

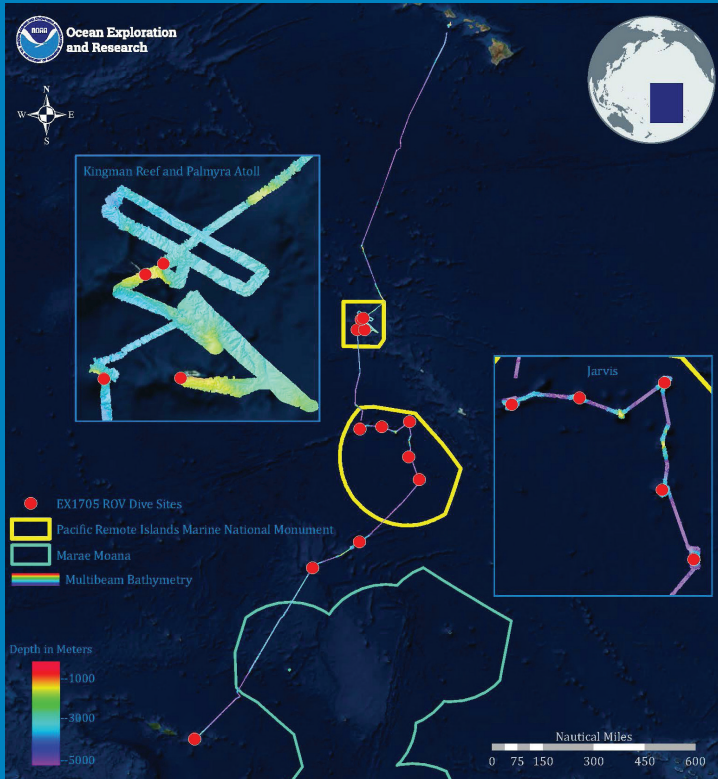
Mountains in the Deep: Exploring the Central Pacific Basin

NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*, April 27 – May 19, 2017

<http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/okeanos/explorations/ex1705/welcome.html>



Ocean Exploration
and Research



Expedition Overview Map

This expedition is part of the three-year Campaign to Address Pacific monument Science, Technology, and Ocean Needs (CAPSTONE), an initiative to collect deepwater baseline information to support science and management decisions in and around U.S. marine protected areas in the central and western Pacific.



Conducted dives in never-before explored and/or poorly understood areas, including five dives in the Jarvis Island Unit of the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument (PRIMNM), four dives in the Kingman Reef and Palmyra Atoll Unit of the PRIMNM, two dives north of the Cook Islands, and one dive at the Aunu'u Unit of National Marine Sanctuary of American Samoa.



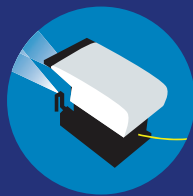
During a dive at Jarvis Island, we observed a group of ophiuroids capture and eat a squid (*Abralia* sp.) that was swimming by. Our science team was shocked to see this behavior from a brittle star. This interaction helps us understand a little bit more about benthic-pelagic coupling in this region.



Nearly 400 students, teachers, media outlets, and VIPs toured the *Okeanos Explorer* while at the port of Pago Pago, American Samoa. Additionally, approximately 1,000 cruise ship passengers attended the Festival of Sites and presentations hosted by the expedition team.



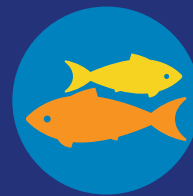
36,800+ square kilometers of seafloor mapped



12 remotely operated vehicle dives at a depth range of 230 to 4,570 meters



79 biological & 16 geological samples collected



20+ undescribed species observed



95 participating scientists, students, & managers



2.5 million+ live video views