



# Aquarium of the Bay

an institution of Bay Ecotarium

## Press Kit





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# About Aquarium of the Bay



Experience the unique ecosystem of San Francisco Bay at Aquarium of the Bay. The only Smithsonian Affiliated aquarium in California, Aquarium of the Bay provides an unmatched window to the Bay's amazing marine life. Located at the world-famous PIER 39 on San Francisco's iconic waterfront, the aquarium has 750,000 gallons of water within its galleries and is home to over 20,000+ marine and indigenous animals, including sevengill sharks, bat rays, jellyfish, river otters, and more. Much of the Aquarium's marine life can be seen through its magnificent 300-foot long crystal-clear acrylic tunnels,

offering an unparalleled view of local aquatic life. Guests are also treated to a hands-on experience in the Touch the Bay Gallery, where they can touch sharks, bat rays, sea stars, and anemones—and no trip to Aquarium of the Bay would be complete without a visit to the North American River Otter Gallery, where frisky river otters romp, swim, sleep, and play.

An institution of Bay Ecotarium, Aquarium of the Bay has a shared mission to protect, restore, and inspire conservation of San Francisco Bay and its watershed, from the **Sierra to the Sea™**. With a focus on education and conservation, Aquarium of the Bay is the only aquarium dedicated to the diverse marine life and distinctive ecosystems of San Francisco Bay and its watershed.



Aquarium of the Bay's exhibit space is organized as a series of experiences that invites visitors to discover the unique ecosystem of San Francisco Bay. The Aquarium features four main galleries for guests to explore.



## DISCOVER THE BAY

Discover the Bay introduces visitors to San Francisco Bay.

This gallery highlights animals that are commonly found closest to the shore and near San Francisco docks where fish tend to be juvenile and smaller. Here, guests will find green moray eels, wolf eels, juvenile swell sharks, and the bright orange garibaldi, the marine state fish of California. Guests can also learn about some of the critical issues facing San Francisco Bay in this gallery, including marine debris, and about the critical importance of Marine Protected Areas.



## UNDER THE BAY

Under the Bay is the Aquarium's largest and most iconic exhibit area, featuring two massive tunnels that total 300 feet in length, holding more than 700,000 gallons of carefully maintained water from San Francisco Bay. They are home to more than 200 species of animals.

### Go With The Flow

When visitors first enter Under the Bay, they step into "Go With the Flow," a tranquil environment featuring various species of mesmerizing jellies.



### Nearshore Tunnel

Much of San Francisco Bay is 10-15 feet deep. The first tunnel, called the Nearshore Tunnel, represents animals found in such depths like giant sea bass, a rainbow of colored rockfish, swirling schools of anchovies, and many more species.

### Octopus and Friends Gallery

This gallery features the newest aquatic additions to the Aquarium—the Pacific spiny lumpsuckers. Other animals that can be found in this gallery include a giant Pacific octopus, Dungeness crabs, and abalone.



### Offshore Tunnel (Sharks of Alcatraz)

The Offshore Tunnel (Sharks of Alcatraz) represents animals from the deeper waters of San Francisco Bay, such as bat rays, skates, sturgeons, and multiple species of sharks, including the Bay's largest predator, the sevengill shark.





## TOUCH THE BAY

Touch the Bay offers a hands-on tactile experience for Aquarium visitors.

### Touchpools

Guests can touch juvenile bat rays, skates, and even sharks in the exhibit's large touchpool. A second touchpool that resembles California's rocky coastline enables guests to gently touch sea stars, sea anemones, and sea cucumbers.



### Bay Lab

The Bay Lab features land-dwelling animals serving as ambassadors for climates around the world. Through hands-on presentations and activities, the Bay Lab demonstrates the effects of climate change on these animals and their natural habitat.



## RIVER OTTERS: WATERSHED AMBASSADORS

The Aquarium's fourth gallery lets guests encounter the amusing antics of its furriest residents: river otters.

Featuring North American river otters romping, swimming, sleeping, and playing in a serene environment that combines land and water habitats, guests can learn all about these adorable animals during special presentations, feedings, and trainings led by Aquarium biologists. This gallery helps to teach the public about the importance of the health and conservation of the rivers, streams, and other watersheds that flow into San Francisco Bay.





# Aquarium of the Bay Fact Sheet



## Overview:

Aquarium of the Bay, located at the world-famous PIER 39, is the only aquarium dedicated to the diverse marine life and distinctive ecosystems of San Francisco Bay. Aquarium of the Bay is home to over 20,000+ marine and indigenous animals that can be found in San Francisco Bay and along the California coast. With more than 500,000 visitors annually, Aquarium of the Bay provides an unmatched window through which to view local marine life.

## Mission:

Aquarium of the Bay is an institution of Bay.org DBA Bay Ecotarium, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to enable conversations on climate resilience and ocean conservation globally, while inspiring actionable change locally by protection and preservation of the San Francisco Bay and its ecosystems, from **Sierra to the Sea™**.

