

PACIFIC **Currents**

Aquarium of the Pacific

SPRING 2023



25

Celebrating our 25th Anniversary
with new exhibits and more!

Swimming in a Vast, Lovable Ocean

By Giovanni Garcia



I LOVE THE OCEAN. While I am not sure when my love for the ocean began, I have a pretty good idea as to what caused it. Some of my best childhood memories are at the Aquarium of the Pacific. I have been to this Aquarium more times than I can even remember. Every visit was as great as the last. I always thought that the ocean's inhabitants were so strange looking compared to animals on land, and the Aquarium offered me a chance to be able to see these bizarre creatures up close.

None of this would have been possible without my wonderful mother. She is originally from Mexico and unfortunately never had the chance to learn to swim. She then took this missed chance and gave it to me by enrolling me in swimming lessons. Over time this evolved into me competing on a swim team. Although I didn't like going to practice and I was gasping for air often, I eventually began to love it.

My love for the ocean deepened even more when an opportunity to camp at Catalina Island presented itself. On this trip, I experienced snorkeling for the first time. While I wasn't able to see very clearly and I was nervous, this was the first time I was seeing ocean animals in their natural environment. This experience made me feel connected to the ocean in a whole new way. It was as if I was a part of their world, even if just for a brief moment.

As I continued to swim and compete, my appreciation for the ocean grew stronger. I started to notice the way the water felt against my skin, the taste of salt on my lips, and the way the waves moved around me. I felt like I was part of something bigger than myself. It wasn't until I started open water swimming that I truly felt a deep connection to the ocean. There is something incredibly humbling and awe-inspiring about being in the vast expanse of the open ocean, surrounded by nothing but water. It's a feeling that is hard to put into words, but it's one that I cherish every time I'm in the water.

Swimming in the ocean also made me more aware of the importance of ocean conservation. As I swam, I would occasionally come across trash and debris that had been discarded or lost at sea. It was a reminder that even though the ocean is vast, it is not invincible. We need to take care of it if we want to continue to enjoy its beauty and benefits.



Giovanni Garcia is a leader within the Aquarium of the Pacific's Teen programs. He has served as a mentor in our VolunTEEN program and donates his writing talents to the Teen Climate Council (TCC).

***“It's a feeling that is hard to put into words,
but it's one that I cherish every time I'm in the water.”***

— Giovanni Garcia



Letter from the CEO

Dear Members,

SCIENCE AND THE AQUARIUM OF PACIFIC are intertwined. That intertwining is both an obligation and an opportunity. It is an obligation because we have a responsibility to provide entry points for those who do not feel welcomed by science and who have never considered a possible career in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). It is an opportunity because millions visit us each year. If we do our job well, those guests will learn about climate change, sustainability, natural history, and marine marvels while also having a joyful and awe-inspiring experience.

Because of memes in the media about science denialism, you probably have the impression that faith in science is waning. Nothing could be further from the truth. Yes. Trust in most public institutions and sectors has been in decline over the last two decades. Since 2002, trust in Congress, television news, business, Wall Street, and public schools have all declined by 30 to 50 percent. The singular exception to declining trust is in “science”. Not only has science seen no decline in trust, but it has also consistently scored higher than all other U.S. institutions—never receiving lower than a “trust quite a lot” rating. And herein lies the greatest opportunity.

Over 1.5 million visit the Aquarium every year. These visitors trust science. And they trust the Aquarium as a source of information. While the Aquarium is dedicated to conservation and stewardship of the ocean, our visitors may not have the same priorities. In fact, one in three visitors to aquariums and zoos do not feel climate change is a severe threat warranting major action. These are not climate change deniers—they are climate change minimizers. If we do our job well, we have an opportunity to open minds to climate change as a serious threat.

Opening minds mean respecting differences. While they are here, our guests with wildly different backgrounds and socio-economic status can nonetheless view the same exhibits, see the same animal shows, watch the same films, attend the same evening events and festivals, and have a conversation. Living with differences is a skill that can only be developed with practice. Public spaces such as the Aquarium enable people to encounter those that they would otherwise never find themselves with and gain some practice at appreciating those who differ from them. We are a space that offers unpredictable and surprising animal encounters and in which people can share a joyful experience that is outside of their ordinary days.

Science, community, and living with differences are core values for Aquarium staff and leadership. They are core values that will help build a better future. As we look to that future, please join us as we celebrate our 25 years of connecting people to nature and each other.

Sincerely,

Peter Kareiva

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PACIFIC CURRENTS is published for members of the Aquarium of the Pacific. Please send your comments to our editorial staff at pacificcurrents@lbaop.org.

OUR MISSION: To instill a sense of wonder, respect, and stewardship for the Pacific Ocean, its inhabitants, and ecosystems.

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The Aquarium of the Pacific is a non-profit 501(c)3 institution. To provide exciting and innovative exhibits and educational programs, we rely heavily on the generous donations of individuals, foundations, and corporations.





ROBIN RIGGS

Just to the right of siphon is the iconic dark spot with a blue ring of the California two-spot octopus.

California Two-spot Octopus

The Aquarium is featuring a California two-spot octopus in its new Southern California Gallery.

FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA TO BAJA CALIFORNIA, the coastline has an eight-armed jewel called the California two-spot octopus (*Octopus bimaculoides*). Named after the two spots found under its eyes, this octopus can be found in the shallow portions of the rocky reef as well as in intertidal areas like tidepools. The spots on the California two-spot octopus help distinguish it from a very close relative—Verill’s two-spot octopus. While both have two spots, the way to identify the California two-spot octopus is by the spot itself, which looks like a chain in the shape of the letter “o.” Verill’s two-spot octopus spots have blue spikes coming off the blue pigment.

Like other octopus species, the California two-spot octopus can camouflage by using its chromatophores. These are specialized cells that can change color. As a nocturnal species, the California two-spot octopus’s eyes are designed for hunting food at night. Due to this, guests may notice the different lighting at this exhibit. Like all octopus species, the two-spot octopus reproduces once in its lifetime known as semelparity.



