



newsletter of the Southwest Marine/ Aquatic Educators' Association 2012 Winter

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## Holiday Specials at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium

For a limited time during the holiday season, Heal the Bay's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium is offering its new wolf-eel for adoption through the marine science education center's Aquadoption program. A juvenile wolf-eel is at the top of everyone's gift list (right?) and since the Aquarium staff does all the work of taking care of this unique marine animal, this is a hassle free way to connect with the sea life of the Santa Monica Bay.

At nearly three-feet long, the young wolf-eel is neither wolf nor eel, but a member of the wolffish family (named for their large front teeth) and will grow to be about seven feet long. This fish is eel-shaped, with a grayish-indigo colored body patterned with gorgeous dark spots. The newest species on display at the Aquarium, the wolf-eel can be found peering out of a rocky outcropping in the Aquarium's Kelp Forest exhibit.

This distinctive creature is available for "adoption" through January 1, 2013 only. In addition to an Aquadoption certificate, a

fact sheet, photo, and year-long free admission to the Aquarium is included in the offer. Learn more about the Aquadoption program at <https://www.healthebay.org/secure/adopt-aquarium-animal>

Stop by to see the wolf-eel and to check out the 100-plus species on exhibit at the Aquarium during public hours: from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. on weekends. Bring your kids to the Aquarium on Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. to help feed our sea stars, then head upstairs to Rusty's Surf Ranch on the Pier where kids eat FREE with proof of Aquarium entry. One child's meal is free with the purchase of an adult entree of \$11 or more.



————— *from the President* —————

Dear Santa,

It has been one year since last I wrote. I hope that you remember me and I hope that I am still on the Nice List. There are so many things that have gone on this year and I hope that you have taken notice of them all. As you know I work with so many amazing people in the field of Marine and Aquatic Education. We have been hard at work making sure that people know about the importance of the ocean and the watersheds that feed into it. It is amazing to think that most people do not know how important they are and how connected they are to the aquatic world. Just think, without the wonderful educators that belong to SWMEA most people would not know that the oxygen on our planet comes from the ocean. People also wouldn't know that the watersheds they live in drain to the sea, connecting them to this resource even if they are 100's of miles away. SWMEA is so important to so many people.

This year SWMEA has solidified itself as a non-profit organization and is planning on hosting a webinar in the New Year. While people have been very busy they have also taken the time to share with one another through SWMEA and are making sure to think of ways that they can be valuable to the organization.

Santa, it is not only me that you should consider this year but all of the people that make SWMEA great. Please consider them for the Nice List as well.

Sincerely,

Dave Bader

PS. Coal has a high carbon footprint. Please consider an alternative for those who are naughty.

## SWMEA Connection Call for Articles

We hope you enjoy this edition of your SWMEA Connection newsletter. We encourage all members to contribute articles and other news regarding your facilities and what's happening in your neck of the woods (or desert or ocean, wherever you may be)!

Check out the schedule below to see the deadlines and publication dates of upcoming SWMEA Connection editions. It's never too soon to start thinking about items you would like to submit for inclusion. Please send any articles to Kellie at [kkorhonen@dolphinquest.com](mailto:kkorhonen@dolphinquest.com) or to me at [sschenk@mandalay-bay.com](mailto:sschenk@mandalay-bay.com). Kellie and I both look forward to receiving your contributions, and to making the SWMEA Connection the most informative, interesting, and best looking newsletter out there!

Sincerely,  
Steven and Kellie

### **Upcoming Newsletters**

**Spring 2013**  
**Deadline - February 15th**  
**Publication - March 1st**

**Summer 2013**  
**Deadline - May 15th**  
**Publication - June 1st**

**Fall 2013**  
**Deadline - August 15th**  
**Publication - September 1st**

**Winter 2013**  
**Deadline - November 15th**  
**Publication - December 1st**

# SeaWorld Cares School Assemblies

This fall, SeaWorld San Diego's Education & Conservation Department, Bird Department, and Animal Ambassador Team visited three Southern California elementary schools to present SeaWorld Cares assemblies to the runner-up classes in last spring's "Write the Ray" Essay Contest. At each school, the third and fourth grade students that participated in the essay contest enjoyed a half-hour program on SeaWorld's local and worldwide efforts to conserve wildlife.

During the assembly, the students learned the story of J.J., a gray whale calf that SeaWorld rescued and cared for in 1997, and watched as they inflated a 30-foot long, inflatable gray whale to see how large J.J. was when she was returned to the sea. They also participated in a simulated sea turtle rescue using a large, plush sea turtle and a sea turtle stretcher to move the turtle. Assembly highlights were up-close looks at some of SeaWorld's ambassador animals-an American alligator, an African crested

porcupine, and a Magellanic penguin. The students watched the animals while learning natural history facts about the animals and how SeaWorld has helped rescue or preserve habitats for similar animal species. The goal of these assemblies is to reward students for their thoughtful and well-written essays and stories on ray conservation, and also inspire them to care for wildlife close to home and around-the-world.

*by Patricia Schick*





# Shark Reef Aquarium Transforms into Haunted Reef for Halloween

For the 10th year in a row, Shark Reef Aquarium was transformed into Haunted Reef to celebrate Halloween. Decorated with a ghastly array of ghouls, goblins, witches, and skeletons, Haunted Reef was a fun time for both visitors and staff. During community day on October 26th, kids in costume received free admission to the aquarium, along with free candy that was handed out inside the aquarium. The 26th also featured a blood drive, where adults who donated blood on-site through United Blood Services received a free admission ticket. It was Haunted Reef's most successful blood drive, with over 200 people signed up to donate. Overall, for the 3 days of Haunted Reef, there were 10,000 guests who visited the aquarium, over 50,000 pieces of candy handed out, and an immeasurable amount of fun had by all!