Location: The Embarcadero at Beach Street, San Francisco, CA 94133

Website: [www.aquariumofthebay.org](http://www.aquariumofthebay.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AquariumoftheBay](https://www.facebook.com/AquariumoftheBay)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/AquariumoftheBay](https://www.twitter.com/AquariumoftheBay)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/AquariumoftheBay](https://www.instagram.com/AquariumoftheBay)

## Smithsonian Affiliation:

Aquarium of the Bay is a Smithsonian Affiliate. It is the only aquarium in the state of California to be honored with this prestigious designation. Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program of the Smithsonian Institution, dedicated to the increase and diffusion of knowledge.

## Accreditation:

Aquarium of the Bay is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). This difficult-to-achieve accreditation is an industry indicator that Aquarium of the Bay has met AZA's rigorous standards for animal management and care, including living environments, social groupings, health, and nutrition for the animals.

## Green Certification:

Aquarium of the Bay has been a Certified San Francisco Green Business since April 2005. Aquarium of the Bay continues to be a leader in sustainability, and is one of the first organizations ever to be certified as a "green business" in San Francisco.





# Aquarium of the Bay Fact Sheet



## Animal Care Programs:

In addition to caring for the Aquarium's 20,000+ animals, Aquarium of the Bay's animal care staff conduct, share, and consult on various research projects to learn more about the animals that call San Francisco Bay home.

- Aquarium of the Bay has maintained a moon jelly culture since 1998, with all moon jellies born and raised on site. The moon jellies can be seen in the Behind-the-Scenes Tour in multiple stages of life, from microscopic polyps to the full-grown jellies seen on exhibit.
- Aquarium of the Bay has developed a program to rescue live octopuses. Each year, local crab fishermen will catch octopuses in their crabbing nets. While many crabbers will kill any octopus they catch, Aquarium of the Bay will take the octopuses as donations, where they can live a predator-free life.
- Aquarium of the Bay is the first institute in the US to successfully breed healthy Pacific angel sharks. Since their birth, Aquarium biologists have monitored and studied their growth behind-the-scenes, publishing several papers and presenting at numerous conferences pertaining to the best practices for the care of angel sharks.

## Special Tours

**Behind-the-Scenes Tour:** Get an exclusive sneak peek at what goes on behind the scenes at Aquarium of the Bay, where guests can traverse the catwalk above the tanks, learn about dive operations, and discover the extensive process of Aquarium caring for 20,000+ marine and indigenous animals on a daily basis. *Behind-the-Scenes Tours occur daily at 1 p.m., and on weekends at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Children must be 5 or older to participate on this tour.*

**Feed-the-Sharks Tour:** Become Aquarium insiders with our Feed-the-Sharks Tour. Feed sharks, rays, skates, and other fishes in the Aquarium's 350,000-gallon Offshore Tunnel (Sharks of Alcatraz) exhibit. Tour participants will get a taste of what it's like to be a marine biologist by testing the pH and oxygen levels of the tunnel water. Stroll the catwalk over the tunnels and sneak a peek at off-exhibit areas, such as the baby jellies nursery, the skate grow-out and holding space, and other Animal Care work areas. *Feed-the-Sharks Tours are every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. Children on this tour must be 8 or older.*



# Aquarium of the Bay Fact Sheet



## Educational Outreach:

Aquarium of the Bay puts a strong emphasis on education, providing education programs to students from around the Bay Area. The education programs have grown to serve more than 25,000 Bay Area school kids and teachers each year. Since opening, Aquarium of the Bay has hosted educational activities for more than 217,500 local students and teachers.

Aquarium of the Bay's programs allow K-12 students to discover the amazing world of San Francisco Bay through hands-on exploration experiences, scientific activities, and inquiry-based learning. All programs are aligned to the California State Science Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, and include developmentally appropriate, accessible, STEM, and conservation activities.



Additionally, the Aquarium proactively educates the public about the importance of conserving the Bay's rich marine life. Each year, Aquarium of the Bay provides important science-based information about conservation to more than 400,000 visitors from around the world through up-close animal encounters and educational exhibits.



## How Your Visit Helps:

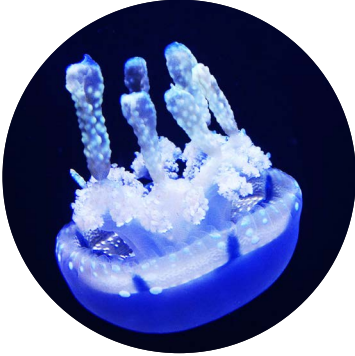
Aquarium of the Bay ticket sales help fund the Aquarium's mission to enable conversations on climate resilience and ocean conservation globally, while inspiring actionable change locally by protection and preservation of the San Francisco Bay and its ecosystems, from **Sierra to the Sea™**. By purchasing a ticket to Aquarium of the Bay, guests are making a contribution towards:

- Providing science and nature programs for over 25,000 Bay Area students each year.
- Funding coastal cleanups around San Francisco to keep our streets, Bay, and ocean healthy and clean.
- Helping biologists research, collect data, and conduct analysis on local species.
- Feeding and providing top-notch animal care for over 20,000 animals at Aquarium of the Bay.





