



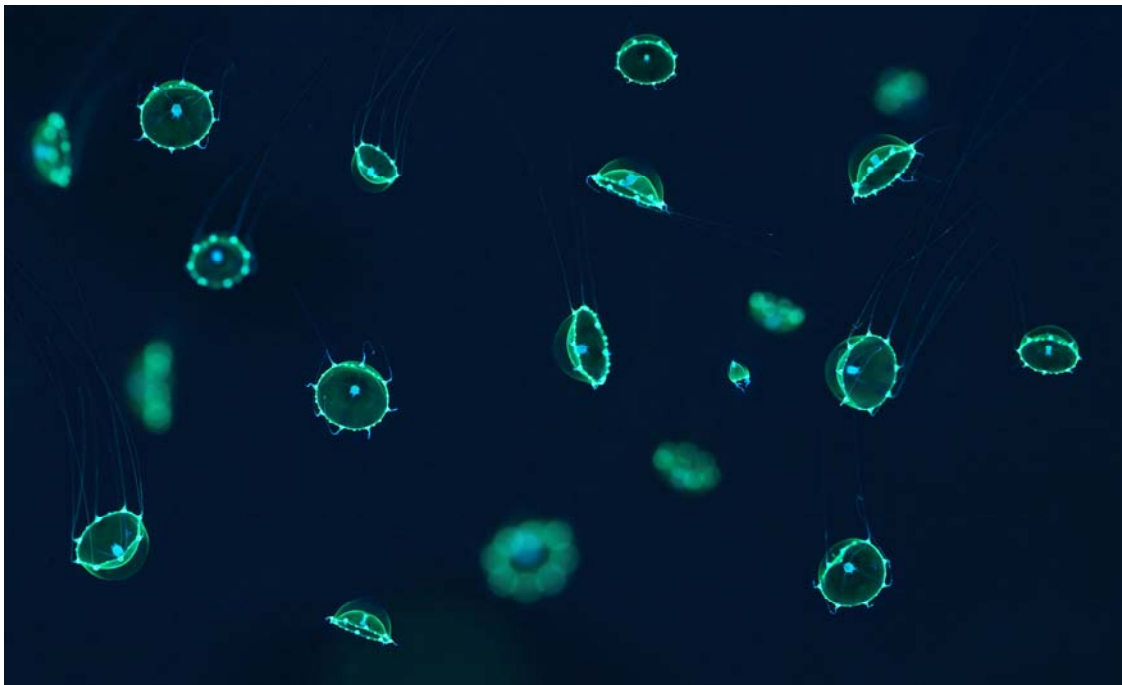
MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM®

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2012 Basic Press Kit

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GROOVE TO THE BEAT AND MIND-BENDING BEAUTY OF JELLIES AT THE MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM IN 2012

*New exhibition weaves live exhibits of graceful drifters, unusual interactive activities;
enjoy extended hours on summer weekends, Aquarium Adventures throughout the year*

The magical world of jellies – graceful, dancing drifters that pulse and glow, flash colorful lights and often pack a powerful sting – comes alive in all its psychedelic glory at the Monterey Bay Aquarium when “The Jellies Experience” opens on March 31.

It’s the newest special exhibition from an aquarium that pioneered the display of these delicate ocean animals, and will feature 16 species of jellies and fluorescent corals from around the world.

The year also brings a full lineup of Aquarium Adventures programs, extended hours during “Evenings by the Bay” on summer weekends, the ever-popular special exhibition “The Secret Lives of Seahorses,” and new opportunities – through an innovative text messaging service – for visitors to experience feeding and enrichment programs with octopus, sharks, cuttlefish and other animals.

In 2012, visitors will come face-to-face with everything from crystalline comb jellies that pulse like living rainbows to improbable flower-hat jellies with magenta and chartreuse highlights on transparent, pin-striped bodies; from elegant Japanese sea nettles to upside-down jellies; from a room that immerses them in a living moon jelly swarm, to exhibits of fluorescent jellies and Day-Glo corals. It’s all part of “The Jellies Experience” special exhibition, which continues through Labor Day 2014.

As visitors encounter these amazing jellies, they’ll plunge into a sensory extravaganza of experiences that highlight the intriguing lives of these unlikely animals – their graceful movements, beautiful symmetry, deceptive fragility and surprising survival skills.

Also, the aquarium’s mobile text message service invites visitors to check out UFOs – Unscheduled Feeding Opportunities that is – throughout the day. These UFOs feature not space aliens but unscheduled feedings of jellyfish, sharks and bat rays, enrichment sessions for the giant Pacific octopus, and even unusual wildlife sightings off the aquarium’s ocean-view decks.

In addition to the new jellies special exhibition, the aquarium’s most popular special exhibition ever, “The Secret Lives of Seahorses,” will continue to capture hearts and minds. With a head like a horse, a snout like an armadillo, a pouch like a kangaroo, a prehensile tail like a monkey and the ability to change colors like a chameleon, seahorses are anything but ordinary. Visitors can meet more than 15 species of seahorses and their kin – from Dr. Seuss-like leafy and weedy sea dragons to alligator pipefish and bright yellow seahorses.