As a nocturnal species, the California two-spot octopus's eyes are designed for hunting food at night.



A giant kelpfish positions itself next to kelp for camouflage.

Giant Kelpfish

Did you see that kelp blade move?

THE GIANT KELPFISH'S (*Heterostichus rostratus*) tapered shape, along with its yellow-brown color, allows it to hide in kelp strands. These fish are sometimes easy to miss, but a patient observer might see one swim from strand to strand. Kelp, as well as other seaweeds, are important to giant kelpfish not only for hiding from predators, but also as a place for females to lay their eggs. The males will guard the eggs until they hatch. Giant kelpfish feed on smaller fish, mollusks, and small crustaceans. These fish can be found along the California coast as well as along the Baja California coast. Look for giant kelpfish in our new Casino Point exhibit.



Giant kelpfish have many color morphs to help camouflage in the kelp.



A warty sea cucumber is surrounded by sea stars.

Warty Sea Cucumber

The surprising role of the sea cucumber.

THE WARTY SEA CUCUMBER (*Parastichopus parvimensis*) is a spiny skinned invertebrate found along the intertidal zones from Baja California to Monterey Bay. It is related to other spiny skinned invertebrates or echinoderms like sea urchins and sea stars. The spiny skin comes from tiny papillae that helps the sea cucumber sense its environment. Sea cucumbers defend themselves by expelling their organs, which stick to their predator. Afterwards, the sea cucumber regrows their organs. The warty sea cucumber plays an important role in recycling nutrients in the ecosystem. While feeding on the sand, sea cucumbers keep the sand soft, making it suitable for other animals. Warty sea cucumbers are featured in the Southern California Gallery.

DISCOVERING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S OCEAN TREASURES

How far does one need to go to find stunning ocean habitats, abundant sea life, and unique animals found nowhere else?

One might think it requires traveling across the globe. Remarkably, Southern California is home to ocean treasures that rival those found around the world. In celebration of our 25th anniversary, the Aquarium is re-imagining our Southern California Gallery to highlight these local treasures.





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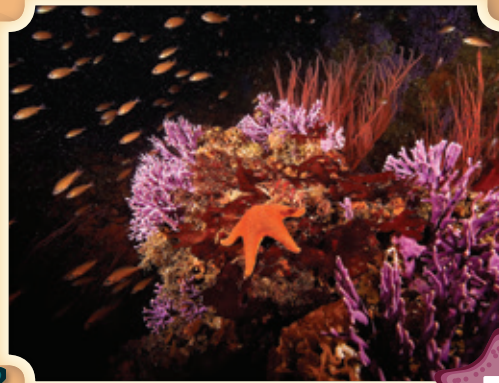
A

Our Backyard Kelp Forest

THIRTY MILES SOUTHWEST of the Aquarium is the small city of Avalon on Catalina Island. At the marine protected area of Casino Point, visitors to Avalon can swim atop the canopy or snorkel and dive inside an undulating forest of kelp. Kelp forests are a vibrant habitat in the coastal eastern Pacific Ocean that support an abundance of life.

Numerous species of kelp rise up from the ocean bottom. Together they create kelp forests. Iconic animals like the Garibaldi, sea lions, and leopard sharks depend on kelp forests; yet kelp is fascinating on its own. These large algae provide a vital source of oxygen and protection for the coastline. Neighboring underwater forests along the northern and central coastlines have been at risk due to rising temperatures, overgrazing from sea urchins made worse by the reduction of urchin-eating animals like the giant seabass and sunflower stars, particularly in Northern California and further north into Canada. Fortunately, California sheephead, another urchin eater, have a stable population in Southern California.

Aquarium guests can peer into this remarkable habitat in our new Casino Point exhibit.



B

Beauty in the Deep

LESS THAN FIVE MILES from Avalon, there is a kaleidoscope of life forming a treasured ecosystem. These underwater mountains are named Farnsworth Banks. Kelp is present here, but what is even more unique are the purple hydrocorals. They are similar to their stony coral relatives in that they both create a hard skeletal structure made of calcium. Purple hydrocorals are special because they are only found along the West Coast of North America. Because of this, Farnsworth Banks has been a protected area since 1973. Prior to that hydrocorals were collected to be sold as jewelry.

Along with the hydrocorals, the Farnsworth Banks habitat at the Aquarium features relatives to hydrocorals called gorgonians. Close-up, the polyps of these gorgonians look like mini sea anemones, which might help with making the connection that hydrocorals, gorgonians, sea anemones, and stony corals are all cnidarians or sea creatures with stinging cells.

HELPING KELP

Starting last year, Aquarium staff members embarked on a program to preserve the genetic material of bull kelp. They are storing the samples under controlled temperature and light to preserve them for future research and restoration efforts.





The Life of Artificial Reefs

WHEN CROSSING THE CHANNEL in between the mainland and Catalina Island, or from a view from shore, there is the familiar sight of oil rigs. The structure beneath these platforms is where a bounty of life resides. Since their placement starting in the 1960s, an ecosystem has formed on the pilings that rise up from the seafloor. The closest offshore oil rig is just twelve miles from the Aquarium. For divers, these rigs are an exciting place to see the potential of artificial reefs in Southern California.

Artificial reefs can be an important refuge for animals in the changing ocean. The key ingredient for artificial reefs is the complexity of space available, which is why fish take up residence at shipwrecks as well. The spaces allow for algae to grow, which attracts fish—many species of rockfish have been surveyed on the pilings of our offshore riggs—and invertebrates like sea anemones and crabs.

The new Southern California Gallery is featuring a habitat similar to what a diver might find in these underwater reefs. Anyone—diver or not—can enjoy a glimpse of these local treasures.



