, DRINKING 100 GALLONS OF
MILK PER DAY. THEY CAN GAIN UP TO 9 LBS PER HOUR!

ORCAS



CAN BE SEEN YEAR ROUND IN THE MONTEREY BAY.

ORCAS LIVE IN PODS, TIGHT KNIT FAMILY GROUPS OF 2-30 INDIVIDUALS. THEY COMMUNICATE WITH SQUALS AND MOANS THAT ARE UNIQUE AMONG PODS.

ORCAS HUNT TOGETHER AS A POD, LIKE A PACK OF WOLVES. THEY WILL ALSO PROTECT ONE ANOTHER FROM DANGER AND COME TO THE AID OF AN AILING OR INJURED COMPANION.

PACIFIC WHITE-SIDED DOLPHIN

ALWAYS TRAVELLING IN
PODS, THESE DOLPHINS CAN
FORM GROUPS OF THOUSANDS!

ONE OF THE MOST ACROBATIC
SPECIES OF DOLPHIN IN THE WORLD,
THEY ENGAGE IN MID-AIR LEAPS,
FLIPS, AND SOMERSAULTS.

COMMONLY SEEN:
YEAR ROUND
IN MONTEREY BAY,
ESPECIALLY IN THE FALL.

RISSO'S DOLPHINS

COMMONLY SEEN:
YEAR ROUND IN
MONTEREY BAY.

RISSO'S ARE COVERED IN SCARS
FROM SOCIAL INTERACTION
WITH THEIR PODS, AS WELL AS
FROM THE BEAKS OF SQUID,
A FAVORITE PREY ITEM.

THESE DOLPHINS ARE DIVERS!
THEY ARE OFTEN FOUND DEEP IN
MONTEREY'S SUBMARINE CANYON.

CALIFORNIA SEA LIONS

CALIFORNIA SEA LIONS ARE BORN
IN THE WATER WITH THEIR EYES OPEN AND
THE ABILITY TO SWIM RIGHT AWAY!

COMMONLY SEEN:
YEAR ROUND IN
MONTEREY BAY.

OFTEN CONFUSED WITH SEALS,
SEA LIONS ARE IDENTIFIED BY THEIR LONG WHISKERS,
EAR FLAPS, BOISTEROUS BARKING, AND LONG FLIPPERS.

HARBOR SEALS



COMMONLY SEEN:
YEAR ROUND IN
MONTEREY BAY.

SEALS CAN HOLD THEIR
BREATH FOR UP TO
30 MINUTES AND DIVE
UP TO 1500 FEET
WHILE HUNTING FOR
SQUID AND FISH IN THE
MONTEREY CANYON!

EACH HARBOR SEAL PUP HAS A UNIQUE "MAAA" CALL,
AND A SMELL THAT ITS MOTHER MEMORIZES
SO SHE CAN ALWAYS FIND HER PUP.

SEA OTTERS

SEA OTTERS ARE A THREATENED SPECIES THAT LIVE IN SHALLOW COASTAL WATERS ASSOCIATED WITH KELP BEDS! THEY ARE THE SMALLEST MARINE MAMMAL AND THE ONLY MARINE MAMMAL TO HAVE FURRY, PAW-LIKE HANDS.



Be Sea Otter Savvy

To stay healthy, sea otters need to:

- Rest a lot
- Eat a lot
- Groom a lot
- Care for their pups a lot

If I'm looking at you, you're TOO CLOSE!

Give them space—At least 5 kayak lengths
Be alert—Back away if you see behavior changes
Avoid approaching head on—A direct approach may scare them
Don't encircle them—They'll feel trapped

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [@SeaOtterSavvy](#)
www.SeaOtterSavvy.org

SEA OTTERS CAN BE SEEN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR OFF THE COAST OF SANTA CRUZ!

Welcome to The Whale Trail Lighthouse Point, Santa Cruz



Watching Whales in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

You are looking over the waters of one of our nation's most spectacular marine protected areas, offering some of the best viewing of marine wildlife in the world, including 34 species of marine mammals! Search for heart-shaped blows of gray whales, tall dorsal fins of orcas, feeding humpback and blue whales, or seals and sea lions swimming just offshore. You might see dolphin pods crossing the bay or sharing the waves with surfers! You can see amazing marine life at the Whale Trail's shore-based sites at any time of the year. What will you discover?



Orca (Killer Whale)
Adult length: 28-32 feet

Orcas move through the sanctuary year-round as they roam the Pacific Coast in search of prey such as gray whales, sea lions or salmon.



