

New science mission launched to study unique seamounts in the northeast Pacific Ocean

Submitted by Katie Shoemaker Thu, 2018-07-05 14:24



Seamounts are underwater mountains that are home to an abundance of marine species, from cold-water corals and sponges to Bocaccio and killer whales. These ecosystems are important to maintaining biodiversity in the ocean and contribute greatly to its health. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Haida Nation, Oceana Canada and Ocean Networks Canada are working together to further ocean research and help protect seamounts in the Pacific Ocean.

The Northeast Pacific Seamounts Expedition, taking place from July 5 to 21, 2018, will explore three seamounts in the Northeast Pacific Ocean: SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie, Dellwood and Explorer.

During the 16-day expedition aboard Ocean Exploration Trust's vessel, E/V Nautilus, partners will survey and collect data on the physical features and ecosystems of the seamounts. They will establish long-term monitoring sites on SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount, and for the first time, will use multibeam sonar to map Dellwood and Explorer Seamounts.

Canadians can join the partners as they explore the mystery and wonder of these seamounts through daily livestreaming and updates which will be available during the expedition on ProtectOceans.ca.

This expedition will provide benchmark data for long-term ecosystem monitoring and scientific research to help conserve and manage seamounts. The findings will support protection measures for these unique seamount habitats, which are critical for ensuring a healthy ocean.

Quotes

"The ocean is complex, and it takes a diverse partnership like this one to help us understand our blue planet's deep-sea engine. Ocean Networks Canada is thrilled to contribute to this exciting collaboration with our world-leading ocean observing technology, which provides the ocean intelligence decision-makers need to preserve and protect ocean ecosystems for future generations."

Kim Juniper, Chief Scientist, Ocean Networks Canada—an initiative of the University of Victoria

Quick facts

- Explorer and Dellwood Seamounts are situated within Canada's Offshore Pacific Area of Interest, an area that includes a series of hydrothermal vents and 87% of known seamounts in Canada. More research can help gain a better understanding of this important area and support more permanent protection measures such as designating the area as a Marine Protected Area.
- SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount and the surrounding area have been designated by both the Haida Nation and Fisheries and Oceans Canada as a Marine Protected Area.
- Located 180 kilometres offshore and to the west of Haida Gwaii, SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount extends 3,000 meters from the surrounding seafloor and reaches to just 24 meters below the sea's surface.
- The E/V Nautilus is equipped with two remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and a multibeam echosounder used for seafloor mapping.
- The ROVs will collect samples and high definition video from the seamounts, and install a long term monitoring instrument on Dellwood Seamount.

Associated links

- [Northeast Pacific Seamounts Partners](#)
- [Council of the Haida Nation](#)
- [Fisheries and Oceans Canada Expedition page](#)
- [Oceana Canada](#)
- [Ocean Networks Canada](#)
- [SGaan Kinghlas-Bowie Seamount Marine Protected Area](#)
- [Offshore Pacific Area of Interest](#)

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