Gelatinous Drifters

FORTY MILES OFF OUR SHORE is considered the open ocean. This seemingly empty place devoid of animal life is actually an active ecosystem that includes plankton, such as sea jellies. These fragile creatures are an important source of food for animals that frequent the open ocean like sunfish, turtles, and even other sea jellies. They drift through the ocean carried by currents and changing tides. At certain times of year, moon jellies drift into the corners of harbors just two miles south of the Aquarium.

Sea jellies appear at first glance simple with no heart or brain. A common question people ask is “How do sea jellies move their bodies without a brain?”—scientists have discovered that sea jellies have a basic neural network that allows them to function.

Guests can experience sea jellies in the new Southern California Gallery as well as multiple places throughout the Aquarium, including a moon jelly touch lab outside on the Harbor Terrace.

HELP PROTECT

Our local ocean is home to many animals, habitats, and special places that need our protection. These ecosystems are already at risk due to the inherent effects of climate change and face many other threats.

However, it is not too late help. Instead of keeping secrets like a pirate's treasure, these treasures are to be shared and celebrated as our unique natural world right outside our door. To experience these treasures first-hand, learn more, and find out how you can help, visit our new Southern California Gallery.





E

Seagrass Meadows

TWENTY MILES AWAY from the Aquarium, the Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve in Orange County is a place where eelgrass, a type of seagrass, has been replanted to restore an underwater nursery for juvenile fish. Located in California coastal areas, seagrass meadows not only serve as a nursery for juvenile fish, but also a natural protective barrier against coastal erosion and a reservoir for carbon. Seagrass was once common, but development, agricultural runoff, and vessel traffic have all combined to degrade or destroy as much as 90 percent in California. Thankfully, recent seagrass restoration efforts have proven to be successful.

In the Aquarium's expansive new seagrass meadow exhibit, guests will discover the many animals that depend on this habitat, including small fish, sea stars, and snails.



F

Night Crawlers

AFTER SUNSET, the rocky reefs and artificial reefs scattered along the Southern California coast come alive as nocturnal animals, like the California spiny lobster, venture out of their daytime shelters. These lobsters are protected from fishing activities from April to September to allow them to reproduce and/or shed their shells to grow in a process called molting. This species of spiny lobsters can be found at a wide variety of depths from Monterey to Southern Mexico.

Lobsters are large bottom-dwelling crustaceans. It may be surprising that not all have claws, pincers, or spines. Those features help identify the variety of lobsters in the ocean. California spiny lobsters do not have claws like the American lobster found off the East Coast. Instead, California spiny lobsters have large antennae to help them "feel" and sense their environment.

Guests will be able to see a pod of these fascinating lobsters in our new gallery.

25 YEARS OF CONNECTING TO NATURE

SINCE OPENING OUR DOORS IN 1998, the Aquarium of the Pacific has connected millions of people from around the world to the beauty and wonder of our ocean planet. Join us as the Aquarium celebrates its 25th Anniversary with new exhibits, events, and programs highlighting the remarkable natural world right outside our door.

Be the first to find our octopus sculpture hidden in a different exhibit each day to win a limited-edition commemorative pin, enjoy our 25th Anniversary film in the Great Hall to learn about how we are saving species and habitats, discover our new podcast series, see our new photography exhibit, attend a special edition of the Blue Whale Gala or our Member Party, and find a variety of 25th Anniversary merchandise in Pacific Collections. The celebration begins May 26, 2023.



25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



Night Dive

■ June 23 and August 11

* Member Events

Please join us for select events just for our members and donors.

Member 25th Anniversary Party

■ July 6, 2023

6:30 P.M.–9:00 P.M.

Celebrate the Aquarium’s 25th anniversary with a special night for members! Tour the re-imagined Southern California Gallery highlighting fascinating local animals and marine habitats. You’ll also learn about the local species we are saving, how we plan to rebuild California’s coastal wild, and the unique ways we are connecting our community to the healing power of nature and our deep blue ocean.

- **Members: FREE**
(Reservations required)

* Special Events

The Aquarium of the Pacific hosts a variety of performances, fundraisers, and other special events throughout the year. Check our website for more details and additional events.

Pride Night

■ June 2, 2023

6:30 P.M.–10:00 P.M.

In partnership with The LGBTQ Center Long Beach, join the Aquarium of the Pacific in celebrating our LGBTQ+ community. Enjoy a fun evening with your favorite animals and colorful fishes. This event is for all ages and will also include drag queen storytelling (a family friendly activity where a drag queen reads a book to children), rainbow photo opportunities, music from our DJ, and much more.

- **Members: \$19.95**
- **Non-members: \$24.95**

Father’s Day BBQ

■ June 18, 2023

11:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.

Join us for a special Father’s Day BBQ to celebrate Dad, and see all your favorite ocean animals! The BBQ will take place on our rooftop Veranda dining area overlooking Rainbow Harbor.

- **Members: \$59/adult, \$30/child**
- **Non-members: \$84/adult, \$55/child**

Juneteenth Celebration

■ June 19, 2023

CHECK WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

Learn about the history of this holiday and its significance to the African American community and beyond. Discover the traditions of this annual celebration through music and song and an interview with Baba the Storyteller. The Juneteenth Celebration will also be live streamed on the Aquarium’s YouTube page.

- **Members: FREE (Reservations required)**
- **Non-members: \$44.95/adult, \$41.95/senior, \$29.95/child**

Night Dive

■ June 23, 2023

7:30 P.M.–11:00 P.M.

This adults-only event features food trucks, cash bars, DJs throughout the Aquarium galleries, art, and a live band performance on the stage in front of the Honda Blue Cavern. Night Dive regularly sells out so be sure to purchase your tickets early.

- **Members: \$24.95**
- **Non-members: \$29.95**
- **Ages 18+ only**



For information, visit aquariumofpacific.org or call (562) 590-3100, ext. 0. Events are subject to change. Please visit pacific.to/memberhub for more information or to make a reservation. Reservations for each event will be available at least two weeks in advance.