Through those experiences, the aquarium hopes to inspire a connection among visitors to protecting the ocean that supports seahorses, jellies and so many other living creatures.

“When people can see for themselves the beauty and diversity of ocean life, they come away with a deeper appreciation for the importance of a healthy ocean to our own survival,” said aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard. “I hope this new jellies exhibit will continue to inspire our visitors to see the connection and get involved as stewards of our ocean planet.”

Weekend summer visitors will have an additional two hours – until 8 p.m. – to groove to the beat and beauty of jellies during “Evenings by the Bay.” Each Saturday and Sunday from June 30 through Labor Day weekend will feature live music, wine tasting, sustainable and organic fare and nocturnal animal sightings after the daytime crowds depart.

In addition to its changing special exhibitions, the aquarium’s acclaimed permanent exhibits include playful sea otters; a towering three-story kelp forest; touch pools and other hands-on exhibits; the award-winning Splash Zone: Ocean Homes family galleries; and the recently renovated million-gallon Open Sea exhibit, home to sharks, tunas, ocean sunfish, sea turtles and other animals of the open sea.

There are daily feeding shows in the Kelp Forest and Sea Otter exhibits, as well as daily auditorium programs featuring high-definition video clips that take visitors into the deep sea and waters around the world to learn about sharks, jellies and otters.

A full lineup of Aquarium Adventures programs will kick off the summer of 2012, including behind-the-scenes tours, Feeding Frenzy tours, sleepovers in the aquarium galleries and children’s SCUBA diving in the Great Tide Pool.

“The Jellies Experience,” along with all exhibits and programs except Aquarium Adventures, is included with aquarium admission. Rates and hours vary by season. Check online at www.montereybayaquarium for details. Advance tickets can be purchased online or toll-free by phone from the aquarium at (866) 963-9645. Seasonal specials, details about special events and programs, family activities and live web cams can all be found online at www.montereybayaquarium.org.

The aquarium is located on historic Cannery Row in Monterey and is open daily except Christmas. Daily schedules are available online at www.montereybayaquarium.org or by calling (831) 648-4800. More information on aquarium exhibits and programs is available online at www.montereybayaquarium.org or by calling (831) 648-4800.

The mission of the Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the oceans.

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Editors: Please contact Public Relations for images of animals in The Jellies Experience as well as throughout the aquarium.

Updated January 2012

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DISCOVER THE WONDERS OF THE OCEAN AT THE MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM

On October 20, 1984, the fish came back to Monterey's historic Cannery Row.

They came back in style, too, as the stars of the world-acclaimed Monterey Bay Aquarium. Today, more than 35,000 creatures representing over 550 species fill 34 major galleries. With nearly 200 exhibits in all, the aquarium is a showcase for the habitats and sea life of one of the world's richest marine regions.

Since its opening, in surveys of peers and public alike, the aquarium has consistently been ranked No. 1 in the United States for its innovative exhibits and unsurpassed visitor experience. Among many accolades, the aquarium was named the No. 1 family-friendly aquarium by Parents Magazine and Forbes Traveler, and the best aquarium and the third overall top-rated family attraction in the country, according to the Zagat Survey® U.S. Family Travel Guide. It has also grown to become one of the leading ocean conservation organizations in the world.

Over its 27 years, the non-profit Monterey Bay Aquarium has been lauded for creating an expertly designed "undersea tour" of Monterey Bay's hidden world. From coastal wetlands to the open sea, from kelp forests to a mile-deep submarine canyon, the bay shelters an amazing range of habitats and sea life. The bay is also at the heart of the largest marine sanctuary along the shores of the continental United States.

Visitors can discover the plants and animals of Monterey Bay in a series of remarkable exhibits that have changed the face of aquarium design. With the debut of its award-winning "Open Sea" galleries in 1996, Monterey Bay Aquarium became the first in the world to create open ocean exhibits on a grand scale. The exhibits are shining light on epic migrations of ocean animals across the Pacific and the constant motion of life in the open ocean.

The million-gallon Open Sea exhibit houses a diverse community of open-ocean animals, including tunas, pelagic stingrays, mackerel, sardines and scalloped hammerhead sharks. The aquarium's pioneering Project White Shark resumes in August 2012, with the aquarium team tagging young great white sharks in the wild and endeavoring to place a seventh young great white shark on exhibit in late summer.

Elsewhere in The Open Sea galleries visitors can immerse themselves at one of the largest permanent jellyfish galleries to be found at any aquarium.

Marine life closer to shore is the highlight of the aquarium's "Ocean's Edge" galleries. Here, visitors can explore habitats including coastal wetlands, the rocky shore, a living kelp forest and the undersea waters of Monterey Bay.

Visitors can enter the realm of the giant octopus, explore an expanded shorebird aviary and coastal wetland exhibit, and venture beneath crashing waves. They also can step into the “Real-Cost Cafe” and learn how to order a seafood meal that pleases the palate and protects ocean wildlife.

