

Gulf of the Farallones

(California)



Description:

The sanctuary includes nurseries and spawning grounds for commercially valuable species, at least 26 species of marine mammals, and 15 species of breeding seabirds. One quarter of California's harbor seals breed within the sanctuary. The Farallon Islands are home to the largest concentration of breeding seabirds in the continental United States. The sanctuary boundaries include the coastline up to mean high tide, protecting a number of accessible lagoons, estuaries, bays, and beaches for the public.

Habitats and Key Species

Habitats

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

Key Species

Dungeness crab

Gray whale

Steller sea lion

Common Murre

Ashy Storm-petrel

Specifications

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

Protected Area: 1,255-square miles

Designation: January 1981

Education Activities

Community outreach marine programs, seminars, presentations, and publications

Sea Camp, a week long summer camp for low income children

Curriculum development and teacher training

Research Activities

Rocky intertidal habitat monitoring

Beach Watch--Volunteer program that trains the public to conduct biological monitoring within the sanctuary

Oil spill monitoring

Marsh restoration in Tomales Bay, and habitat restoration for common murre

Development of Geographical Information System (GIS)

Assessments of pollutants in seabirds and Steller sea lions

Assessment of Ashy Storm-petrel population

Administration and Support

Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries are managed jointly by a manager, assistant manager, and a research coordinator.

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