4th of July BBQ

■ July 4, 2023

4:00 P.M.-9:00 P.M.

Break out your red, white, and blue and join the Aquarium of the Pacific for a special 4th of July. Reservations for the buffet meal on the front plaza is open from 4:00-6:00 p.m. and VIP dinner on the Rooftop Veranda overlooking Rainbow Harbor will be available from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Tickets include all-day admission and a buffet dinner. Beverages will be available from the cash bar.

- 4th of July BBQ
 - Members: \$77/adult, \$55/child
 - Non-members: \$97/adult, \$75/child
- VIP BBQ
 - Members: \$100/adult, \$80/child
 - Non-members: \$130/adult \$120/child
- Prices include Aquarium admission (Reservations required)

Blue Whale Gala

■ July 22, 2023

5:30 P.M.-11:00 P.M.

Join us in celebration of the Aquarium of the Pacific's twenty-fifth anniversary at the Blue Whale Gala. Enjoy cocktails and conversations at the cocktail reception in Shark Lagoon, explore the re-imagined Southern California Gallery highlighting local animals and marine habitats, bid on an array of auction items, dine under the blue whale with a gourmet dinner, and visit your favorite animals while exploring the Aquarium with after-dinner drinks and dessert. Table sponsorships, seats, and program book tribute ads are available at aquariumofpacific.org/gala. Visit pacific.to/gala for more information

Night Dive

■ August 11, 2023

7:30 P.M.-11:00 P.M.

This adults-only event features food trucks, cash bars, DJs throughout the Aquarium galleries, art, and a live band performance on the stage in front of the Honda Blue Cavern. Night Dive regularly sells out so be sure to purchase your tickets early.

- Members: \$24.95
- Non-members: \$29.95
- Ages 18+ only

First Responders Day

■ September 11, 2023

9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Police officers, sheriff's deputies, and fire-fighters receive free admission on September 11. Contact your union or association to purchase discounted tickets for friends and family.

- Free for police officers, sheriff's deputies, and firefighters with a current and valid service ID (Reservations required)

Coastal Cleanup Day

■ September 16, 2023

9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

Join the Aquarium in cleaning up Long Beach as part of the statewide Coastal Clean-Up Day. Help protect our ocean and marine life by picking up trash on the beach. Gloves and bags will be provided, and free parking is available.

- Email Shauna Badheka (sbadheka@lbaop.org) for more information and to reserve your spot.
- Location: end of the Long Beach Peninsula at Ocean Blvd. and 72nd St

Seniors Day

■ October 2, 2023

9:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.

The Aquarium will open its doors for free to people ages fifty and above. Special exhibits for seniors will be featured.

- FREE to visitors ages 50 and over with a valid photo ID. (Reservations required)

Aquarium 5k Run/Walk

■ October 14, 2023

7:00 A.M.-9:00 A.M.

The Aquarium will partner with the Long Beach Marathon to host the annual 5k Run/Walk. Sign up early as it is expected to fill up quickly.

- Visit runlongbeach.com/events/aquarium-of-the-pacific-5k/ for more details

Photographers Night

■ October 8, 2023

6:00 P.M.-10:00 P.M.

Practice your wildlife photography skills and take your time getting the perfect shot. Professional and amateur photographers are invited to capture the Aquarium's wildlife during exclusive "photographers only" hours. Explore vendors, test new equipment, and meet other wildlife photo enthusiasts.

- Member: \$41.95
- Non-member: \$44.95



Did you know that we have an app? The Aquarium app has everything from Daily Show schedules to an interactive map!



Moompetam American Indian Festival

■ Saturday & Sunday, September 9-10

* Festivals

Experience our community's diverse cultures and their connections to the ocean and environment.

Pacific Islander Festival

■ June 3-4, 2023
9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

Join the Aquarium for its twentieth annual Pacific Island Festival. This festival features traditional music and dance, cultural displays, and craft demonstrations, and celebrates Pacific Islander cultures, including Hawaiian, Tahitian, Samoan, Tongan, Chamorro, Marshallese, and Maori.

Moompetam American Indian Festival

■ September 9-10, 2023
9:00 A.M.-5 P.M.

In celebration of the local American Indian cultures, the Aquarium will host its nineteenth annual Moompetam Festival. This celebration features traditional cultural craft demonstrations, storytelling, music, and dance. The festival celebrates indigenous California maritime cultures, including Tongva, Chumash, Acjachemen, Costanoan, Luiseno, and Kumeyaay.

Baja Splash Cultural Festival

■ September 23-24, 2023
9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

The Aquarium will host its twenty-second annual Baja Splash Cultural Festival in celebration of cultures from Mexico, Central and South America, and beyond. The event features traditional dance, live music, educational programming in English and Spanish, and booths from participating organizations.

Southeast Asia Day

■ September 30, 2023
9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.

The Aquarium will celebrate its nineteenth annual Southeast Asia Day. The festival's program will highlight the beauty and diversity of the cultures of Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, and Indonesia. Guests can enjoy music, dance, and cultural craft demonstrations.



High Tide Student Film Festival

June 1, 2023



* First Wednesdays

Reserve your seat by visiting aquariumofpacific.org (click on Guest Speakers under the Events tab) or calling (562) 590-3100.

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First Wednesdays: Lecture, Cocktails, and Conversation

June 7, July 5, August 2,
September 6, & October 4, 2023
7:00 P.M.-9:00 P.M.

Join us on the first Wednesday evening of every month for a talk with leading experts in our state-of-the-art Honda Pacific Visions Theater. Each presentation is followed by a cocktail social hour with music. Guests can mix and mingle and participate in crafts, our digital Paint-a-fish activity, book signings, and more. The program is recommended for high school and college students and adults of all ages.

- \$5.00 with advance reservations, \$10.00 day of event

High Tide Student Film Festival Award Ceremony and Screening

June 1, 2023
6:30 P.M.-9:30 P.M.