Sevengill sharks, salmon, giant sea bass and other fishes roam the 90-foot-long, 326,000-gallon Monterey Bay Habitats exhibit, which recreates a cross-section of the bay’s major habitats: sandy seafloor, shale reefs, deep reefs and wharf pilings. Sea otters frolic inches away from visitors in a two-story exhibit where they’re on view both at the surface and underwater. A towering 28-foot-high Kelp Forest exhibit offers a diver’s-eye view of a living kelp forest community.

The aquarium not only puts people eye-to-eye with a host of creatures, it puts them in touch with sea life, too. Kids and adults alike can touch bat rays in the Bat Ray Pool and sea stars, gumboot chitons and abalone in the Ocean’s Edge Touch Pool. They can stroll through an open-air shorebird aviary, walk under a kelp canopy, and pass beneath life-size models of orcas, gray whales, porpoises and dolphins.

Microscopes, magnifiers, telescopes and even a viewer-guided underwater macro-video camera bring visitors closer to the mysterious world beyond the aquarium’s decks. A hands-on learning gallery lets younger children and their families explore the adaptations that allow marine mammals to survive in the ocean.

More than 1.8 million people visit the 322,000-square-foot aquarium annually. There’s always something new to see and do – even for those who return often – such as new animal arrivals, days with special animal-themed programming such as sharks, and other family events. Among the aquarium’s unique programs are kelp forest feeding shows where a diver talks with the audience through a two-way communications mask, and daily video broadcasts of deep sea marine life, sent to the aquarium from a scientific research submarine operating as much as 12,000 feet below the surface of Monterey Bay. Hands-on “discovery stations” and interactive exhibits help make each aquarium visit a memorable experience.

Elsewhere in the aquarium, visitors can explore “The Secret Lives of Seahorses,” a special exhibition that became an instant hit when it opened in early 2009. More than 15 species of seahorses, sea dragons, pipehorses and pipefish beckon visitors into the elusive world of these charismatic creatures, the varied habitats in which seahorses and their relatives live, and shares important stories about the threats they face in the wild.

In 2012, “Aquarium Adventures” programs will again let visitors enhance their experience with behind-the-scenes tours and activities. Offerings include daily behind-the-scenes tours, surface SCUBA diving for kids ages 8 to 13 in the Great Tide Pool, pre-opening feeding tours and other adventures.

Other permanent exhibits at the aquarium include “Vanishing Wildlife: Saving Tunas, Turtles and Sharks,” that focuses on why these magnificent animals need our protection and what individuals can do to help.

The “Splash Zone: Ocean Homes” galleries features interactive exhibits and living species designed to engage the imaginations of young visitors and inspire a lifelong connection with the wonders of the oceans. The galleries encourage families with children to play and learn together, exploring three ocean habitats – the Enchanted Kelp Forest, Coral Reef Kingdom and Rugged Rocky Shore.

“Splash Zone” features over 45 bilingual interactive exhibits, many fascinating animals including penguins, cuttlefish and leafy sea dragons, as well as exhibits featuring the kelp forest habitat and an immersive touch pool. The aquarium’s waterfront decks offer telescopes and sweeping views of Monterey Bay. Inside, visitors will find gift and bookstores, and the Monterey Bay Café and Restaurant, with its self-service cafe, ocean-view restaurant and full-service bar.

The aquarium is located on historic Cannery Row, just two and a half hours south of San Francisco and only 15 minutes from Carmel and Pebble Beach, at 886 Cannery Row in Monterey. Hours of operation vary by season.

Travelers can find more information about the aquarium’s exhibits and the local marine environment – plus live web cams, a special events calendar, online games and more – at www.montereybayaquarium.org. All programs and special exhibitions (except for “Aquarium Adventures”) are included with aquarium admission of \$32.95 adult (18 and over); \$29.95 senior (65+) and student (13-17 or with college I.D.); and \$19.95 children (3-12) and the disabled. **(2012 rates; subject to change)**. Children under 3 are admitted free. Discounted tickets for members of the military and their families can be purchased in advance at many California and Nevada installations.

Advance tickets can be purchased online at www.montereybayaquarium.org; or by phone from the aquarium at (866) 963-9645. To register for “Aquarium Adventures” programs, call (866) 963-9645. Guests at Monterey Peninsula hotels can buy two-day tickets (at one-day ticket prices) at hotel front desks. Visitors can book rooms and learn about special lodging packages with one phone call to (866) 900-9188; or visit www.seemonterey.org for more information.

Parking for visitors is located three blocks away, in the Cannery Row parking garage. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the free MST Trolley links the aquarium and Cannery Row with downtown Monterey, Pacific Grove, and major waterfront destinations including Fisherman’s Wharf.

For more information, call (831) 648-4800 or visit www.montereybayaquarium.org.

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Editors: Digital images and video b-roll are available through Public Relations department.