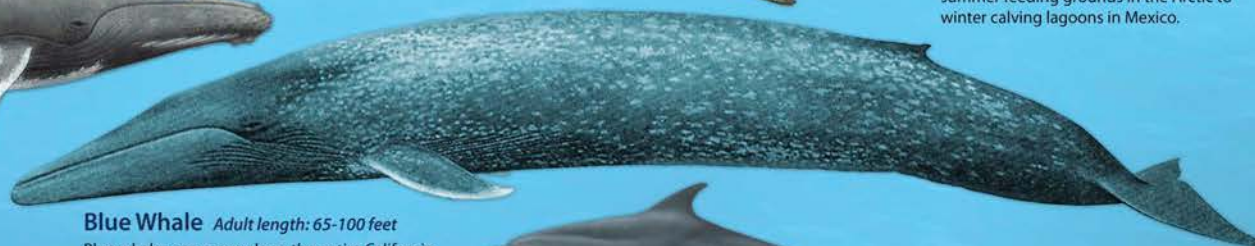
Gray Whale Adult length: 35-50 feet

Look for gray whales close to shore during winter and spring, as they travel between summer feeding grounds in the Arctic to winter calving lagoons in Mexico.



Humpback Whale Adult length: 45-50 feet

Commonly seen from spring through fall, humpbacks feast on schools of anchovies, sardines or krill. They often leap clear of the water, landing with a thunderous splash.



Blue Whale Adult length: 65-100 feet

Blue whales can move along the entire California coastline during summer and fall searching for their prey—great swarms of krill.



Risso's Dolphin Adult length: 8.5-13 feet

Risso's may be seen any time of year in pods ranging from 10 to 1,000 animals. These active dolphins are deep divers and mainly hunt at night for squid.



Southern Sea Otter Adult length: 3.5-4.5 feet

Sea otters use small rocks to crack open crabs, abalone and sea urchins. They rest wrapped in kelp to keep from drifting away and spend hours grooming to keep their fur waterproof.



Bottlenose Dolphin Adult length: 8-12 feet

Bottlenose dolphins are year-round residents and usually stay close to shore along sandy beaches, traveling just outside the breakers.



California Sea Lion
Adult length: 6-7.5 feet

Noisy sea lions pack onto rocks or rest together in the water in "rafts." Sleek and fast, they hunt offshore for fishes and squid.



Harbor Seal Adult length: 5-6 feet

Shy and curious, harbor seals rest on offshore rocks and often watch people on the shore. In spring, they congregate on protected beaches to give birth and nurse their young.



Learn more at www.thewhaletrail.org



MARINE LIFE WATCHING GUIDELINES



Learn before you go. Many marine wildlife species have specific habitat needs and sensitive lifecycle requirements. Use the Internet, guidebooks, and knowledgeable people to learn how to observe them responsibly, where you plan to visit them.



Do not feed or attract marine wildlife. Feeding or attempting to attract wildlife may harm animals by causing sickness, death, and habituation to people. Animals that are accustomed to humans become vulnerable to injuries and can be dangerous to people.



Wildlife and pets don't mix. Wild animals can injure and spread diseases to pets, and pets can harm and disturb wildlife. If you are traveling with pets, keep them leashed and away from marine wildlife.



Keep your distance. Getting too close to animals can be harmful to them and to you. Take precaution and use binoculars that let you view animals from a distance where they won't be disturbed.



Never chase or harass wildlife. Do not surround, trap or separate animals, approach them head on, or approach them directly from behind. Make sure they know you are there before they see you.



Lend a hand with trash removal. Human garbage and fishing debris are some of the greatest threats to marine wildlife. Carry a trash bag with you and pick up litter found along the shore.



Hands off. Touching wildlife, or attempting to do so, can injure the animal, put you at risk, and may be illegal for most protected species.



Stay away from wildlife that appears abandoned or sick. Animals that appear sick may not be. They may be resting or are young awaiting the return of a parent. If animals are approached, their behavior may become aggressive. If you think an animal is sick or injured, contact local authorities.