High Tide is a short film contest for Southern California high school students to explore the ocean and conservation through creative visual storytelling. At this screening, the Aquarium will present the finalists' films and announce the gold, silver, and bronze award winners in each of the categories. Films were

submitted in three topic categories: Ocean and Culture, Ocean and Food, and Ocean and Sports. The program is presented by Dr. Allen and Charlotte Ginsburg. The event will be live streamed to the public.



For information, visit aquariumofpacific.org or call (562) 590-3100, ext. 0. Events are subject to change. Please visit pacific.to/memberhub for more information or to make a reservation.



Harpo gives a shout out in celebration of Parker's birthday

*Aquarium
of the Pacific*



LEARN AND EXPLORE

Classes and Tours

Connect with the Aquarium through in-person and virtual experiences that offer up-close views of our animals and exhibits.

In-Person Programs

Aquarium Summer Camps

Campers ages 3-12 can join the Aquarium for summer camp while learning all about ocean animals and habitats. Half day camps allow our youngest campers to explore the Aquarium for three mornings (Fish Fry Camp for ages 3-4 with adult and Sea Squirt Camp for ages 5-6). Older campers will spend five full days at the Aquarium as they dive deeper into ocean science in Ocean Adventure Camp (ages 7-9) or Jr. Biologist Camp (ages 10-12).

- Visit aquariumofpacific.org/camps for more details and dates.

Animal Encounter: Sharks and Rays

Feed the sharks and walk among the rays! Join an Aquarium educator and animal care staff for a private encounter at the touch pools of Shark Lagoon.

- Member \$135 and Non-member \$150; minimum 2, maximum 4 participants

School Field Trips

In-Person Field Trips

Bring your class to the Aquarium for a fun-filled learning experience while you explore the 12,000 animals living at the Aquarium. Teachers can choose a self-guided exploration or add on a live educational program in one of our learning spaces. The following pricing applies to accredited schools. After-school programs, extra-curricular school clubs, day-care affiliated programs, and other non-accredited organizations are not eligible for these rates.

- Self-guided: \$8.50 per person, one free chaperone per 10 paid students.
- Class and theater programs: \$11.50 per person, one free chaperone per 10 paid students

Virtual Field Trips

The Aquarium is offering Virtual Field Trips for schools, homeschools, and care facilities for learners of all ages. These educator-led programs run live from our studio on site. Our educators will help you and your students/ participants explore various topics based on grade level, like recognizing shapes and colors, comparing sharks and fish, and even discussing conservation and human impacts on ecosystems.

- Prices range from \$100 to \$250 depending on the program.

Whale Watching Cruises

Whale Watching and Dolphin Cruise

■ Seasonal

The Pacific Ocean is home to many wondrous animals year round. Join us as we search for dolphins, seals, sea lions, and other marine life on our Whale Watching and Dolphin Cruise. This is an experience you and your family will not soon forget!

- Members: \$27 per adult, \$22 per senior (ages 62+), \$19 per child (ages 3-11). Non-members (includes Aquarium admission): \$66.95 per adult, \$62.95 per senior, \$47.95 per child.
- Prices subject to change.
- 2 to 2.5 hours

Blue Whale Watching Trips

■ Summer Season

Join naturalists and experts from the Aquarium for an ocean voyage in search of the largest animal on the planet—the blue whale. Along the way we will also have the opportunity to spot dolphins, seals, sea lions, and other marine animals.

- Members: \$46 per adult, \$39 per senior (ages 62+), \$32 per child (ages 3-11). Non-members (includes Aquarium admission): \$78.95 per adult, \$75.95 per senior, \$59.95 per child.
- 3 to 3.5 hours



Why did the octopus eat two ships full of potatoes?
 one potato ship.
 Because you can't eat just
 ANSWER:

Virtual Resources

The Aquarium offers a library of free virtual resources. Check out the following opportunities to connect with us.

Visit aquariumofpacific.org and click on Learn

Virtual Programs

Zoom Animal Appearance

Invite one of the Aquarium's animals to your next birthday party or Zoom meeting. Meet our animals up close and learn about them from our animal care staff in this private program.

- \$750
- Flexible dates and times based on advance reservations

Aquarium Online Academy



Tune in to the Aquarium's Online Academy for free interactive programming for kids of all ages. Visit pacific.to/onlineacademy for current scheduling. In addition to live programming, the Online Academy offers a large library of pre-recorded sessions on the Aquarium's YouTube channel.

- Grades PreK-12

Webcams

Want to check in on your favorite Aquarium animals from your living room? Webcams placed in our exhibits allow your family to visit the Aquarium virtually. Take webcam exploration even further with the Aquarium's Webcam Resource Kits (available at pacific.to/webcamkits). These kits include lesson plans and videos that provide guided exploration of the Aquarium webcams.

- Grades K-8

Career Connections

Introduce your teenager to a variety of STEM careers through the Aquarium's Career Connections series. By exploring the careers of scientists working at the Aquarium, you will learn more about current research and career opportunities. The series is available at pacific.to/careerconnections.

- Grades 6-12

Conservation Series

Explore current conservation projects and meet the professionals who have dedicated their lives to conservation. Visit pacific.to/conservationseries for videos, discussion guides, and activities related to conservation and sustainability.

- Grades 6-12



What is a marine protected area (MPA)?

- A) A place protected by the marines
- B) An area where only fish are allowed
- C) An underwater park

ANSWER:
C! Just like there are state parks on land, there are parks underwater. In MPAs the government places limits on human activity for conservation efforts.



ROBIN RIGGS

Word Search Activity

There are so many wonderful ways to connect with nature because it's all around us! You can explore it by hiking in the forest or swimming in the sea. But that's not the only way.

You can connect with nature in your local parks by observing butterflies or even stargazing in your own backyard. Go have a look. You never know what you might discover!

Can you help Captain Quinn and his son Kevin find all 10 nature activities in this word search?

HIKE

Taking a walk in the forest, local park, or wilderness.