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Monterey Bay Aquarium

Overview – 2012

MISSION:	To inspire conservation of the oceans
GRAND OPENING:	October 20, 1984
LOCATION:	886 Cannery Row, Monterey, California
HOURS:	The aquarium is open daily, except Christmas Day. Hours of operation vary by season. Visit www.montereybayaquarium.org or call (831) 648-4800 for daily schedules.
ADMISSION RATES:	\$32.95 Adult (18 and over) \$29.95 Senior (65 and over) \$29.95 Student (13-17, or with college I.D.) \$19.95 Child (3-12) \$19.95 Disabled Group rates available for 20 or more (by reservation; 1-866-963-9645)
INFORMATION:	(831) 648-4800; www.montereybayaquarium.org
ADVANCE TICKETS/ RESERVATION CENTER:	(866) 963-9645 (toll free) or online at www.montereybayaquarium.org
OPERATING BASIS:	Private non-profit, self-supporting; no public funding; annual budget \$73 million
CAPITAL COST:	Nearshore galleries: \$55 million (opened October 1984) Outer Bay galleries: \$57 million (opened March 1996) New entry, ticket lobby and skywalk: \$10 million (opened May 2004) Ocean's Edge galleries (updated Nearshore galleries): \$11 million (opened May 2005) Open Sea galleries (updated Outer Bay galleries): \$19 million (opened July 2011)
CURRENT SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS:	“The Secret Lives of Seahorses” showcases many beautiful species of seahorses and their kin. Galleries focus on the seahorse family, camouflage techniques, mating rituals and unique male pregnancy. Visitors uncover some of the “secrets” of seahorses, and also learn how to help protect these amazing animals and their habitats in the wild.
GALLERIES AND MAJOR EXHIBITS:	Nearly 200 galleries and exhibits devoted to the diverse habitats of Monterey Bay. The four largest exhibits are the Open Sea (1 million gallons); the Kelp Forest (335,000 gallons); Monterey Bay Habitats (326,000 gallons); and Sea Otters along the Rocky Coast (55,000 gallons).
LIVE EXHIBITS:	More than 35,000 animals and plants representing over 550 species of fishes, invertebrates, mammals, reptiles, birds and plants found in Monterey Bay and other marine habitats worldwide.
FEEDING SHOWS:	Sea Otters at 10:30, 1:30 and 3:30 daily Blackfooted Penguins at 10:30 and 3:00 daily Kelp Forest dive show at 11:30 and 4:00 daily Open Sea at 11:00 daily Laysan Albatross at 1:30 daily
DIMENSIONS:	Site: 3.3 acres Exhibits and other public areas: 175,064 sq. ft. (excludes decks) Ocean-view decks: 25,500 sq. ft. Behind-the-scenes: 125,300 sq. ft. Total aquarium square footage: 322,000 sq. ft.

ATTENDANCE: Grand opening year: 2.37 million
Open Sea grand opening year (1996): 2.41 million
Total in 2011: 1.9 million
Annual average: 1.8 million
Total through 2011: 49 million

STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION: Approximately 425 full and part-time staff; over 1,200 volunteers.

DISABLED ACCESS: All exhibits and aquarium facilities are accessible to people with disabilities. Assisted listening devices are available for the deaf and hard of hearing; most exhibit videos are captioned; wheelchairs and walkers are available free for use during a visit. Ask for details at the Information Desk.

VISITOR INFORMATION: Free visitor maps in several languages are available at the Information Desk.

ON THE WEB: Information about all permanent and special exhibits, events and promotions, as well as an online pressroom with full press kits and photo & video libraries can be found online at www.montereybayaquarium.org. Become a fan of the aquarium on Facebook and follow us on Tumblr and Twitter.

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INSPIRING OCEAN CONSERVATION

The mission of the Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the oceans. Approximately 425 full and part-time staff members and over 1,200 volunteers at the non-profit aquarium work toward these goals. The \$73 million annual budget of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation is supported by earned revenue (admission, gift and bookstore sales) and contributed income (memberships and donations). Major endeavors include:

Exhibits

Aquarium exhibits are a living extension of Monterey Bay, which lies at the heart of the nation's largest marine sanctuary. Exhibits feature more than 35,000 creatures and over 550 species of plants and animals from the waters off California's central coast – and beyond. Seawater from the bay is piped into the aquarium at a rate of up to 2,000 gallons per minute (1 billion gallons a year) to sustain a three-story living kelp forest, a Monterey Bay Habitats exhibit with large sharks and schooling fishes, a two-story sea otter exhibit, a walk-through aviary and nearly 200 smaller exhibits and galleries devoted to the varied habitats around the bay, from rocky shores to coastal estuaries and the sandy seafloor.

The Open Sea galleries tell the story of marine life found in open ocean waters of the temperate Eastern Pacific. Exhibits include a million-gallon indoor ocean and large jellyfish galleries. Vanishing Wildlife focuses on why magnificent animals like sea turtles, sharks and tunas need our protection, and what we can do to help. Special exhibitions feature sea life stories and conservation topics from around the world.

Education & Outreach

Each year, free school programs serve over 80,000 visiting schoolchildren. In January, 2012 the aquarium welcomed its 2 millionth student as part of its education programs. Students take part in guided and self-guided tours and classroom programs taught by staff educators. The Splash Zone family gallery becomes an extended classroom for Head Start students and families around Monterey Bay. All education programs are offered free of charge. Other conservation and science initiatives for young people include Teen Conservation Leaders (TCL); Young Women in Science, a week-long summer program for teens; Watsonville Area Teens Conserving Habitats (WATCH), which support two local high schools with environmental education programs; and a Student Guide program in which young people learn to interpret Monterey Bay marine life for aquarium visitors.

