



Kids explore the Passages of the Deep exhibit at the Oregon Coast Aquarium.

Aquarium Unveils Expanded 2003 Events Calendar

The Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport, Ore., has unveiled its 2003 calendar of events with a year full of educational and entertaining activities, along with three new events.

A new "Keeper Encounter" program in June brings visitors behind the scenes for a morning with the Aviary staff. Youngsters age 4 and 5 are provided a new Oceans of Fun day camp about marine invertebrates titled "No Bones About 'Em'" in June and a look at whales, seals, sea lions, and sea otters during "Marine Mammal Mania" in July. And in October, teachers get their own sleepover while they spend the night with the aquarium's fishes, skates, and sharks.

Highlights for the aquarium's 2003 scheduled events include:

- * School Dollar Days have been expanded to include students in all of Lincoln, Tillamook, Benton, and Polk counties through March 21.
- * The April Spring Garden & Flower Show and Dive Into Earth Week events provide eco-friendly activities for the conservation enthusiast.
- * Scouts take over the aquarium in May during Scout Day, where education stations and classroom offerings help Boy and Girl Scouts earn their merit badges.
- * Day camps add special flavor for the summer months, with marine programs for youngsters of all ages.
- * Labor Day weekend marks the second annual All-American Road Celebration, highlighting the variety of activities available along U.S. Highway 101.
- * The aquarium turns into a haunted house in October during the Creatures of the Night Halloween party.
- * In December, thousands of twinkling lights and brightly lit animal figurines set the stage for Santa's annual visit and the Sea of Lights holiday festival.
- * Around-the-clock buffs can attend aquarium sleepovers from February through November. Groups also may schedule their own sleepover and spend the night sleeping with the sharks!

Marine Discovery Tours, the aquarium's official cruise company, offers a wide range of sea life trips in April, a May Mother's Day Cruise, and a September Yaquina Bay Salsa Cruise. The popular Family Sea Camp Aboard the Discovery returns in July and August, while those with the need for speed and action-packed adventure trips can get their fill on the faster Oregon Rocket.

Experience the magic of Enchanted Seas while taking a journey into the mystical world of seahorses, sea dragons, and other magical sea creatures. This bright new exhibit features murals painted by Michael Cole and displays a collection of ocean gems, featuring seahorses hanging onto seagrass with their

Oregon Coast Aquarium Hosts Shark Sleepover Spectacular!

Do you have a young ocean enthusiast between the ages of 7 and 11 in your family who would love to spend the night with sharks swimming nearby? Maybe they'd like to come eye to eye with a sea otter or touch the skin of a shark?

If the answer is "yes," then sign them up for the Oregon Coast Aquarium's popular sleepover. Passages of the Deep undersea adventure is turned into sleepover headquarters, giving kids a chance to sleep with the sharks and dream with the fishes! Participants arrive Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. and go home Feb. 16 at 10 a.m.

Children will have the opportunity to dress as various marine animals as they discover the secrets to their survival. These young scientists will also learn how to rub shark skin the "right" way; take a peek at an octopus beak; and uncover the mysteries of the big, the bad, and the blubbery world of marine mammals.

On Saturday evening, children can explore the indoor galleries on a scavenger hunt. The next morning, they'll eat breakfast before watching the fishes, invertebrates, birds, and marine mammals devour theirs.

Children will receive an evening snack and breakfast. Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$40 for aquarium members, \$35 for P.D. Shark Kids'

Club members, and \$45 for non-members. Space is limited and participants are asked to register by Feb. 12 by calling 541-867-3474, ext. 5301.

The Oregon Coast Aquarium sleepover is made possible through the generous support of KYTE/KNPT Radio, Marine Discovery Tours, Safeway, Shilo Inns and Resorts, the *News-Times*, Spirit Mountain Community Fund, KVAL TV 13/Eugene, KPIC TV 4/Roseburg, KCBY TV 11/Coos Bay, and La Quinta Inn & Suites.

Located just south of Newport's Yaquina Bay Bridge, the Oregon Coast Aquarium is a private, non-profit educational facility that offers people a fun way to understand Oregon's unique coastal resources, so that they and future generations will cherish and conserve them. It's open every day except Dec. 25. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Memorial Day weekend.

Oregon Coast Aquarium admission is \$10.75 for adults, \$9.50 for seniors (65+), \$6.50 for youth (4-13), and children 3 and under are free. Advance tickets can be purchased on-line at www.aquarium.org or by calling 541-867-FISH. Group rates are available when requested in advance.

For additional information about the aquarium, surf www.aquarium.org or call 541-867-FISH.



prehensile tails, a rainbow of tropical reef fishes flitting among the coral, sea dragons trailing frilly appendages, cuttlefish hovering like blimps, and children enjoying a gaze-to-'gator vision of baby American alligators in a crawl-through tank.

Indoors, take a peek "Under the Lily Pad" at the Ocean Exploration Station for an up-close view of frogs, newts, and salamanders as you discover that there's more to a pond than scum and explore the role these soggy spaces play in a healthy ecosystem. Learn what's lurking beneath the pond's surface as you watch bluegills, compare newts, and salamanders, and search for tree and red-legged frogs. You'll be ribbeted!

Outdoors, rugged cliffs, caves, and pools showcase the many fascinating fish and invertebrates of Oregon's coastal shores. Discover curious seals, sea lions, and sea otters and see the cartoonlike tufted puffins and other seabirds make their homes in one of the largest walk-through aviaries in North America.

Virtual reality comes to the Oregon Coast Aquarium (Memorial Day weekend 2003) with an underwater submarine adventure, where passengers experience deep-water travel without leaving their seats. The 15-seat "Deep-Sea Traveler" gives riders the visual effect of going underwater as well as the movement of a real submarine. The "Deep-Sea Traveler" will be available for visitors during normal operating hours for a small additional charge and also will be available for private parties and other after-hours events.