

# Delay in Dungeness crab season not uncommon

COOS BAY — A naturally occurring toxin has resulted in commercial crab season delays in California, Oregon and part of Washington. But that doesn't mean crab isn't getting to market.

Some tribal fishermen in Washington are fishing in areas tested and proven safe and delivering crab to shore. The good news is that all crab for

sale in markets and restaurants is just as safe and delicious as the Dungeness crab enjoyed in the past.

Meanwhile, fishermen and processors continue working with state wildlife and health agencies to perform ongoing testing for domoic acid, the same rigorous testing they do every year. It's all to ensure crab for sale is safe for public

consumption.

Domoic acid is a naturally occurring toxin that dissipates over time.

Crab must be free of elevated levels of domoic acid for two tests in a row to be considered for harvesting.

Each test must be at least seven days apart, according to Food and Drug Administration guidelines, and takes a few

days or more to be completed. Oregon crabbers are volunteering their time to collect samples for testing.

It's important to note these are delays, not closures. Along most of the coast, the commercial season typically wouldn't start until Dec. 1.

Seasonal delays can be for any number of reasons, including meat fill content or food

safety issues.

"Rigorous testing, combined with continued cooperation between the seafood industry and state agencies, should provide consumers with even more confidence that any Dungeness crab on the market this season will be safe to eat and of the highest quality," says Rod Moore, senior policy adviser for the West Coast Seafood

Processors Association.

Here's the silver lining: Oregon and Washington crab are in great shape. Meat fill content has met or exceeded the testing parameters.

This winter, Dungeness are chock full of that sweet tasting meat that's become a West Coast staple.

# Cape Perpetua to begin popular Discovery Series Dec. 5

YACHATS — Dave Thompson was a summer seasonal ranger in California's Redwoods National Park.

He lived an idyllic life in a trailer within the park, where most evenings he'd set out a chair to observe the bear, elk and even mountain lions, which frequented the property.

It was a peaceful co-exis-

tence until the night Thompson found himself in the middle of a hunt, standing between a mountain lion and its prey.

Hear the harrowing story neither Thompson nor his audience will forget, while learning facts about the life and behavior of this secretive and often-maligned creature.

Thompson, the Siuslaw

National Forest's interpretive specialist, shares his story at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5, as part of the Cape Perpetua Winter Discovery Series at the Visitor Center, three miles south of Yachats.

The Cape Perpetua Winter Discovery Series is an opportunity to explore topics and resources relevant to the

Oregon Coast during the off-season months between November and March.

All presentations and guided walks are free, but a Northwest Forest Pass, Oregon Coast Passport or \$5 day-use fee is required within to the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area.

Upcoming Winter Discover Series events will include:

- Dec. 19, at 2 p.m. — Old-Growth Forest Hikes: Learn about the characteristics and ecology of coastal old-growth forests during ranger-led hikes.

All ages and hiking abilities welcome; no RSVPs necessary.

- Dec. 27-31, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. — Whale Watch Week.

Volunteers trained through

Oregon State Parks's "Whale Watch Spoken Here" program will be at the Cape Perpetua Visitor Center and viewpoints throughout the Cape Perpetua Scenic Area to help visitors spot and learn about grey whales during the mammals' winter migration to their breeding grounds off Baja, Mexico.

No RSVPs necessary.

# Thousands of lights to brighten aquarium for holidays during Sea of Lights

NEWPORT — SCUBA Santa, sparkling lights and an ocean of holiday cheer will greet visitors every weekend this December at the Oregon Coast Aquarium's Sea of Lights celebration.

Over half a million colorful lights and holiday decorations will surround visitors with the spirit of the season as they explore the aquarium after

hours. Santa will be present every night of Sea of Lights until Christmas to pose for photos and note visitors' Christmas wishes.

This family-friendly event kicks off with a special celebration Dec. 4, 5 and 6, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Admission to the first weekend of Sea of Lights is \$2 with 2 cans of nonperishable people or pet food for the

local food bank.

Entry is \$8 per person without donation. Admission is free for aquarium members, but they are encouraged to bring an item to donate.

Sea of Lights will continue to illuminate the aquarium every following Saturday and Sunday of December from 5 to 8 p.m.

Admission is \$8, or free with

same day paid admission.

"Sea of Lights lets the aquarium give back to the community, but we also organize it for the sheer fun of it. There is no other place to go see a big light display on the central Oregon Coast," said Michele Steen, the event's organizer.

This year's Sea of Lights is proudly presented by Walmart. Customers who spend more

than \$100 at Walmart's Newport will receive a voucher for one free admission to Sea of Lights at the Oregon Coast Aquarium.

Offer valid while supplies last and certain dates are subject to blackout. See store for details.

Attendees using a voucher are encouraged, but not required, to make a food or toy

donation.

Join in the merriment this December at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, 2820 SE Ferry Slip Road, Newport, OR. 97365.

The aquarium is open every day, except Dec. 25, this winter from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information visit [www.aquarium.org](http://www.aquarium.org) or call 541-867-3474.

# the spotlight

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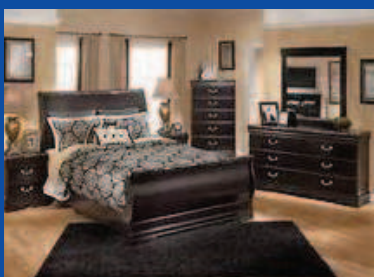
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