Annual teacher workshops and teacher institutes help educators become more effective at teaching science and sharing their skills with colleagues. Materials for teachers and students are available online.

More than 500 volunteer guides (out of over 1,200 volunteers in all) receive ongoing marine science training from aquarium staff. They add depth to a visit by answering visitors' questions and leading tours.

Conservation Research

Biologists with the Monterey Bay Aquarium Sea Otter Research and Conservation program are assessing the long-term health of California's sea otter population and play key roles in recovery efforts for this threatened population. The research-oriented approach supports the priorities of the federal sea otter recovery plan released in April 2003 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify the possible causes that have slowed the growth of the southern sea otter population, including increased rates of infectious disease and parasites within the wild otter population.

The aquarium's program is the only one of its kind in the world to care for stranded otter pups and return to the wild those animals that can contribute to the recovery of the wild population. Staff and volunteers constantly refine their techniques for the care of injured and orphaned sea otters. Protocols developed at the aquarium will be applied in the event of a major oil spill in the sea otters' California range.

Staff and research colleagues with our Project White Shark tag and track adult and juvenile great white sharks in the eastern Pacific, and collect DNA samples in an effort to map the migrations and genetic diversity of these top ocean predators. Project staff also attempts to bring young white sharks to the aquarium for exhibit; since 2004 six animals have been kept at the aquarium for periods up to six months before they were tagged and returned to the wild.

The Tuna Research and Conservation Center (TRCC), a joint project with Stanford University, is the world's leading center to study these ecologically and commercially important fishes. TRCC scientists have been working since 1996 to answer basic questions about tunas' marathon migrations by tagging individual fish in the wild with electronic data tags,

documenting genetic diversity and distribution of tuna populations across ocean basins through DNA analysis, and studying basic tuna physiology by studying captive populations of warm-blooded tuna and their cold-blooded relatives.

Aquarium researchers conduct long-term field studies of sea otter behavior; and study the basic physiology and husbandry of open-ocean and deep-sea animals, including sharks, jellies and schooling fishes. Our internship program brings college students to the aquarium for original research projects.

The independent Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI; www.mbari.org) uses Monterey Bay as a living laboratory to study complex deep sea and open ocean systems. Engineers at the institute design new tools for scientists to use in their research. Aquarium visitors can see researchers at work during daily auditorium programs featuring live video from deep-sea research submersibles. And a permanent exhibit, Mission to the Deep, highlights MBARI's tools and technologies with interactive displays, high-definition footage and animation to transport visitors into the deep sea.

Shorebirds, corals and many marine animals breed in our exhibits or are reared behind the scenes. Some birds are returned to the wild, and animals deemed non-releasable can be shared with Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited institutions to reduce collecting from the wild.

Resource Conservation

The aquarium is a leader in conservation business practices, from our seafood buying policies and conservation requirements for vendors who deal with our gift and bookstores; to programs that reduce our carbon footprint, conserve water, encourage alternative transportation and promote recycling.

Staff use vanpools, receive free bus passes, pay reduced parking fees for carpooling, and enjoy incentives for riding a bike or walking to work. The aquarium helps subsidize a community shuttle bus serving waterfront destinations and hotels during summer months. Voluntary staff contributions to a Conservation Action Fund support habitat restoration projects in the Monterey Bay region.

Aquarium publications are printed on recycled paper or published online, and most waste generated by aquarium offices, shops and gift and bookstores is recycled. Cleaning materials and other chemicals used here have largely been replaced with nontoxic products. The aquarium's Seafood Watch program is a leader in transforming the seafood market to support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. We created Seafood Watch guides for consumers and partner with restaurants and food service companies to help them shift to sustainable seafood purchasing. Details are available at www.seafoodwatch.org.

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MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM

Events Calendar 2012

- **Shark Days (February 11 & 12)**
Explore the mysterious world of sharks and rays, shake the hands of aquarists who hand feed the ocean's most misunderstood predators, enjoy special animal feeding shows and presentations, and revel in the beauty and power that is the ocean.

- **Dia del Nino (April 22)**
Celebrate children and families with live Latin performances, bilingual feeding shows, a craft room, prize drawings and more. Children 12 and under will be admitted free all day.

- **Cooking for Solutions (May 18 - 20)**
Celebrity chefs from around the country gather for a celebration of sustainable seafood. Events include the signature gala, food and wine adventures, cooking demonstrations and more. On Saturday and Sunday, all visitors enjoy the Sustainable Foods Celebration featuring special food event, celebrity chefs and book signings.

- **World Oceans Day Celebration (June 9 & 10)**
Join in for a celebration of the amazing ecosystem that covers 70% of our planet. You'll learn about the treasures of the ocean, the threats it faces and what we can do to keep it healthy.

- **Evenings by the Bay – Saturdays & Sundays (June 30 through September 2)**
Spend summer evenings on the bay with extended hours until 8 p.m. on summer weekends. Get a few more hours to commune with your favorite animals, enjoy special programs and live music.