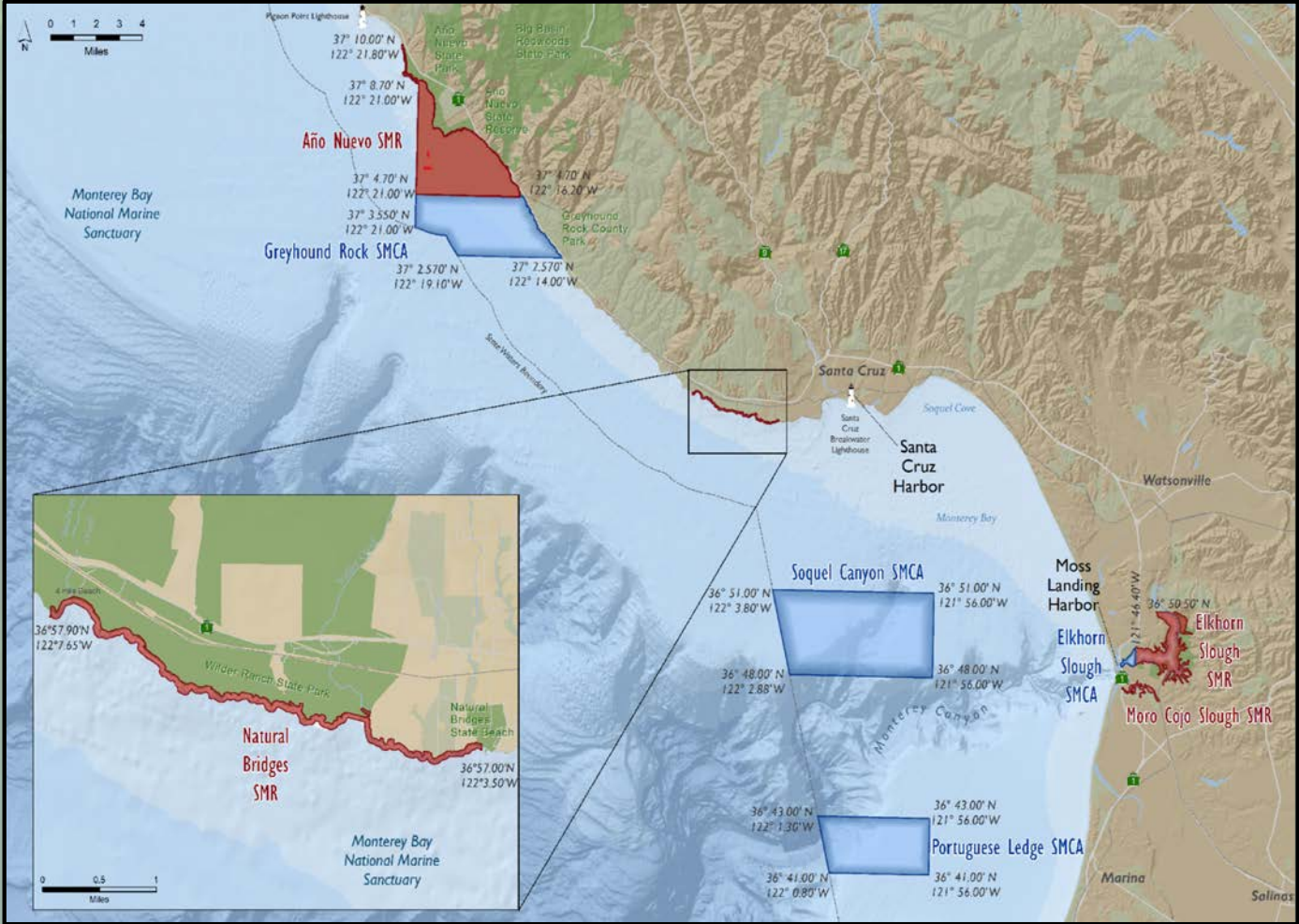
Help others to become responsible wildlife watchers and tour operators. Lead by example. It's up to you! Obtain and carry a few copies of these guidelines on your travels and share them with others. Patronize businesses that follow these guidelines. Protecting and conserving is everyone's responsibility.

© NOAA

IF YOU SEE A SICK, INJURED OR DEAD MARINE MAMMAL, DO NOT APPROACH AND CALL THE MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE HOTLINE FOR SANTA CRUZ AND MONTEREY COUNTIES (831) 633-6298.

FOR INJURED SEA BIRDS, CALL NATIVE ANIMAL RESCUE: +1 (831) 462 0726.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY STATE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



AÑO NUEVO STATE MARINE RESERVE

AÑO NUEVO IS HOME TO THE ONE OF THE LARGEST MAINLAND BREEDING COLONIES OF NORTHERN ELEPHANT SEALS IN THE WORLD, OFFERS A PLETHORA OF HIKING TRAILS, AND HAS PROMISING SURF FOR THOSE BRAVE ENOUGH TO FACE THE COLD WATER CONDITIONS.