# Aquarium of the Bay Fun Facts



- Our tanks are designed to replicate the habitat in the Bay, including water temperature, which is approximately 55 degrees Fahrenheit (12.7 °C).

- A majority of the animals in Aquarium of the Bay are fed human-quality, sustainable seafood.

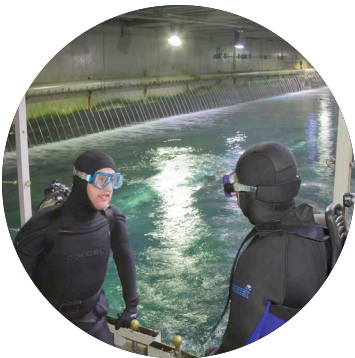
- It takes about 50,000 pounds of food to feed our animals each year.



- Aquarium of the Bay is home to over 200 species and over 20,000 animals found in San Francisco Bay or along the California coast.

- Every week, 27 volunteers scuba dive into our tanks to keep them clean and feed our animals.

- There are 700,700 gallons of water in the Aquarium's tunnels. That's equal to just under 2.7 million liters.



- Approximately 16,000-20,000 gallons of water are re-circulated into our tunnels directly from the Bay each day.

- The water in the Aquarium goes through 3 rounds of filtration before flowing into our tanks, including sand, ozone, and bacteria.



- Aquarium of the Bay has an in-house research lab that is used for water quality testing to ensure that the water is suitable for the animals living in the Aquarium.

- The animals that live at Aquarium of the Bay act as ambassadors to help us teach about climate change and other threats facing animals in the wild.

# Sustainability at Aquarium of the Bay



Aquarium of the Bay is dedicated to creating experiences that inspire both locals and visitors alike to engage in the conservation of San Francisco Bay and the broader marine environment. With sustainability at the core of our mission, it is important to us to reduce our carbon footprint and continue to find ways to improve green initiatives.

## Key Sustainability Programs:

### Waste Diversion

- 80% diversion rate and mandatory composting of food waste and fish waste.
- Separation of recyclable waste that is not accepted by city programs, responsibly disposing of all batteries, light bulbs, paint, and e-waste.



### Water Conservation

- Use of low-flow fixtures and screens throughout the building.

### Energy Conservation

- Use of energy efficient lighting and motion-activated timers throughout the building.



### Pollution Prevention

- No plastic bags are given out in our gift stores.
- Minimization of the use of products that generate hazardous waste.
- 90% of housekeeping products are sustainable.

### Education

- Education programs at Aquarium of the Bay incorporate strong conservation and sustainability messages. Aquarium of the Bay educates the public about the importance of sustainability through daily presentations, free field trips for local students, teacher workshops, and more.



### San Francisco Bay Area Sustainable Seafood Alliance

- Aquarium of the Bay is both a founder and a leader of the San Francisco Bay Area Sustainable Seafood Alliance. Aquarium of the Bay is committed to educating our guests about sustainable seafood and the impact of personal choice. Throughout the year, we partner with Monterey Bay Aquarium, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco Zoo, and The Marine Mammal Center to promote and enhance the sustainable seafood movement throughout the Bay Area.



# About Bay Ecotarium

As Northern California's largest watershed conservation group, bay.org (doing business as Bay Ecotarium) is the voice for the water of San Francisco Bay. A 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, Bay Ecotarium's mission to enable conversations on climate resilience and ocean conservation globally, while inspiring actionable change locally by protection and preservation of the San Francisco Bay and its ecosystems, from **Sierra to the Sea™**. The six unique institutions of Bay Ecotarium speak not just for the ocean, but for the San Francisco Bay Delta, rivers, wetlands, and all the wildlife that call this place home.

Through its six institutions, Bay Ecotarium works to motivate Bay Area residents, influencers, politicians, businesses, and visitors to become agents of change for a healthy, thriving ecosystem.



## Aquarium of the Bay

Located on San Francisco's scenic waterfront, Aquarium of the Bay provides 500,000 guests a year with unforgettable encounters with over 20,000+ local marine and indigenous animals that inspire both wonder and conservation.



## The Bay Institute

The Bay Institute's scientists and conservationists develop and lead model scientific research, education, and advocacy programs that have a major impact on improving the health of the San Francisco Bay watershed.



## Sea Lion Center

The Sea Lion Center provides free interpretive presentations by trained naturalists, educating the 11 million visitors to PIER 39, both local and out-of-towners, about one of San Francisco's most iconic wildlife species, the California sea lions that grace the piers along the City's waterfront.



## Bay Model Alliance

The Bay Model Alliance is a partnership between the Bay Model Visitor Center and Bay Ecotarium. The Bay Model is the only working hydraulic model of the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta System.



## Bay Academy

The Bay Academy is tasked with consolidating and archiving all of The Bay Institute's educational publications, citations and editorials into a cohesive database and to assess the scope of publishing the Bay Eco Series hard cover and e-books. In addition, the Academy is engaged in planning, developing, and designing curriculum based e-learning modules for both teachers and students.

## CONTACT

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