

# MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Photo: SIMON/MBNMS

## SIMoN Web Expansion

In February 2008 the Sanctuary Integrated Monitoring Network (SIMoN) website was upgraded and expanded into a multi-sanctuary tool, supporting Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries. The website hosts information on the sanctuaries' resources, ecological processes, and relevant scientific programs. The expanded SIMoN website also supports the R/V *Fulmar's* Vessel Project Manager, an important planning and scheduling tool for this regional research platform. Also at a user's fingertips are an enhanced photo library with over 2500 digital images of marine organisms, a new species database, and easy to access summary information on over 100 research and monitoring projects. Visit this valuable web resource at [www.sanctuariesimon.org](http://www.sanctuariesimon.org).



Photo: SIMON/MBNMS

## MBNMS Characterizes Unexplored Habitats and Marine Protected Areas

Throughout the year, MBNMS Sanctuary Integrated Monitoring Network staff and researcher divers from UC Santa Cruz's Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO) monitored over 100 subtidal sites in kelp forests along the coast of Big Sur, CA. Sites included marine protected areas recently established by the State of California and adjacent reference areas. Over 400 incident-free dives have characterized the seafloor habitats and associated macro-invertebrates and fishes at previously unexplored locations in the nearshore. In addition, numerous towed camera sled observations on the continental shelf quantified resources within and around State Marine Reserves and Conservation Areas off Soquel, CA and the Big Sur coast. The characterization effort on the continental shelf will support site selection for potential federal marine reserves while also contributing to the baseline data collection for the deep-water State Marine Reserves and Conservation Areas.

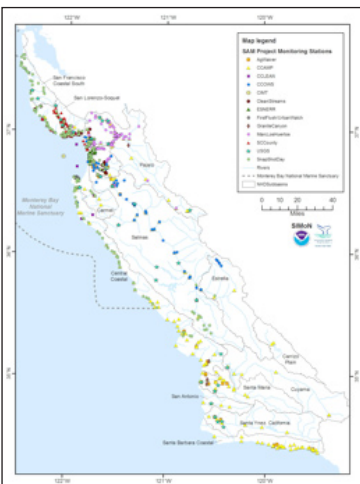
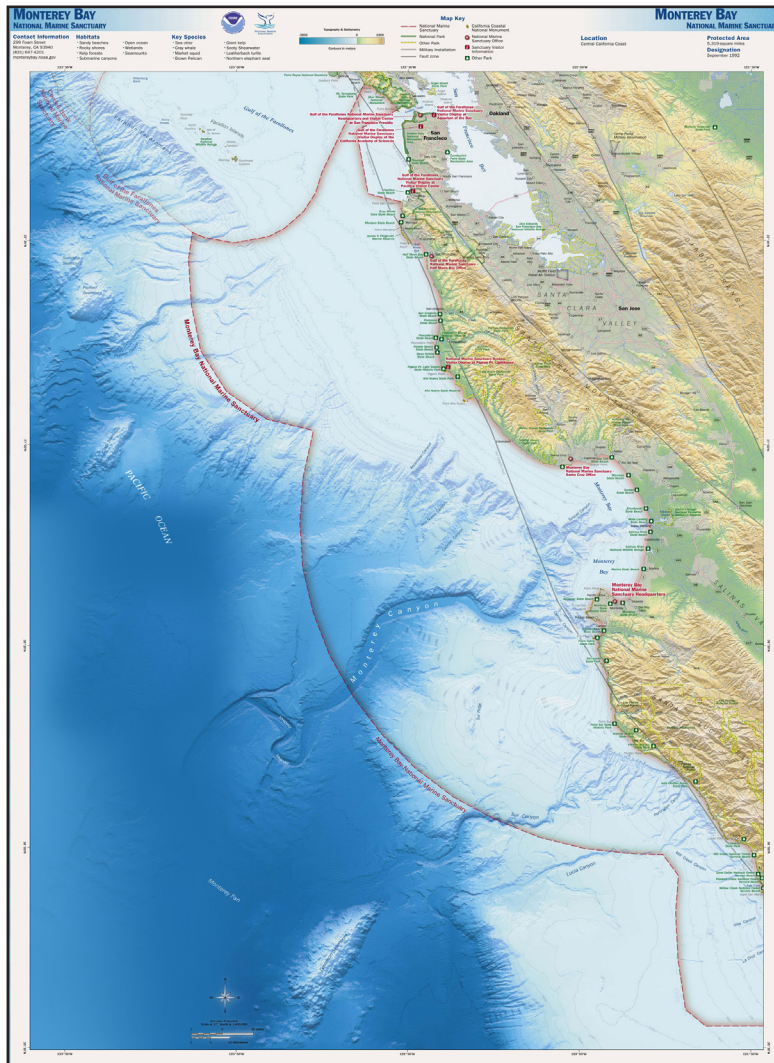


Photo: MBNMS

## Central Coast Water Quality Synthesis, Assessment and Management (SAM) Project

Sanctuary staff hosted a technical advisory meeting to outline a Strategic Plan for ongoing regional water quality monitoring coordination, data integration and data synthesis. The resulting Strategic Plan frames the technical and programmatic infrastructure required to apply data collected by diverse monitoring organizations such as volunteer groups, regulatory agencies, and academic researchers to critical non-point source pollution issues directly affecting the ecological health of the Sanctuary. This data has been incorporated into a recent National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) project, becoming a critical component of the tools being created by NMFS to evaluate habitat conditions. The SAM Project is expanding to include data from watersheds draining into the Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries.



Sanctuary maps available at [sanctuaries.noaa.gov](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov)

### Partnership Award - California State Park's DeWitt Award

The MBNMS Education & Outreach Team has been awarded a 2008 California State Parks Director's Award for outstanding partnership. The team was awarded the State Parks' Dewitt Award for the numerous collaborative education and outreach projects and programs they have implemented with State Parks over the past ten years. The Education Team works closely with the Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo Coast Districts of CA State Parks on a regular basis. This long-term partnership has enabled both agencies to do much more with shared resources than either could do individually. Two interpretive facilities, numerous signage projects, joint programming and co-location of staff are just some of the partnership highlights.. This award is a quite an honor for the MBNMS Education Team, as the nominees are submitted by districts all across the State.

### R/V Fulmar Hard at Work for the National Marine Sanctuaries

The R/V *Fulmar* has become a critical research and resource protection platform for the Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries. After catastrophic port main engine failure, which dry docked the vessel for 2 months, the R/V *Fulmar* operated almost 190 days during the 2008 calendar year and provided 52 sea days to critical partner projects. Safety and technical trainings were hosted aboard ship for cruise PIs and personnel from all sanctuary sites and the West Coast Regional Office, covering a wide variety of emergency situations, the requirements for pre and post cruise planning and the use of the new online Vessel Project Management System (<http://sanctuariesimon.org/vpm/>) which allows for easy input of vessel request forms, cruise reporting and viewing the vessel schedule.

To learn more about these and other accomplishments, visit [sanctuaries.noaa.gov](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov)