SWIM

Moving or floating in a body of water like the ocean, river, or your swimming pool.

WRITE

Putting your thoughts on paper. This can be something you see, a poem you think of, or even a story!

CAMP

Sleeping, eating, playing, and setting up a tent outside.

DRAW

Making pictures with pen, pencil, or crayon on paper. You can draw what you see or use your imagination!

EXPLORE

Traveling in or through a new place. Seeing sights both big and small!

MEDITATE

Thinking deeply to relax your mind and body.

GARDEN

Caring for plants indoors or outdoors. This can be tending to potted flowers or growing your own vegetables outside.

STARGAZE

Looking at the stars. You can try to count them or look for planets and constellations.

SNORKEL

Using a short tube to breathe, while you swim with your face under water.



P A F H N U R X M V
G M E X P L O R E E
S W I M T E P V D A
E N O T S T A P I C
X Y J U Z Z Y W T A
O B W R I T E O A M
G H M E A A U S T P
A O D S N O R K E L
R Y G D R A W I X B
D H I K E E S Y L T
E X H M A B D V T U
N X S T A R G A Z E

AQUARIUM

Animal Facts

ROBIN RIGGS



SEAL AND SEA LION HABITAT

California Sea Lion

Zalophus californianus

The California sea lion is one of the mammals here at the Aquarium. They can be viewed underwater at the end of the Southern California Gallery just before exiting to Shark Lagoon or viewed above water in the seating area below the Ray Pool Touch area. Sea lions have a seemingly smooth coat to help them swim rapidly through their habitat. But did you know that a male sea lion's neck or mane would look like a male lion's mane if the sea lion was completely dry?

HONDA BLUE CAVERN

Giant Sea Bass

Stereolepis gigas

These enormous fish can reach lengths over seven feet, which is bigger than most people are tall. Giant sea bass have lifespans similar to humans. The Aquarium has been helping this species by assisting in studies about these fish because scientists, today, are just getting the chance to observe them. Previously, giant sea bass were hard to find due to overfishing, which led to the giant sea bass getting legal protection in their ecosystem. While the word "bass" is in the name of this fish, giant sea bass are related to other wreckfish like groupers.



KEN KURTIS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GALLERY

Garibaldi

Hypsypops rubicundus

The Garibaldi is the state fish of California. It is named after an Italian political figure Giuseppe Garibaldi because people who followed him wore a scarlet or red shirt. Because of the bright color, these large damselfish are easy to spot in the water—even from land if the water is clear enough. Garibaldi take guarding their eggs very seriously to the point they have been observed defending their territory. When the Garibaldi hatch, the young have blue spots.



2023 African American Scholars

For the third year in a row, a cohort of African American students were awarded scholarship funds and join a growing community of scholars engaging in various Aquarium efforts.

IN FEBRUARY AS PART OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FESTIVAL, the Aquarium announced the names of the ten African American Scholars for 2023. These students range from undergraduate to doctoral students, and all will be invited to participate in Aquarium conservation projects, events, and other activities through the program. In addition, each recipient was awarded \$10,000 to support their exploration of the fields related to the work of the Aquarium.

This newly named cohort joins a community of program alumni with whom they can connect, share resources, and further feel supported in their marine science career. Past recipients have volunteered, interned, and been hired as paid staff at the Aquarium.

Others have published in the Aquarium's member magazine, published a scientific paper with the Aquarium's CEO, created one-minute film clips for early childhood educators, met with the Aquarium's Teen Climate Council, and completed an Instagram takeover of the Aquarium's social media.

This program is possible thanks to funding from individuals and corporate supporters, including Aquarium of the Pacific Board members and staff members, The Boeing Company, The Ahmanson Foundation, Lori Prince and Robert Hum, Kathie Eckert, David Cameron with City National Bank, Bob Foster, and the Schulzman-Neri Foundation.



Anthony McGinnis



Bryce Barbee



Danielle McHaskell



Genece Grisby



Gregory Smith



Jada Alexander



Jahnita DeMoranville



Jake Roth



Khalil Russell



Kimberly Randolph

To learn more about the African American Scholar program and the recipients, visit aquariumofpacific.org/multimedia/africanamericanscholar.

Aquarium Research

Aquarium staff lead and assist in important research. The Aquarium is committed to better understanding and conserving our local marine life. Recently, we were part of three important research papers.



A fin whale lunge feeding.



Sea turtle monitoring staff.



A juvenile zebra shark.

Research Identifies Local Fin Whale Population

The Aquarium's extensive database of local whale sightings collected by our Whale Photo ID interns assisted in the identification of a local fin whale population. The results were published in a paper titled *Movements and Residency of Fin Whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*) in the California Current System in Mammalian Biology*. James Stewart, a supervisor in the Aquarium's education department, coordinated with the paper's lead author to provide fin whale data processed and tagged by interns in the photo ID program. The data and the photos helped researchers identify individual fin whales to allow them to say with confidence that a resident fin whale population resides off the Southern California coast.

Aquarium Furthers Knowledge on Local Green Sea Turtles

The Aquarium's Southern California Sea Turtle Monitoring Project summarized 10 years of its observational data in the journal *Animals*, with the article *Monitoring Green Sea Turtles in the San Gabriel River of Southern California*. Analysis of the data revealed high green sea turtle activity around wetland areas, highlighting the importance of these ecosystems as key habitats and foraging areas. The Southern California Sea Turtle Monitoring Project is made up of a team of Aquarium volunteers. The results reveal the benefits of community science in monitoring this threatened population. The full article is open access, and can be read at doi.org/10.3390/ani13030434.