- **Fiesta del Mar (September 9)**
Celebrate ocean conservation and Latin American cultural traditions. The day includes live music, cultural dance, bilingual feeding shows, crafts for kids and more. Children 12 and under will be admitted free all day.

- **Community Day (December 9, Open House December 1 – 9)**
Local conservation and environmental organizations share their contributions with residents and provide them with opportunities to get involved. Free admission to residents of Monterey County. Current student identification from California State University Monterey Bay, Hartnell College, Monterey Peninsula College and the Monterey Institute of International Studies are also valid proof of residence.

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‘THE JELLIES EXPERIENCE’ SET TO IMMERSE VISITORS IN A WORLD OF MIND-BENDING BEAUTY

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*New exhibition blends live exhibits of graceful drifters, unusual interactive activities*

The magical world of jellies – graceful, dancing drifters that pulse and glow, flash colorful lights and often pack a powerful sting – comes alive in all its psychedelic glory at the Monterey Bay Aquarium when “The Jellies Experience” opens on March 31.

It’s the newest special exhibition from an aquarium that pioneered the display of these delicate ocean animals, and will feature 16 species from around the world: from crystalline comb jellies that pulse like living rainbows to improbable flower-hat jellies with magenta and chartreuse highlights on transparent, pin-striped bodies; from elegant Japanese sea nettles to upside-down jellies; from a room that immerses visitors in a living moon jelly swarm, to exhibits of fluorescent jellies and Day-Glo corals.

As visitors encounter these amazing jellies, they’ll plunge into a sensory extravaganza of experiences that highlight the intriguing lives of these unlikely animals – their graceful movements, beautiful symmetry, deceptive fragility and surprising survival skills.

Through those experiences, the aquarium hopes to inspire a deeper connection among visitors to protecting the ocean that supports jellies and so many other living creatures.

“When people can see for themselves the beauty and diversity of ocean life, they come away with a deeper appreciation for the importance of a healthy ocean to our own survival,” said aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard. “I hope this new jellies exhibit will continue to inspire our visitors to see the connection and get involved as stewards of our ocean planet.”

The Jellies Experience immerses visitors in a world of animals that have no heads, hearts, brains, bones or true eyes yet have survived for hundreds of millions of years and rank among the ocean’s major predators.

It will bring visitors face-to face with species new to the aquarium, including elegant jellies, and past favorites like blubber jellies, Mediterranean jellies and crystal jellies. There will be occasional appearances by stunningly beautiful animals like the spotted comb jelly – found seasonally in Monterey Bay, exhibited only rarely, and only at the Monterey Bay Aquarium – and the potential for other new

species, including thimble jellies (with golden gonads), Indonesian sea nettles, hairy jellies and crown jellies.

Each of the six exhibit galleries in The Jellies Experience engages visitors in ways that connect them with the many dimensions of jellies' lives.

In the "Ocean Dance" gallery, people will get a trio of "virtual" jellies to pulse with the rhythm that propels jellies in the water. In the "Radiant Nature" gallery, visitors can become part of a kaleidoscopic image – their bodies as symmetrical as the jellies around them.

Fiber-optic chandeliers create an environment where visitors can get a sense for how jellies sting and eat their prey in the "Delicate Danger" gallery. They'll learn about the many varieties of jellies found in the ocean in "Jelly Fantastic" – and can create electronic jellies of their own before launching them into a virtual aquarium populated with other people's creations.

The "Jellies Explosion" gallery features cylinders of moon jellies and mirrored walls to create the feeling of swimming through a massive jelly swarm – a condition occurring more frequently around the world in recent years, perhaps the result of global changes in the ocean. In the final gallery, "Light Show," people experience fluorescent, bioluminescent and iridescent jellies and corals – and will be able to trigger light shows by simulated jellies with the wave of an arm, or by passing through a walk-through comb jelly sculpture flashing with LED lights.

"Part of the challenge is creating hands-on experiences that complement the beauty of the incredible living animals in the exhibits," said Exhibit Designer Koen Liem. "The animals are the real stars, and the interactive elements help tell their story in ways our visitors have never seen before. The psychedelic theme is a new approach for us, and one that really fits the subject matter."

Monterey Bay Aquarium first introduced visitors to the beauty of jellies in 1992 with "Planet of the Jellies," a special exhibition that remains one of the most popular in aquarium history. Exhibit design innovations and new husbandry techniques developed for the exhibit launched the jellies exhibit boom in the United States. They also provided the basis for the aquarium's award-winning permanent jellies exhibits that opened in 1996 as part of the Open Sea wing, and for the award-winning special exhibition "Jellies: Living Art" that opened in April 2002.

"People have an endless fascination with jellies," said Exhibit Developer Eileen Campbell. "I think they'll really enjoy this jellies experience. It'll be both fantastic and enlightening."

The Jellies Experience is included with aquarium admission – \$32.95 adult; \$29.95 senior (over 65) and student (full-time college, with I.D.); \$19.95 children and the disabled; under 3 free (**2012 prices; subject to change**).

The aquarium is located on historic Cannery Row in Monterey and is open daily except Christmas Day. Hours of operation vary by season. Daily schedules are available online at [www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org) or by calling (831) 648-4800.

