

Wanna find Dory?

Come see a real version of the animated Disney star, along with a variety of her aquatic pals at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 17, 2016

Tacoma, Wash. – Movie theaters across the country likely will be filled this weekend with children and adults seeking to enjoy “Finding Dory,” the Disney Pixar sequel to the 2003 hit movie “Finding Nemo.” The animated sea creatures are cute, have wonderfully expressive voices and appear destined for box office stardom once again.

So as the movie opens nationwide, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium wants Puget Sound-area viewers to know that they can come and see the real deals right here in Tacoma. In the movies, Dory is a brilliant Pacific blue tang fish and Nemo is a colorful clownfish. Blue tangs, which have distinctive yellow fins and tails, are native to coral reefs in the Pacific Ocean. Clownfish, also tropical, are native to the Red Sea and the Indian and Pacific oceans.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium’s North Pacific Aquarium is home to both a Pacific blue tang and clownfish, as well as some of Dory’s other pals – an octopus, sea urchins and jellyfish, for example. Plus, there is an array of sharks in the South Pacific Aquarium and dinner-plate-sized stingrays visitors can touch at Stingray Cove.

The Rocky Shores area of the zoo is home to sea otters, also some of the fictional Dory’s pals.



The film is fun, but it also carries messages about the meaning of family, and it depicts the damage humans are doing to the world's oceans through pollution, according to reviews of the movie. Bottles and other trash, including a car, litter the ocean floor, and in one scene, Dory gets her fins

caught in a plastic ring like those found on soda and beer cans.

Disney Pixar makes it clear in materials – including an educators' guide – issued in advance of the movie that taking care of the world's oceans and the animals that live in them is a powerful lesson embedded in all of that underwater color.

Visitors to Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium not only can view real life animals like the animated stars of the movie, they can learn a lot about the world's oceans and ways to help take care of them. Simple actions visitors can take include looking for and purchasing ocean-friendly seafood in supermarkets and restaurants; paying attention to water runoff that winds up in Puget Sound; and being champions for sharks and other marine animals whose numbers are dwindling.

For more information, go to www.pdza.org/marine-discovery-center; www.pdza.org/savesharks; www.pugetsoundstartshere.org; and www.seafoodwatch.org.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 5400 N. Pearl St. in Tacoma's Point Defiance Park.

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Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo and aquarium, promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities. The zoo, a division of Metro Parks Tacoma, is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).

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