



Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary has a busy field and public event season ahead with many ways for you to get involved. Whether your interest is outreach, education, scientific research, diving or boating- we have opportunities for you.

Your participation in our programming helps promote public understanding of our National Marine Sanctuary, empowers citizens with the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions that lead to the responsible stewardship of aquatic ecosystems, and enhances appreciation of our natural, historical and cultural resources.

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Research collaborations between scientists and volunteers, particularly (but not exclusively) to expand opportunities for scientific data collection and to provide access to scientific information for community members.

(Source: Citizen Science Central, <http://citizenscience.org>)

Phytoplankton Monitoring

Partnering with NOAA's National Center for Coastal Ocean Science lab in Charleston, we are developing our citizen science programs while providing an opportunity to contribute much-needed data on the phytoplankton communities in our sanctuary and coastal marine waters. Volunteers are needed weekly to monitor and maintain site specific surveys of phytoplankton while watching for potentially harmful algal blooms (HABs) and signs of environmental disturbance.

Team Ocean Diver Corp

We recruit advanced certified divers interested in NOAA scientific dive opportunities on an ongoing basis.

Marine Debris Monitoring and Removal- Team Ocean Divers will assist Sanctuary staff in conducting field surveys to track the location and accumulation of trash and litter across the Sanctuary as well as support removal efforts to extract the debris from the Sanctuary.

Reef Fish Monitoring- Team Ocean Divers will be trained to identify fish species at the Sanctuary and to conduct fish surveys based on the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) roving diver protocols. With these new skills divers will conduct fish surveys across the Sanctuary from dive platforms to build upon the existing long-term fish monitoring program at the Sanctuary.

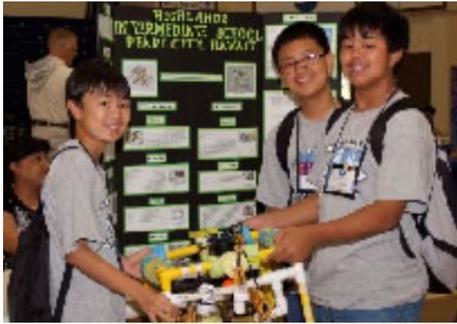
Habitat Assessments- Team Ocean Divers will support Sanctuary staff in habitat mapping and assessment programs designed to characterize in detail the type and distribution of habitats across the Sanctuary. These data will contribute to the current habitat classification maps used by the Sanctuary.

EVENT CORP

Participation at local public events and festivals keep us connected to the community and allow us to share current research and management initiatives. Volunteer support at these events help project our mission of protection.

Featured public events for [2011](#) are: Tybee Island Water Fair, The Savannah International Boat Show, Gray's Reef Southeast Regional MATE-ROV Competition, Earth Day Savannah, Shell-e-brate Earth Day Jekyll Island, SCAD Sidewalk Arts Festival, and Turtle Crawl Triathlon Jekyll Island.

Additional support is still needed for our southeast regional ROV (remotely operated vehicle) competition, held April 2nd, 2011 at the Chatham County Aquatic Center in Savannah, GA.



The [Marine Advanced Technology Education](#) (MATE) Center coordinates an international student underwater robotics (remotely operated vehicle or ROV) competition and a network of 20 regional ROV contests that take place across U.S. and in Canada, Hong Kong, Scotland, and Japan. Student teams from upper elementary, middle schools, high schools, home schools, community colleges, universities, and community organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club and 4-H, participate. The competition consists of three different "classes" that vary depending on the sophistication of the ROVs and the mission requirements.

In addition to technical skills, the events help students to develop the ability to problem solve, think critically, and work as part of a team. By connecting students with employers and professionals from the workplace, the competitions also expose students to ocean-related career opportunities and help them to see the pathways to those careers.

Individuals with ocean-related, oil and gas industry, robotics, engineering or marine tech experience are needed to assist in judging student ROV competition mission tasks, engineering reviews and reports, poster displays and general support.

For more information about any of our volunteer opportunities, please contact Jody Patterson at 912-598-2431 or [email](#).

<http://graysreef.noaa.gov/involved/volunteer/welcome.html>

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