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DIVE IN TO EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF MARINE LIFE DURING OCEAN COMMOTION WEEKEND, MARCH 19-20

TACOMA, Wash. – Ocean Commotion, the event all about sea creatures and their habitats, is back for 2016.



The sea-themed weekend, held on March 19-20, will give visitors a detailed glimpse into the lives of marine animals.

Curious kids and the young-at-heart will be able to take a journey through the ocean by trying on jellyfish costumes, watching shark feeds, listening to keeper talks, touching stingrays and small sharks, and more.

Here's the lineup of activities:

Outer Reef Shark Feed: Watch graceful sharks eat lunch at 11 a.m. (Saturday only)

Lagoon Feed: Colorful tropical fish will enjoy

treats at 11 a.m. (Sunday only)

Shark-cicles: Watch sharks enjoy an icy "popsicle" treat at 12:30 p.m.

Jellyfish Hats: Try on a jellyfish costume and do a jelly dance.

Plankton Lab: Discover a tiny world of wonder under the microscope.

Shark Puzzles: Learn about different shark species and their unique adaptations.

Go Fish: Go fishing without any bycatch. What's bycatch? Come play to find out!

Build a Coral Reef: Create a coral reef polyp.

At Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, there's a myriad of opportunities to see and touch underwater animals.

For example, at the South Pacific Aquarium, sharks steal the show. Some are small and live with their cartilaginous cousins at Stingray Cove, where visitors can gently touch them.

From there, one can head downstairs to see more massive sharks circling gracefully in the shark exhibit.

The North Pacific Aquarium is home to many iconic Northwest species, like salmon and ratfish, who inhabit a central community tank. Upstairs, the Jammin' with Jellies exhibit celebrates the mesmerizing motion and fascinating biology of jellyfish from around the world. And a vibrant world of seahorses, anemone, and other animals are on display along a playful Aquatic Masquerade pathway.

For those who wonder what a sea star feels like – or a slimy sea cucumber – the Marine Discovery Center features a touch tank of local marine critters that live right here in Puget Sound. Kids can touch an interesting-looking organism, then learn how their own actions at home can help protect the animal they've just befriended.

In addition to getting up close with interesting animals, visitors can learn about the roles played by sharks and other species in ocean ecosystems. Sharks are essential to ocean health, but millions are killed every year just for their fins. Learn how to help sharks at www.pdza.org/savesharks.

All Ocean Commotion activities are free with membership or admission to the zoo.

For more information, visit www.pdza.org.

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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).