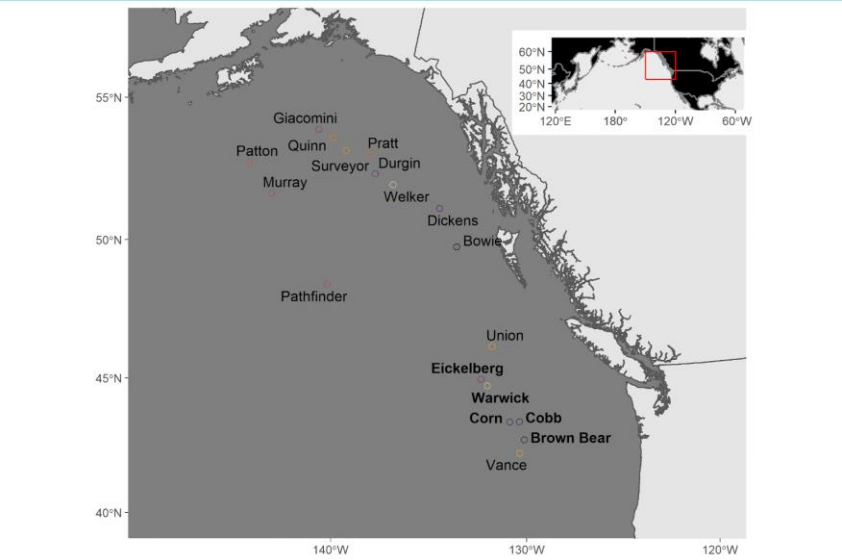
National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Fisheries Science Center

Research Brief

Joint Canada-USA International Seamount Survey

September 3-16, 2024



Who is conducting the research?

Scientists from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Alaska Fisheries Science Center with support from the Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program.

What is the research objective?

The primary objective of this research expedition is to generate spatially explicit data using underwater stereo video cameras that can be used to map the distribution of deep-sea corals and sponges at the seamounts, document their size structure, catalog visible impacts of human activity, and their species associations. Additional objectives include:

- Collecting eDNA samples from each stereo-camera transect for laboratory analysis
- Collecting observations of marine mammals and birds along the vessel trackline
- Collecting acoustic data from transects during nighttime hours
- Collecting acoustic data and ADCP data continuously along the vessel trackline at seamounts

Where is the research being conducted?

Survey operations are based out of Sidney, British Columbia, CA, aboard the CCGS Sir John Franklin. Researchers will visit five seamounts (Eickelberg, Warwick, Corn, Cobb and Brown Bear, see map) based on predetermined priority status.

Why are the data important? How will data be used?

This international collaboration will expand our knowledge of deep sea coral and sponge distributions outside of US and Canada EEZ's which are under-explored. This research will also provide information about genetic connectivity among coral populations, historical fisheries impacts, and recovery rates of these vulnerable habitats. The intersection between deep-sea coral and sponge distribution and fisheries is an ongoing concern of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission, the Regional Fisheries Management Organization for international waters of the North Pacific Ocean (www.npfc.int).

See timetable on back

Schedule for the 2024 Joint Canada-USA International Seamount Survey

Survey team travels to Sidney/Victoria, Canada	September 2nd
Load gear and test camera systems	September 3rd
Vessel mobilization	September 4th
Science operations begin	September 6th
Science operations conclude	September 14th
Demobilization and gear offload in Sidney, Canada	September 16th

How do you plan to communicate research results?

During the survey we will be videoing vessel operations for a future web story. After the survey, images will be annotated and data submitted to National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI). Results will be communicated through processed reports, scientific papers and web stories available to the public on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Alaska Fisheries Science Center websites.

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Gina M. Raimondo

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