AÑO NUEVO STATE PARK'S RICH VARIETY OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES OFFER MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPLORATION FOR ALL AGES!



MARINE MAMMOLOGISTS STUDY THE ELEPHANT SEAL POPULATION AT AÑO NUEVO INTENSIVELY. A MAJORITY OF WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT ELEPHANT SEAL PHYSIOLOGY, DIVE PATTERNS, AND FORAGING HABITS COMES FROM THE RESEARCH TAKING PLACE AT AÑO NUEVO!

GREYHOUND ROCK STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA



THE AREA AROUND GREYHOUND ROCK IS A
BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT!

OVER 300 SPECIES OF INVERTEBRATES AND
SEABIRDS ARE FOUND HERE.

AROUND 400 YEARS AGO, PURPLE OLIVE SNAIL
SHELLS WERE USED AS CURRENCY BY INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA.

THE COTONI, WHO LIVED AROUND GREYHOUND
ROCK, HAD A HUGE TRADING ADVANTAGE- THE
SNAILS ARE ABUNDANT IN THIS AREA!

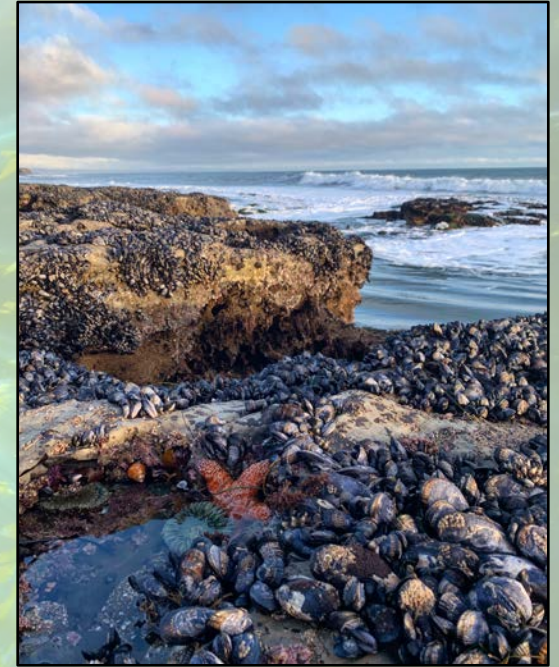


NATURAL BRIDGES STATE MARINE RESERVE

THIS NARROW MPA PROTECTS INCREDIBLY DIVERSE TIDEPOLS FROM NATURAL BRIDGES STATE BEACH NORTH TO FOUR MILE BEACH.



TIDEPOLS IN THIS AREA OFFER A GLIMPSE OF LIFE BENEATH THE SEA!



NATURAL BRIDGES STATE BEACH IS AN EXCELLENT PLACE TO VIEW BIRDS, MIGRATING WHALES, SEALS, AND OTTERS PLAYING OFFSHORE!

THE MANY SECLUDED BLUFFS, BEACHES AND COVES OF THIS AREA ARE POPULAR FOR SURFING, HIKING, TIDEPOLING, PHOTOGRAPHY, WILDLIFE WATCHING AND MORE!

SOQUEL CANYON STATE MARINE CONSERVATION AREA

ABOUT 2,000 FEET BELOW THE SURFACE, SOQUEL CANYON IS HOME TO A RANGE OF DEEP SEA HABITATS INCLUDING ROCKY CANYON WALLS AND A SANDY FLOOR.

THIS AREA PROTECTS
A FINGER OF THE
MONTEREY SUBMARINE
CANYON —
DEEPWATER HABITAT
WHERE FISH SCHOOL
AND WHALES FEED!



THE MONTEREY BAY AREA AQUARIUM
RESEARCH INSTITUTE (MBARI) SENDS
REMOTELY OPERATED SUBMERSIBLE RESEARCH
VEHICLES TO EXPLORE THIS DEEP AREA!

COMMUNITY SCIENCE IN MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



MPAS ARE IDEAL PLACES
TO GET INVOLVED WITH
RESEARCH, CONTRIBUTING
TO LOCAL CONSERVATION!

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF CITIZEN SCIENCE OPPORTUNITIES IN SANTA CRUZ.
CHECK OUT MPA WATCH, REEFCHECK CA, OR THE SANTA CRUZ MPA COLLABORATIVE.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CALIFORNIA'S MARINE PROTECTED AREAS
VISIT CALIFORNIAMPAS.ORG OR WILDLIFE.CA.GOV/MPAS