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JOURNEY INTO THE DARK DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN, WHERE UNUSUAL SEA LIFE DWELLS BEYOND THE REACH OF LIGHT

From bioluminescent fish that light up in the deep sea to fish that produce slime, mysterious animals will be featured in the Aquarium of the Pacific's new exhibit gallery

April 4, 2013, Long Beach, CA—Imagine a world in total darkness, a mysterious place where few humans have ever traveled. The deep ocean is one of the last places on our planet that is largely unexplored. Starting this summer, visitors to the Aquarium of the Pacific will be transported into the dark depths of the ocean, where they will encounter unusual animals that live beyond the reach of light.

New animals, exhibits, educational displays, films, an art exhibit, and an ocean explorer guest speaker series will debut as part of Ocean Exploration at the Aquarium of the Pacific from May 24, 2013 through February 1, 2014. About 95 percent of the ocean remains unexplored. "Through this program, the Aquarium hopes to inspire a push to explore our planet's last physical frontier—the World Ocean," said Dr. Jerry R. Schubel, Aquarium of the Pacific president and CEO.

The Aquarium will transform its changing exhibit space into the new *Wonders of the Deep* gallery. Through lighting and audio-visual effects, visitors will journey to the darkness of the deep ocean, where animals dwell in extreme conditions. Beyond the reach of sunlight, flashlight fish live. The Aquarium will showcase these bioluminescent fish that produce their own light in addition to hagfish that emit slime. The gallery will also include chambered nautilus, deep-sea isopods that resemble massive pill bugs, deep-water crabs, and other creatures of the depths. A sea jelly touch tank will allow people to learn about gelatinous, deep-sea animals.

Visitors will see what it is like to explore the deep ocean as they learn about the challenges of studying it. They will also discover how animals survive the extreme temperatures and pressure and manage to find food and mates in this vast darkness. Displays will include a re-creation of a whale fall, the island of life that survives on a dead whale when it sinks to the bottom of the sea, as well as an exhibit representing hydrothermal vents, where toxic hot fluids flow from the inside of the Earth in the ocean depths. The Aquarium's Ocean Science Center, Great Hall, and Ocean Theater will feature three different films that showcase deep-sea animals, animals recently discovered, and the history of ocean exploration. The film presented in the Ocean Science Center *Exploring the Depths* was made possible by support provided by The Roddenberry Foundation.

Guests will be able to see live video feeds from the deep ocean and will be able to interact with ocean explorers and scientists, as the Aquarium of the Pacific will become an official Ocean Command Center of the University of Rhode Island's Inner Space Center. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) ship *Okeanos Explorer* and Bob Ballard's ship *Nautilus* will deliver live video feeds daily as they explore deep waters around the world.

Mixed-media portraits of contemporary ocean explorers, including Jacques Cousteau, Sylvia Earle, and Bob Ballard, will hang in the Great Hall in an exhibit called *The Oceanauts: Living the Dream of the Sea* by artist Zofia Kostyrko. The Aquarium will also debut the new Explorer App for both iPhone and Android that uses augmented reality to allow guests to embark on their own missions of ocean discovery during their visit.

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Throughout the year, the Aquarium will feature its new Ocean Exploration Guest Speaker Series. During these evening lectures, people can hear from ocean explorers, including Bob Ballard, Sylvia Earle, Don Walsh, Edith Widder, and others. On Sunday, July 21, the Aquarium of the Pacific is encouraging the public to dive into the unknown, the final frontier of our planet, during Explorers Day. Guests will have the opportunity to meet and hear from historical and modern-day ocean explorers, see demonstrations of remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) under water, and watch live video feeds from three deep-sea exploration vessels. NOAA, NASA, and other agencies and organizations engaged in ocean exploration will feature educational booths at this event. Kid's activities, including guest appearances by the Octonauts, will be included throughout the day.

Join the Aquarium as it celebrates its 15th anniversary of ocean discovery. Charter Communications is the summer sponsor of Ocean Exploration. The nonprofit Aquarium of the Pacific is a community gathering place where diverse cultures and the arts are celebrated and where important topics facing our planet are explored by scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders in search of sustainable solutions. The Aquarium is dedicated to conserving and building nature and nature's services by building the interactions between and among peoples.

Home to more than 11,000 animals, Aquarium exhibits include the June Keyes Penguin Habitat, Ocean Science Center, Molina Animal Care Center, and the interactive Shark Lagoon and Lorikeet Forest exhibits. Beyond its animal exhibits, the Aquarium offers educational programs for people of all ages from hands-on activities to lectures by leading scientists. The Aquarium of the Pacific is located at 100 Aquarium Way in Long Beach, CA. For information call (562) 590-3100 or visit www.aquariumofpacific.org.

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