Aquarium Veterinarian Publishes Study on Zebra Shark Parthenogenesis

Female zebra sharks can reproduce young without male fertilization, a process called parthenogenesis. Aquarium Veterinarian Dr. Lance Adams and collaborators—from the Georgia Aquarium, Ripley's Aquariums, and the Delaware Biotechnology Institute—published research on this phenomenon in the *Costs of Parthenogenesis on Growth and Longevity in Ex Situ Zebra Sharks *Stegostoma tigrinum** in the journal *Endangered Species Research*. Dr. Adams found that the baby zebra sharks that hatched via parthenogenesis had poor fitness when compared to baby zebra sharks that were born via sexual reproduction. This may be one of the reasons why many young zebra sharks born in aquarium settings are not surviving beyond ages associated with sexual maturity. These results can help inform the future care of these animals.

“This recent publication [in the journal *Mammalian Biology*] validates the contributions of community science to understanding [natural systems]. Without the thousands of hours of our interns, this discovery may not have been possible,” said James Stewart, Aquarium education supervisor.

Aquarium Contributes to Knowledge of Marine Aquaculture Impacts

MARINE AQUACULTURE is the breeding, rearing, and harvesting of aquatic plants and animals. It can take place in the ocean or on land in tanks and ponds and involve fin and shellfish and seaweed. When done responsibly, it can be an important and sustainable source of food for people around the world. As part of a project undertaken by intern Isabela Alameda, the Aquarium helped NOAA Fisheries scientists expand their knowledge of how marine aquaculture is impacting communities across the globe that could have applications in the United States.

Adriane Michaelis, an aquaculture social scientist with ECS and working with NOAA Fisheries, states that “When it comes to the social impacts of aquaculture in California and the U.S. more broadly, there really hasn’t been a ton of work to detail these impacts in a synthesized or comprehensive form. As the U.S. aquaculture industry continues to grow, it’s important to understand what that growth could mean for local communities.”

This project involved looking through discussions and case studies in over 100 peer-reviewed articles that resulted from a GoogleScholar search of “social impacts” and “aquaculture.” Fifty-four articles were flagged as relevant for the project. These articles were then broken down and categorized in a number of ways, including the geographic region of focus, the type of aquaculture (shellfish, finfish, seaweed, or the practice of marine aquaculture broadly), and the documented and perceived impacts.

This research, based on the available literature, indicated there is currently a lack of knowledge about aquaculture among public

stakeholder groups, it is difficult to generalize findings across locations, and there is an absence of California-specific research on the socio-economic implications of marine aquaculture.

Based on the results, experts have suggested that it is important to provide comprehensive explanations of aquaculture before implementing it in a community and to obtain community input and regionally specific information to best assess the local impacts of aquaculture. Not only would this increase the likelihood that local traditions and culture are taken into consideration, but also could promote more accurate collective knowledge about aquaculture impacts.

These findings can inform aquaculture development and community planning as well as to identify areas in need of additional study. As Kim Thompson, Aquarium director of the project, explains, “Understanding social interactions and community impacts is critical for sustainable development...to ensure the best possible outcomes for local communities, the environment, and society at large.”



Isabela Alameda is a junior at the University of Southern California majoring in environmental science and Spanish with a minor in computer programming. She worked with the Aquarium of the Pacific as part of a paid internship focused on researching the social implications and potential future of aquaculture.




A Unique Setting for Your Event

The Aquarium of the Pacific’s award-winning Pacific Visions wing provides a unique venue for private events, including outdoor picnics and indoor receptions or dinners. Other spaces available include the Great Hall, Shark Lagoon, and adjacent Shoreline Aquatic Park.

yourevent.aquariumofpacific.org 562-951-1663 AOPCatering@longbeach.cc.com
 100 AQUARIUM WAY LONG BEACH, CA 90802





Supporter Stories

Corporate volunteers pick up trash at the Long Beach Peninsula beach.

Charter Donor Spotlight: **Bank of America**

BANK OF AMERICA shares the Aquarium's commitment to the environment and the positive impacts institutions like ours together can have for the community. Since our founding 25 years ago, the bank has sponsored special events and provided grants in support of workforce development programs for teens. Local Bank of American employees have volunteered hundreds of hours at annual beach cleanups and wetland restorations, and bank executives have lent their time, resources, and expertise to our Trustees of the Pacific ambassador group.

“We are so grateful for Bank of America’s continued support in 2023 in celebration of our 25th anniversary, and we look forward to a fulfilling partnership for years to come,” said Ryan Ashton, Aquarium of the Pacific vice president of development.

Aquarium Supporters

THANK YOU to the Aquarium's education supporters who continued to provide grants and donations in 2022.

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Ways to Give

Did you know?

Many employers will match your donation or membership contribution to the Aquarium! Find out if you can double your impact at pacific.to/matchinggifts.



pacific.to/myplannedgift

Leave a Legacy

Learn more about estate planning and have a lasting impact on your Aquarium.



pacific.to/naming

Naming Opportunities

Honor or memorialize loved ones with a gift to support the Aquarium's future.



pacific.to/adopt

The Gift that Keeps on Giving

Adopt an Animal to support education and conservation at your Aquarium.



pacific.to/sponsorship

Sponsorship Opportunities

Customized sponsorships give your company unique opportunities to engage with the Aquarium's audiences.



pacific.to/donorcircle

Upgrade Your Membership

Join the Steward Circle or Pacific Circle today for personalized access, exclusive benefits, and more!



pacific.to/corpcircle

Join Corporate Circle

Learn how your company can support the Aquarium as a Corporate Circle member.



pacific.to/monthly

Monthly Giving

Sustain the programs and animals you know and love with a monthly donation.



pacific.to/startafundraiser

Make a Difference on Your Birthday

Start a fundraiser for your Aquarium for your birthday, holiday, or any occasion!

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Aquarium Accolades



Vice President of Human Resources Kathie Nirschl with Michael Seale, Jr.

Michael Seale, Jr. *Festival of Human Abilities*

The Aquarium presented the Heritage Award to Michael Seale, Jr. during the Festival of Human Abilities in January.