More information on aquarium exhibits and programs is available online at [www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org) or by calling (831) 648-4800. Advance tickets can be purchased online or toll-free by phone from the aquarium at (866) 963-9645. Seasonal specials, details about special events and programs, family activities and live web cams can all be found online at [www.montereybayaquarium.org](http://www.montereybayaquarium.org).

The mission of the Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the oceans.

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**Editors: Please contact Public Relations for images of animals featured in The Jellies Experience.**

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## NEWS RELEASE

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# THE VAST AND THE FAST: EXPLORE THE OPEN SEA AT THE MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM IN JULY

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Newly transformed galleries offer close encounters with seabirds, sharks, jellies, turtles and more

The Monterey Bay Aquarium is transforming the way people see the oceans with a new perspective on the vast, virtually unexplored waters of the open sea. On July 2nd, the aquarium's acclaimed Outer Bay galleries re-opened as The Open Sea —shining light on epic migrations of ocean animals across the Pacific and the constant motion of life in the open ocean.

The dramatically reinvented Open Sea galleries carry visitors beyond our coasts to a vast world of deep, open water. Immense swirls of schooling fishes, pulsing jellies, skilled predators such as sharks and tunas, and seasoned travelers like sea turtles and seabirds share this wild territory. In one instant the water appears empty; in another, it teems with life.

“The open sea is a dynamic place where life is in constant motion,” says Senior Exhibit Developer Jaci Tomulonis. “Complex forces drive currents that, in turn, influence living conditions for ocean animals. The Open Sea galleries bring our visitors into the heart of this extraordinary environment through transformed live exhibits, new multimedia experiences and surprising artistic elements.”

In three different galleries, remarkable new species including tufted puffins and deep-sea jellies join aquarium favorites such as tunas, stingrays, sea turtles and the occasional great white shark to introduce visitors to life in this sweeping realm.

The “Out to Sea” gallery carries visitors into the ebb and flow of powerful currents where microscopic plankton and delicate jellies thrive. Get an up-close view of tiny phytoplankton that form the base of a food web on which everything from sharks and whales—and even people—depend.

Drift into the heart of a massive bloom of jellies and investigate how changing ocean conditions, some possibly influenced by human activities, may be causing jelly populations to explode. Currents rule in the open sea and a wide range of invertebrates—from microscopic copepods to black sea nettles with lacy oral arms up to 20 feet in length—flourish in this ever-shifting world.

But it's not just drifters that prosper here; some animals live fast in the open sea. In the million-gallon Open Sea exhibit visitors will meet animals that are built for speed, agility and endurance. Tuna, mackerel, barracuda and sardines flash through the water in streaks of silvery scales. Scalloped hammerhead sharks appear to be languid swimmers until they spring into action and turn their supple bodies on a dime.

The aquarium's pioneering white shark research project resumed in 2011, and a sixth young great white shark was on exhibit in late summer. The field research team will also tag and track juvenile great white sharks in the wild, gathering information vital to the protection of these top ocean predators as they move through coastal waters in southern California and Mexico.

Joining the frenetic pace of The Open Sea are slow-moving sea turtles, pelagic stingrays and ocean sunfish (*Mola mola*), which have evolved their own methods of survival in this deep blue world.

The "Ocean Travelers" gallery brings some new animals to the aquarium, as it tells the story of marine animals that make long journeys on the ocean's migratory highways. Several exhibits are paired with art installations designed to connect visitors with ocean conservation threats that imperil open sea animals.

Tufted puffins, striking seabirds that sport distinctive sweeping yellow plumage on their heads during breeding season, make their aquarium debut, too. Dubbed "sea parrots" by early sailors for their stout bodies, short wings and orange or red webbed feet, these engaging birds are expert divers and spend most of their lives in the water. Their new exhibit home gives visitors the opportunity to watch them dive, preen and swim.

"The open sea is one of the few truly wild places left on the planet," says Tomulonis. "In addition to introducing visitors to the diverse species that make their homes here, The Open Sea exhibit will offer simple ways to help protect ocean animals so they're around for generations to come."

Evenings by the Bay also begins June 30 and runs through September 2 – giving visitors an extra two hours – until 8 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays to enjoy the new Open Sea galleries. This is a perfect time for visitors to leisurely view their favorite exhibits while enjoying live music and special programs.

The aquarium is located on historic Cannery Row in Monterey and is open daily except Christmas Day. Hours of operation vary by season. Daily schedules and aquarium information are available online at www.montereybayaquarium.org or by calling (831) 648-4800.

The Open Sea is included with aquarium admission – \$32.95 adult; \$29.95 senior (over 65) and student (full-time college, with I.D.); \$19.95 children and the disabled; under 3 free **(2012 prices; subject to change)**.

Advance tickets can be purchased online or toll-free by calling (866) 963-9645. Seasonal specials, details about special events and programs, family activities and live web cams can all be found online at www.montereybayaquarium.org.

The mission of the Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the oceans.

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Editors: Please contact Public Relations for images of animals and exhibits featured in The Open Sea galleries as well as throughout the aquarium.

