

## What is a California marine protected area (or “MPA”)?

An MPA is a type of managed area whose main purpose is to protect or conserve marine life and habitats in ocean or estuarine waters. California's MPA Network consists of 124 areas with varying levels of protection and 14 special closures, all designed to help safeguard the state's marine ecosystems. The ban on collecting and fishing in no-take marine conservation areas such as Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area provides very high levels of protection.

One goal for California's MPAs was to strategically place them near each other to form an interconnected network that would help to preserve the flow of life between marine ecosystems. Within that network each MPA has unique goals and regulations, and non-consumptive activities, permitted scientific research, monitoring, and educational pursuits may be allowed.

## Why was this location chosen for a state marine conservation area?

One of the goals for [Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area](#) is to protect the sandy seafloor, surfgrass, kelp forest, caverns, and rocky reef habitat near shore. This conservation area includes a wide range of underwater environments due to the steep topography of the island. Bat ray, kelp bass, and California spiny lobster thrive here, and rare species such as the scythe butterflyfish, rainbow scorpionfish, and guadalupe cardinalfish have been seen. The former Catalina Marine Science Center Marine Life Refuge, which predated the conservation area by 30 years, helped to create an MPA that now protects an outstanding variety and abundance of large fish and invertebrate species.

The conservation area shares a northern border with [Blue Cavern Offshore State Marine Conservation Area](#). The onshore and offshore conservation areas work together to protect marine life and habitats from the shore to as deep as 2,616 ft. Placing a no-take state marine conservation area here provides very high levels of protection for marine species and the habitats they use.



**Report poachers and polluters**  
**Call CalTIP: 1 (888) 334-2258**

or text 847411 - begin message with “Caltip” followed by the details.



## Quick Facts: Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area

- **MPA size:** 2.61 square miles
- **Shoreline span:** 2.2 miles
- **Depth range:** 0 to 892 feet
- **Habitat composition:**
  - Sand/mud: 2.54 square miles
  - Rock: 0.15 square miles



Non-Consumptive Activities



Anchoring Restrictions  
See Regulations on Back



No Fishing



No Collecting

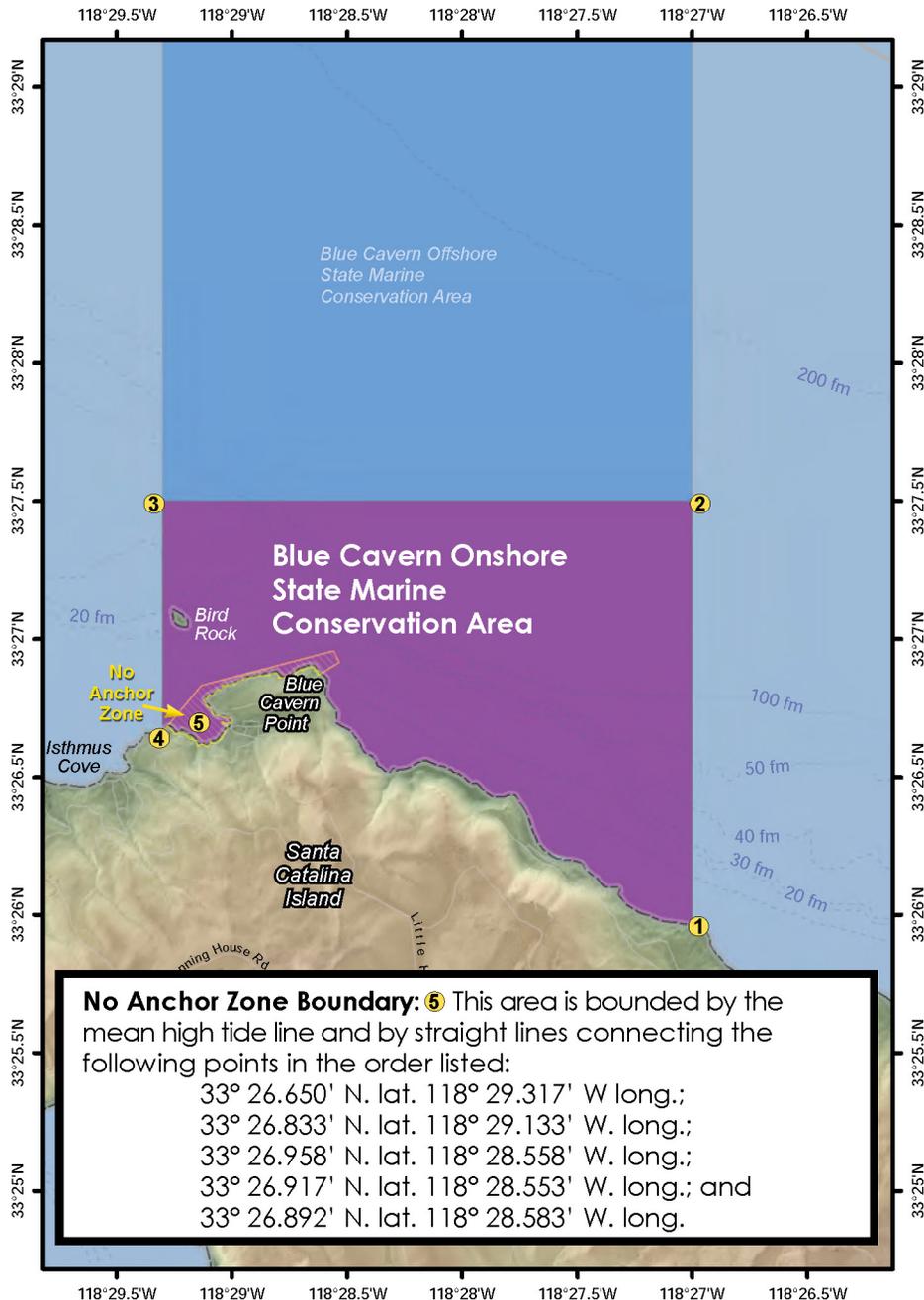
## Further Information:

- MPA Website: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/MPAs)
- MPA and Sportfishing Interactive Map: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/OceanSportfishMap)
- Email: [AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov)

**Photos - Upper:** Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area near the western boundary, photo by T. Mason **Lower right:** Bat ray in the conservation area, photo © seavivs CC BY-NC 2.0 **Lower left:** Fringed cerianthid anemone in the conservation area, photo © Stefanie CC BY-NC 2.0

# Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area

Southern California - Santa Catalina Island



## Blue Cavern Onshore State Marine Conservation Area Boundary and Regulations from California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632

### Boundary:

This area is bounded by the mean high tide line and straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed:

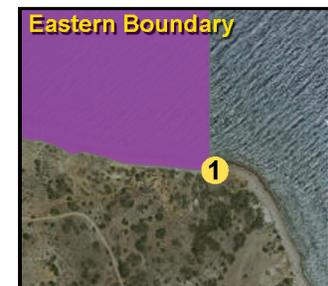
- 33° 25.960' N. lat. 118° 27.000' W. long. ①;
- 33° 27.500' N. lat. 118° 27.000' W. long. ②;
- 33° 27.500' N. lat. 118° 29.300' W. long. ③; and
- 33° 26.640' N. lat. 118° 29.300' W. long. ④

### Permitted/Prohibited Uses:

1. It is unlawful to injure, damage, take, or possess any living, geological, or cultural marine resource for recreational and/or commercial purposes, with the following specified exceptions:
  - a. Except as pursuant to Federal law, emergency caused by hazardous weather, or as provided in b. below, it is unlawful to anchor or moor a vessel in the formerly designated Catalina Marine Science Center Marine Life Refuge ⑤.
  - b. The director of the Catalina Marine Science Center Marine Life Refuge, or any person that the director of the refuge has authorized may anchor or moor a vessel or take, for scientific purposes, any fish or specimen of marine plant life in the formerly designated Catalina Marine Science Center Marine Life Refuge under the conditions prescribed in a scientific collecting permit issued by the department.
  - c. Take pursuant to the maintenance of artificial structures inside the conservation area is allowed pursuant to any required federal, state and local permits, or as otherwise authorized by the department.

**No Anchor Zone Boundary: ⑤** This area is bounded by the mean high tide line and by straight lines connecting the following points in the order listed:

- 33° 26.650' N. lat. 118° 29.317' W. long.;
- 33° 26.833' N. lat. 118° 29.133' W. long.;
- 33° 26.958' N. lat. 118° 28.558' W. long.;
- 33° 26.917' N. lat. 118° 28.553' W. long.; and
- 33° 26.892' N. lat. 118° 28.583' W. long.



Take may be authorized for research, restoration, and monitoring purposes under a scientific collecting permit. See California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632(a).

The information in this document does not replace the official regulatory language found in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 632. View these regulations online at [www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs/Network).