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Bull shark images/b-roll available on request

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CALIFORNIA'S ONLY BULL SHARK ON DISPLAY **AT THE AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC**

On September 7, 2006, the Aquarium of the Pacific announced the official debut of its first bull shark, making it the only aquarium on the nation's west coast with this animal. The public can visit this member of the Aquarium family in the outdoor Shark Lagoon exhibit.

Although shark attacks are rare, the majority of them come from white, tiger, and bull sharks. Shark attacks can occur any month of the year with the highest amount of reported incidents in the United States being in September. According to the International Shark Attack Files, in 2005 four fatal shark attacks took place worldwide. However, humans pose the greatest threat to these marine animals. All sharks continue to be threatened by the practice of shark finning. It is estimated that humans kill 100 million sharks each year. While the bull shark's numbers seem stable, more than 80 species of sharks are endangered.

"As the only aquarium on the U.S. west coast to have a bull shark, we are excited to share with the public the beauty and grace of these marine animals. We hope that by having the bull shark here, we can educate the public on the importance of protecting sharks and the need for shark conservation to ensure the future presence of sharks in our oceans," said Sandy Trautwein, Aquarium of the Pacific curator of fish and invertebrates.

Bull sharks are known for their small eyes, short nose, husky gray body, off white underbelly, and medium sized dorsal fin. Found in all tropical and subtropical waters along coastlines, the bull shark is the only shark that can live in freshwater lakes and rivers.

The Aquarium of the Pacific's juvenile bull shark enjoys a diet of mahi mahi, hoki, and other fish including sardines, herring, and squid. The female bull shark came to the Aquarium as a pup in the summer of 2005 from a private collector who found the bull shark off the coast of Texas. The Aquarium plans on keeping the bull shark in Shark Lagoon for as long as she thrives in her environment. Female bull sharks can grow to be an average of eight feet long and about 300 pounds.

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The Aquarium of the Pacific offers programs for the public to learn more about sharks. Daily, guests can touch sharks, view shark babies and egg cases, and watch feeding presentations at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. The Aquarium also offers a shark Animal Encounter program available on the weekends by reservation and classes throughout the year.

The Aquarium of the Pacific, a nonprofit institution, celebrates our planet's largest and most diverse body of water: the Pacific Ocean. Home to more than 12,500 animals, the Aquarium explores the waters of Southern California and Baja and the Northern and Tropical Pacific. The Aquarium features hands-on discovery labs staffed by knowledgeable volunteers; the Lorikeet Forest aviary; its interactive Shark Lagoon; the kiosk exhibit *Whales: Voices in the Sea*, and more. The Aquarium was rated #2 Los Angeles area Family Destination in the *2004 Zagat U.S. Family Travel Guide*. A world of discovery awaits people of all ages, backgrounds, and interests. The Aquarium is open daily from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and is located at 100 Aquarium Way in Long Beach, Calif. General admission is \$20.95 for adults (12+), \$17.95 for seniors (62+), \$11.95 for children (3-11), and free for children under three and Aquarium members. For advance tickets and information, the public may visit www.aquariumofpacific.org or call 562/590-3100.

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