

SMALL BOAT PROGRAM

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM

2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Research Vessel SRVx Debuts with Wide Range of Missions

The SRVx (Small Research Vessel experimental) is an 85-foot test and evaluation platform that will determine the application of regional class vessels to sanctuary research, monitoring, and outreach mandates. The SRVx conducted missions in all five West Coast national marine sanctuaries since its first mission in September 2008, traveling from Tatoosh Island in Washington to the Channel Islands in California. Sanctuary scientists and partners, along with the first NOAA-certified volunteer science divers, participated in missions including tagging giant squid, deploying acoustic monitoring instruments, and documenting maritime heritage resources. In addition to carrying sanctuary science mission, SRVx operations are providing valuable information to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations on the role of small research vessels in meeting Agency missions.



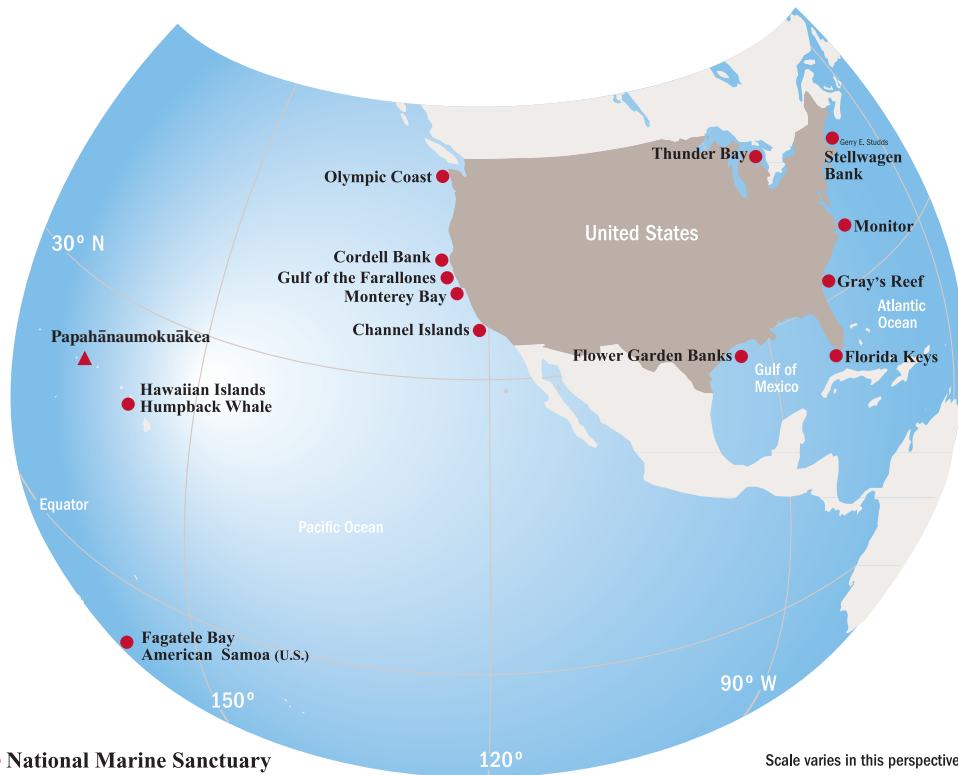
R/V Manta Provides Valuable Support in the Gulf of Mexico

Dedicated on June 28, 2008, in Galveston, Texas, the 82-foot research vessel *Manta* is a versatile ship that was designed to conduct research, monitoring, education, public outreach, enforcement and emergency response-related operations in Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary and the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. The *Manta* was designed with flexibility in mind, and its ability to adapt will make the ship a valuable tool for the sanctuary and its partners, as evidenced by the support it provided for relief efforts in Galveston in the wake of Hurricane Ike in September 2008. The *Manta* greatly enhances the staff's ability to respond to natural events such as hurricanes, coral disease and coral bleaching, and also respond to human disturbances such as oil spills, anchoring and illegal fishing activities.



Twin 41-foot Vessels Expand Sanctuary Capabilities in Hawaii, California

Two 41-foot research vessels were introduced into the National Marine Sanctuary System's small boats program in summer 2008. The ships are nearly identical in design, and are the first of their class in the sanctuary system's inventory. The size and capacity of this new class of small boat will allow a modest crew to stay aboard the vessels overnight, and will provide safe working platforms for research, rescue, training and educational operations for up to 10 people. The vessels have been assigned to Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale national marine sanctuaries, where they will greatly expand the capabilities of sanctuary staff to conduct research, monitoring, enforcement, education and outreach activities. Channel Islands sanctuary staff performed sea trials on their 41-footer in 2008. The vessel bound for Hawaii assisted with several missions on the East Coast, and is scheduled to arrive at its new home in spring 2009.



To learn more about these and other accomplishments, visit sanctuaries.noaa.gov