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What they're saying about the Monterey Bay Aquarium

Awards & Honors (partial list)

- 2010 – Aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard honored the Lifetime Achievement Award by the **National Marine Sanctuary Foundation** for her commitment to ocean sustainability and leadership
- 2009 – Aquarium Executive Director Julie Packard named one of nine Coastal Heroes by *Sunset Magazine* and the California Coastal Commission
- 2008 – *Travel + Leisure Family* named the aquarium one of the Top 10 Places to See Before You're 10
- 2008 – *Bon Appétit Magazine* named the aquarium Tastemaker of the Year for our Seafood Watch program.
- 2007 - *Parents Magazine* rated us the No. 1 kid-friendly aquarium on its list of “The 10 Best Aquariums for Kids”
- 2007 - **TripAdvisor®** users rated us No. 8 on the Top 10 list of best U.S. travel attractions of all kinds
- 2007 - The international **Themed Entertainment Association** gave its 2007 “Thea” Award to the Real Cost Café for outstanding achievement in experience design (sustainable seafood exhibit).
- 2005 - **American Zoo and Aquarium Association** Exhibit Award for “Sharks: Myth and Mystery” special exhibition
- 2004 - **Zagat Survey® 2004 U.S. Family Travel Guide** No. 1 aquarium in the United States; No. 3 top-rated family attraction in the United States
- 2003 - **National Association for Museum Exhibition** Curators' Award (American Association of Museums' highest exhibit award) for “Jellies: Living Art” special exhibition
- 1998 - *Coastal Living Magazine's* Award for Cultural and Environmental Education
- 1998 - **Coastal America** recognition as a Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center
- 1997 & 2000 - **American Zoo and Aquarium Association** Exhibit Awards
- 1995 - **Urban Land Institute** Award for Excellence
- 1988 - **American Institute of Architects** Honor Award

Quotes (highlights)

“One of the most enchanting aquariums in the world.” -- *Forbes Traveler*

“Not only is it one of the premier organizations fighting to save our oceans from overfishing and pollution, it is also a haven for marine life lovers eager to gaze at playful otters, undulating jellyfish, waddling penguins, respect-inducing sharks – and faithful re-creations of local underwater habitats.” -- *Los Angeles Times*

“For my money, the best aquarium in America.”

-- *Keith Bellows, editor, National Geographic Traveler*

“My apologies to Baltimore, which has a really great aquarium, but Monterey is very likely the world’s best.” -- *Washington Post*

“...arguably the greatest aquarium in the world.” -- *The Guardian (United Kingdom)*

“Coolest aquarium in the world.” -- *Bill Nye, “The Science Guy”*

“Monterey Bay Aquarium is the most technically sophisticated – and perhaps the most esthetically successful – public aquarium yet built.” -- *Newsweek*

“...set a new bar in the art of showing off sea creatures to the public.” -- *USA Today*

“As soon as you enter the aquarium, the cathedral aura of the Kelp Forest, with sunlight streaming down from above, turns your head and pulls you over, bidding you to slow down and meditate on the majesty that lies hidden just offshore.” -- *National Geographic*

“As a habitual aquarium-goer, I’ve seen my share of these institutions...The Monterey Bay Aquarium is, for me, the clear winner...Like all great aquariums [it] offers not just an assemblage of fish but a passionate argument that the ocean is far more intricate and alive than you ever imagined it to be.” -- *Travel/Holiday*

“In my mind, the Monterey Bay Aquarium is the most beautiful and most effective aquarium in the world.” -- *Dr. Carl Safina, executive director, Blue Ocean Institute*

“Stunning seems too meager an adjective for the facility....” -- *Dallas Morning News*

“...knock-your-socks-off marine exhibits.” -- *Boston Globe*

“A quantum leap was made with Monterey; nobody will be able to do it again.”
-- *John McCosker, California Academy of Science*

“A superstar....a perfect balance between education and entertainment.” -- *Copley News Service*

“It’s hard to find enough superlatives to describe what’s going on at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.”
-- *Reno Air Approach*

“This aquarium routinely makes history.” -- *National Geographic Traveler*

“One of the world’s most impressive aquariums.” -- *Financial Times of London*

“Making the ordinary extraordinary is business as usual at the (Monterey Bay) aquarium.”
-- *Chicago Sun-Times*

“Remarkable.... As I watched the schools of fish slowly circling...I began to slip into the rhythm, the silence, of life under the surface of Monterey Bay, a deep and boundless home.”
-- *New York Times*

“It won’t get you wet, but it will make your head swim.” -- *Sacramento (Calif.) Bee*

“Standing before the showpiece of the Outer Bay wing – the world’s largest window, opening onto a seemingly infinite water world swirling with tuna, barracuda, bonitos and sharks – I realize I’m confronting the newest Wonder of the World.” -- *American Airlines’ American Way*

“Ranked one of the nation’s top family attractions, it’s the Disneyland of aquariums, housing one of finest collections of sea creatures on the planet. It’s like strolling through an aquatic dream where more than 350,000 marine animals and plants coexist in a magical setting.” -- *www.localgetaways.com*

“We dare you not to be mesmerized and enriched by this eco-conscious aquarium.”
-- *www.lonelyplanet.com*

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