

# KINGMAN REEF



## KEY SPECIES

### *Birds*

Masked boobies  
Brown boobies  
Brown noddies

### *Reptiles*

Green sea turtles  
(threatened)  
Hawksbill sea turtles  
(endangered)

### *Mammals*

Spinner dolphins  
Undescribed beaked  
or mellow-head  
whales

### *Invertebrates*

22 stony coral species  
over 38 genera  
22 species of benthic  
Cnidaria over 16  
genera  
27 species of macro-  
invertebrates  
other than  
Cnidarians  
Giant clams

### *Fish*

297 fish species in 47  
taxonomic families  
Gray reef sharks

## PROPOSAL

- Establish a National Monument that includes Kingman Reef and its surrounding waters
- Expand US Fish and Wildlife Service management authority from 3 to 12 nautical miles (nm)
- Manage the island and nearshore waters to 12 nm as a fully protected National Wildlife Refuge under authority of the Secretary of the Interior
- Establish appropriate conservation measures to protect and conserve the wildlife in the waters and on the seafloor surrounding the fully protected refuge, in particular shallow and deepwater corals, large predatory fishes, and seabirds. This zone from 12 to 200 nautical miles would be managed by the Secretary of Commerce acting through NOAA

## IMPORTANCE

- Kingman Reef lies within the inter-tropical convergence zone and path of the eastward moving Equatorial Countercurrent, bringing more rainfall and the larvae of additional reef species from the more diverse West Pacific
- Most pristine US reef with top predator biomass of 85%
- Highest coral recruitment, live cover, mean diameter, and second highest diversity of coral in Central Pacific Islands
- Serves as a baseline from which to evaluate the condition of other coral reefs and sea-bird populations elsewhere that have been degraded
- Refuge for resident and migratory fish, marine mammals, sea turtles and a resting spot for seabirds and migratory shorebirds

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Kingman Reef encompasses approximately 2.6 acres of emergent reef and nearly 483,713 acres of submerged lands. Kingman Reef and surrounding waters out to 12 nautical miles are currently managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as National Wildlife Refuge as a fully protected biological reserve.

Kingman Reef is home to a variety of marine species, including the largest populations of large clam species, *Tridacna squamosa* and *Tridacna maxima*, in the Central Pacific Ocean. Kingman Reef has the only known occurrence of any finger coral species within a 2,500 kilometer radius.

## THREATS

- Localized upwelling around the island attracts illegal foreign commercial fishermen
- Potential trespass by a handful of US fishing vessel, which cannot be monitored
- Potential shipwrecks, groundings, and oil spills from commercial fishing vessels in refuge waters
- Potential for transiting vessels to ground due to poor charts
- Invasive marine species destroying natural ecology
- Lost fish aggregating devices (FADs) wash up on reefs and beaches as marine debris and entangle and kill wildlife; potential groundings by trespassing vessels retrieving FADs



*Centropyge flavissima*

Photo: J E Maragos