

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument



Photo: Mark Sullivan, NOAA

The monument is an important habitat for rare species such as the threatened green sea turtle and the endangered Hawaiian monk seal.



Photo: Dan Clark, USFWS

The monument is a nesting and foraging area for over 14 million seabirds – making it the world's largest tropical seabird rookery.



Photo: Wayne Levin, NOAA

The monument's coral reefs are home to more than 7,000 marine species.

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) is one of the largest conservation areas in the world. It encompasses 139,797 square miles of the Pacific Ocean – an area larger than all the country's national parks combined. The extensive coral reefs found in Papahānaumokuākea are home to over 7,000 marine species, one-quarter of which are found only in the Hawaiian Archipelago. Many of the islands and shallow water environments are important habitats for rare species such as the threatened green turtle and the endangered Hawaiian monk seal. On less than 6 square miles of land, over 14 million seabirds representing 22 species breed and nest. Land areas also provide a home for four bird species found nowhere else in the world. The monument's vision is to forever protect and perpetuate ecosystem health and diversity and the Native Hawaiian cultural significance of Papahānaumokuākea. In 2010, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated the monument as a mixed World Heritage Site.

Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument is jointly administered by the Department of Commerce, the Department of the Interior and the State of Hawai'i, and in collaboration with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Research and Monitoring

Scientific, cultural and maritime research are

important parts of the monument's overall operations. The focus of the monument's coral reef research program includes shallow and deep mesophotic reef characterization and monitoring. Reef surveys have recorded the diversity and abundance of fishes, algae, corals and other reef invertebrates at numerous locations throughout the archipelago. Historic resources, such as shipwrecks, have also been documented on shallow reefs by monument and national marine sanctuary Pacific Region archaeologists. Research in deeper offshore waters has utilized multibeam sonar and submersibles to document rarely seen biological resources and topographical features contained within monument waters. The results of these shallow and deep water research efforts will aid in the management of these vast ocean resources in one of the largest coral reef systems and marine protected areas in the U.S.

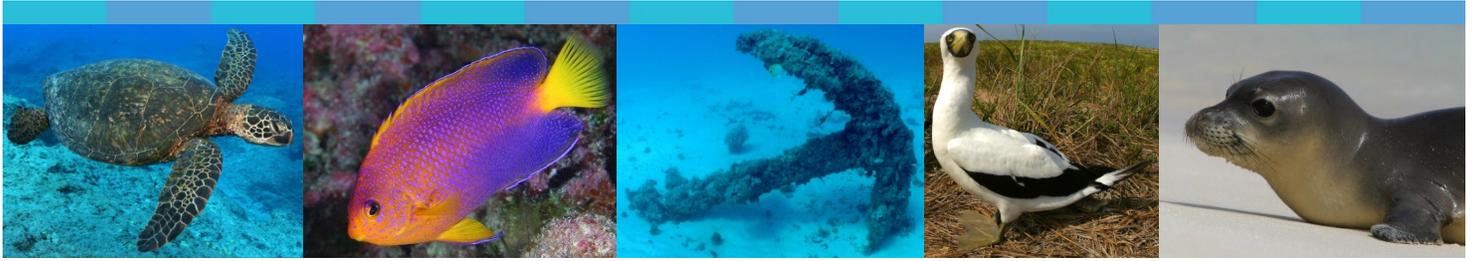
Education and Outreach

The focus of the education and outreach program is to increase understanding of ecosystem management, develop an ocean stewardship ethic and train the next generation of leaders to be both scientifically and culturally grounded. The monument's visitor center, the Mokuāpapa Discovery Center in Hilo, interprets the natural science, culture and history of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and surrounding marine environment.



Photo: James Watt, NOAA

The name Papahānaumokuākea celebrates two Hawaiian ancestors, Papahānaumoku and Wākea, who gave rise to the Hawaiian Archipelago, the taro plant and the Hawaiian people.



Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

Location

140 miles northwest of the Main Hawaiian Islands

Protected Area

139,797 square miles

Designation

June 2006

Habitats

Abyssal
Atolls
Bank
Hypersaline lake
Islands
Lagoon
Pelagic
Reef
Seamount
Slope

Key Species

Calcareous algae
Corals
Endemic reef fish
Green sea turtle
Hawaiian monk seal
Laysan albatross
Sharks and jacks
Spinner dolphins

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



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On the Web

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<https://www.facebook.com/Papahanaumokuakea>

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries

Network of marine protected areas
Encompasses more than 170,000 square miles
Established October 1972

On the Web

sanctuaries.noaa.gov
www.facebook.com/NOAAOfficeofNationalMarineSanctuaries
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Photo: Mark Sullivan, NOAA

A Hawaiian monk seal rests on a beach in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.



Photo: James Watt, NOAA

The remains of a shipwreck lie on Laysan Island in the monument.



Photo: Wayne Levin, NOAA

Mokumanamana is one of the monument's many dramatic features.