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## **AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC DEBUTS NEW EXHIBIT WITH MORE THAN TWENTY SPECIES OF FROGS AND AMPHIBIANS AND HIGHLIGHTS WORK TO SAVE THEM**

***The new FROGS exhibit opens May 24 and will take you on a journey around the globe to meet frogs and other amphibians while learning about the threats they face and what you can do to help***

**May 23, 2024, Long Beach, California**—The Aquarium of the Pacific is leaping into summer with a new exhibit that will take you around the world to meet charismatic creatures from the axolotl found in Mexico to colorful frogs that live in rainforests in South America and beyond. The new exhibit *FROGS: Facing a Changing World* features amphibians such as frogs, toads, newts, and salamanders, educational displays, and programs and opens on May 24, 2024, continuing through April 30, 2025. When this exhibit opens, it will be the first time visitors to the Aquarium of the Pacific will be able to see endangered mountain yellow-legged frogs. You can find out what the Aquarium is doing to save amphibians and what you can do to help as you explore the new exhibit.

Guests will be able to discover a newly reimagined section of the Tropical Pacific Gallery featuring frogs found in a variety of countries, peek behind-the-scenes to watch Aquarium staff care for frogs from eggs to adults, and see a new space in Pacific Visions highlighting California and Baja frogs, their amphibian relatives, and reptile neighbors. Visitors of all ages will also be able to paint their own virtual frog.

As guests journey through the Aquarium, they can meet more than twenty species of amphibians in over twenty exhibits representing habitats from California, Arizona, Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America, Australia, Vietnam, Madagascar, Solomon Islands, and more. Through the new exhibition and program, guests can learn about the diversity of frog and amphibian species and their unique adaptations, the threats they are facing, and how the Aquarium is helping to save them from extinction.

Amphibians like frogs, salamanders, and toads eat insects in and around water sources, keeping animals such as mosquitos in check. This in turn helps with the health of humans and other animals that can be impacted by mosquito-borne diseases and pathogens. Amphibians also play a vital role in the food web as they are an important food source for animals such as birds, fish, and snakes.

Frogs and other amphibians are impacted by climate change, habitat destruction such as pollution, logging, and human development, and chytrid fungus, which impairs the amphibians' ability to maintain their electrolyte balance through absorbing water through their skin. People can help amphibians by reducing their carbon footprints, staying on marked trails when hiking or walking, and making sustainable choices if they decide to bring an amphibian home as a pet.

“Amphibians face particularly high illegal trade as pets. Researching prior to adopting a new companion can help avoid inadvertently contributing to this global problem,” said Erin Lundy, conservation coordinator, Aquarium of the Pacific. “Some ways to research including looking up the protected status of the species online, making sure the animals are bred under human care, and asking where the animal came from.”

The Aquarium serves as a sanctuary for animals seized from wildlife traffickers, including axolotls. Many

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species, including those that are protected under the Endangered Species Act, are not allowed to be traded or kept as pets. When law enforcement identifies a violation of these rules, the animals are confiscated. Animals can be in a state of distress or poor health and require specialized care. Law enforcement then calls on zoos, aquariums, and other animal care organizations to assist. The Aquarium of the Pacific is one of those institutions and is part of the Southern California Wildlife Confiscations Network, a partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and nineteen animal care partners in the region.

A recent example of the Aquarium's response with these efforts involved a pair of axolotls. In April 2023 California Department of Fish and Wildlife confiscated two juvenile axolotls. They were very young and in poor health upon arrival, including one missing a leg. Aquarium staff members worked intensively to revive them, including hand feeding multiple times a day, extensive water changes, and closely monitoring other environmental factors. The pair was successfully restored to health last summer in their behind-the-scenes area, and guests to the Aquarium will be able to see them when *FROGS: Facing a Changing World* opens.

The Aquarium of the Pacific is also part of an ongoing conservation effort to help save mountain yellow-legged frogs from extinction. This species was once abundant in the local mountains of San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto, and is currently endangered. The Aquarium's role is to care for and raise mountain yellow-legged frog tadpoles through metamorphosis so that they can be released into the wild as frogs to help increase their population. Since it began taking in these animals in 2021, more than 300 mountain yellow-legged frogs raised at the Aquarium of the Pacific have been released into the wild to help reestablish their populations.

### **Aquarium of the Pacific**

The nonprofit Aquarium of the Pacific is a community gathering place dedicated to connecting people to and conserving nature. The Aquarium's vision is to foster an inclusive community that works together to create our sustainable future. Home to more than 12,000 animals, Aquarium exhibits include the Southern California Gallery, *Coral Reefs: Nature's Underwater Cities*, Pacific Visions, and Shark Lagoon. Beyond its animal exhibits, the Aquarium offers educational programs for people of all ages, including First Wednesdays featuring a variety of guest speakers. The Aquarium offers memberships with unlimited FREE admission for 12 months and other special benefits. To make a donation to help support the Aquarium, please visit [pacific.to/donate](https://pacific.to/donate). To visit, reservations are required for everyone and can be made at [aquariumofpacific.org](https://aquariumofpacific.org) or by calling (562) 590-3100.



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