

Wildlife Watching in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary



While you are a guest visiting the sanctuary...

*Information courtesy of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
<http://montereybay.noaa.gov/>*

- Never feed wild animals. Most have special diets and human food is not healthy for them. It also encourages animals to beg and brings them into close contact where diseases can be transmitted more easily.
- Don't disturb animals by trying to approach too closely or to touch them. Enjoy observing them in their natural homes at a safe distance. Some animals can even be dangerous if you get too close. Stay at least 100 yards from any marine wildlife for your safety and theirs.
- Please do not touch or pick up young birds and animals that appear to be "orphans." Their parents are usually not far away.
- Keep your pets under control. Our animals scare wildlife and may transmit diseases to wildlife or vice versa.
- If you're exploring tide pools, please leave plants and animals where you find them. Many of these animals have found a home in a specific tide pool, on a rock or in a crevice. Removing them, even if you replace them, may jeopardize their future well-being. It's best to look closely, but not to pick up tide pool creatures.
- Please dispose of your trash in a proper container. Larger animals and birds have been known to eat food packaging, film, plastic bags, fishing tackle and other litter as it smells or looks appealing. Other types of trash can entangle and trap animals and birds.
- Look closely, step carefully and try not to touch. Most rocks along the coast are covered with living animals. Instead of picking them up, quietly stop and watch for a few minutes. You'll see and learn much more this way.
- If you touch an animal, touch it gently. If it tries to escape, just let it be. Leave it in its ocean home. Many animals die when pried from rocks, and many need oxygen from seawater to breathe. Always return animals exactly as you found them. Replace any rocks or shells that turn over -- they're roofs for many animals.
- Always watch the ocean waves as they come to shore. Larger than normal waves can suddenly sweep the unsuspecting off the rocks. And watch that you don't get trapped out on the rocks by an incoming tide.
- Also, be careful when walking on the ocean bluffs or cliffs. Edges can give way unexpectedly and rocks can be more slippery than they look. Many people have lost their lives by falling into the ocean from cliffs and overlooks.
- Since the Sanctuary plants, animals, rocks and shells are protected by Federal and/or State law, collecting them is not allowed without the proper permits. To help ease the temptation, leave all buckets, pails, nets and other collecting tools at home.
- Tread lightly, and leave the seashore as clean or cleaner than it was when you arrived.
- Take pictures -- both with your mind and your camera. Leave only footprints in the sand.