Michael Seale, Jr. is an abstract artist and advocate for people, especially children with disabilities. Since 1999, he has participated in numerous community projects and fundraising activities. In the Los Angeles School District, Seale has spoken to students with disabilities on how to ask for services and programs. He has spoken to master's degree students in special education at California State University, Dominguez Hills about socialization and inclusion at an early age and how it builds self-esteem for students with disabilities. Seale has gathered volunteers and invited the community to support numerous programs and events for people with disabilities. With The Jeffrey Foundation, Seale volunteered to teach abstract art to various people with disabilities across two classrooms. For the last five years, Seale has conducted volunteer art workshops.

Seale has participated in the Festival of Human Abilities for many years, leading workshops in hat making. In 2019, Seale adapted the program to include participants who are deaf. Seale is a role model who has dedicated his life to improving the lives of people with disabilities.



Dr. John Hamilton with Aquarium Board of Directors Member Dan Hopper.

Dr. John Hamilton *African American Festival*

The Aquarium presented the Heritage Award to Dr. John Hamilton during the African American Festival in February.

Dr. John Hamilton currently serves as the associate vice president of student success and equity at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). Hamilton was recently named the co-chair of the CSULB president's commission on equity and change. He is also an executive board member of the NAACP-Long Beach chapter.

Prior to his current position, Dr. Hamilton worked at CSULB as the director for the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) as well as the Guardian Scholars. Both programs aim to assist CSULB students in and out of the classroom during their studies.

Dr. Hamilton has dedicated his work to supporting the success of African American students. He has done this by presenting at conferences on not only equity and diversity, but also hip-hop, pop culture, welfare-to-work programming, foster youth, community policing, and identity-conscious strategies. As a leader in higher education institutions, Dr. Hamilton seeks to improve practices, inform decisions, strengthen communities, and ensure success.



Nakamura Gankyo dressed to perform Kabuki.

Nakamura Gankyō *Heritage Award*

The Aquarium presented Nakamura Gankyō with the Heritage Award at the Autumn Festival in November 2022.

Gankyō began training in Japanese classical dance at the age of three in Southern California. As a young performer, Gankyō traveled throughout the United States. Gankyō was later accepted to one of the two Kabuki schools in Japan. He was the first non-Japanese citizen to be accepted to the school and graduated first in his class. Gankyō became the first non-Japanese citizen to be accepted in the professional ranks of Kabuki theater. He has also worked in both the television and film industry and has hosted numerous workshops, demonstrations, and lectures. Gankyō was the youngest chosen official representative of the Tokyo School of Japanese Classical Dance to the United States. Gankyō teaches Japanese classical dance throughout California, New York, Boston, and Japan with his group Bandō Ryū: Kyō no Kai. He has a PhD from the department of Asian languages and cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles and is currently an assistant professor of Japanese studies at George Mason University. Gankyo has donated numerous volunteer hours promoting cultural awareness and has been a dedicated participant at the Aquarium's Autumn Festival, representing the display of Kimekomi Dolls.

“[Nakamura] especially cherishes the partnership with the Aquarium, and he looks forward every year to coming out and supporting the Aquarium and being part of the Autumn Festival.”

— Sheri Kaneska, Nakamura's older sister, who accepted the award on behalf of Nakamura.



The Mind and Water

A visit to the Aquarium could improve your health.

WHY DO YOU COME TO THE AQUARIUM? Our guests state in surveys that they come to see amazing and beautiful marine life or because the Aquarium is a source of entertainment that is family friendly. Some of our guests come to learn and others to see a new exhibit or animal. Those motivations likely seem obvious to you, but have you ever thought about whether you came to the Aquarium because it makes you feel better?

“Take note of your feeling and mood before you walk in our doors, and then again when you leave.”

It may not be a primary motivating factor for you, or one that you have even specifically thought about, but you are improving your mental and physical health by visiting. Studies have shown that nature—whether that be wilderness, an urban public park, or an aquarium—has an amazing, positive impact on us. Exposure to nature has been scientifically demonstrated to reduce stress, anxiety, blood pressure, and depression. In addition, it improves memory performance, mood, and rate of recovery from major procedures. Research into this topic has grown in the past few decades, and you can find articles in all types of publications from medical journals to popular media.

While all nature has these types of impacts upon us to varying degrees, water forms of nature, such as the ocean, lakes, and rivers, outperform the others in psychological benefits. Researchers have found that the color blue generates calm and peaceful feelings as well as heightened creativity. Studies specifically in aquarium settings have validated how watching fish in exhibits produces feelings of relaxation and happiness and reduces blood pressure and heart rate.

The Aquarium is slowly starting to introduce its guests to these concepts in a more intentional way. In October 2022 we hosted Dr Wallace J. Nichols as the keynote speaker of the West Coast Sea Turtle Symposium. In addition to being a sea turtle biologist, Dr. Nichols is the author of *Blue Mind: The Surprising Science That Shows How Being Near, In, On, or Under Water Can Make You Happier, Healthier, More Connected, and Better at What You Do*. During his talk, as in his book, he explored the connection of people to water and its restorative capabilities. He describes how interactions with water can assist in achieving ‘blue mind,’ a calm, mildly meditative, state that contrasts the more frenetic, anxious, or overstimulated state we often find ourselves in. While not a medical doctor, he professed that he often gives his friends a ‘bluescription’—a prescription to go for a swim, stroll on the beach, or otherwise experience water to restore their blue mind.

The next time you visit the Aquarium, I encourage you to test this. Take note of your feeling and mood before you walk in our doors, and then again when you leave. As you are standing in front of an exhibit you love, put your fingers on your wrist to feel your heartbeat. Does it slow the longer you gaze underwater? You don’t even have to wait until your next visit to try this. The beneficial impacts of the Aquarium can be achieved through purely visual encounters. Put on one of our webcams when you’re feeling overwhelmed or stressed and see what happens.

By Jennie Dean,
vice president of education and conservation



WATCH HIS
FULL TALK



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you

for being a member and celebrating
our 25th Anniversary with us.