# Sand in the making...across the miles

"Shake it! Rocks get rolled around a lot on the beach. Look closer and you'll see the smaller pieces start to break off," said Birch Aquarium Director of Education Kristin Evans as she demonstrated the role that erosion plays in making sand during a virtual field trip lesson on November 1, 2012. Simultaneously, students in Texas, Georgia and Illinois followed along shaking and making their own sand.

Why was all this shaking going on? The aquarium had connected with students at ACE Academy in Texas, Fayetteville Intermediate School in Georgia, and LEARN Charter School in Illinois during the first of the pilot AZA-Google Hangout. During the 30-minute program that began at 7 a.m. PST, Kristin Evans along with School Programs Coordinator Judith Coats introduced the students to sandy beaches. Specifically they talked about what you find on a sandy beach, how sand is made, and where sand might come from. Prior to the hangout, Kristin mailed each of the schools a special Sandy Beach Investigation Kit. Then, while "on air" the students and aquarium staff explored their sandy beach buckets that were full of items you might find on a beach, such as dried seaweed, shells, rocks, feathers, crab molts, and even trash. The students also compared and contrasted several sand

samples from around the world, looking at color, grain size and composition.

The noisiest, but most dynamic, part of the hangout was when each of the schools and the aquarium staff simultaneously made "sand" from pieces of hard candy. By shaking the candies in a rigid plastic container and pretending to be erosion actions, such as waves, wind and weather, the students at each school observed their beach items breakdown into delicious sand! The program wrapped up with a great Q and A ses-

sion. Questions from the schools included "had the aquarium staff traveled to all of the places the sand samples came from," "does sand always stay the same color, or does it change with the weather," and "can different types of sand be on the same beach." To learn the answers to these questions, and all the others asked during the Birch Aquarium at Scripps' Hangout, you will have to watch the program at <https://plus.google.com/+birchaquarium/posts> and scroll down to the November 1 post.

*by Judith Coats*

## Make it yourself!

This activity appears in many forms in various curriculum materials. This is a very streamlined version.

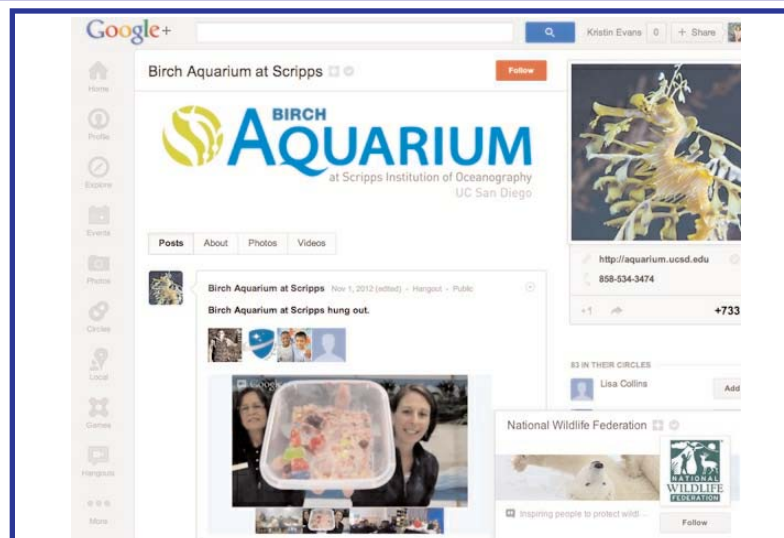
### Materials (per student or student group)

- \* hard candy, at least four different colors
- \* hard plastic container with a secure lid

### Procedure

- \* place one color of each candy in the plastic container
- \* tightly secure lid
- \* shake!

After a few strong shakes you should see the candy start to crack and chip. Keep shaking and the different colors will mingle. Colors can be related to materials found on the beach such as rocks, coral, shells, and crustacean molts.





# QUIKSCIENCE CHALLENGE SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR OCEAN LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Environmental educators at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles have kicked off the 10th edition of the highly successful QuikScience Challenge, a "science competition" for high school and middle school teams, and the challenge has something for teachers and informal educators as well.

The QuikScience Challenge honors educators whose dedication to ocean stewardship and conservation have made a difference to their students and their communities.

Last year we honored these amazing California educators: Dr. Jay Vavra, High Tech High in San Diego; David Meyer, Back Bay Science Center in Newport Beach; Katherine Levensailor, University High School in Irvine; and Debby West, Oak Park Unified School District in Oak Park.

Now we need nominations for the 2013 Ocean Leadership Awards! If you know of educators in California who have made outstanding contributions, please nominate them for this award. (This includes self-nominations.) Winners

will receive a \$500 stipend and a recognition plaque.

QuikScience Challenge honors educators in four categories for the Ocean Leadership Awards:

- \* Formal Teaching Excellence
- \* Informal Teaching Excellence
- \* Early Career
- \* Commitment to Education

Nominations are open until February 4, 2013. We look forward to receiving your candidate's nomination soon!

For more information, contact:

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For more details, check  
our website at:  
[http://www.usc.edu/org/  
quikscience/  
oceanleadership.html](http://www.usc.edu/org/quikscience/oceanleadership.html)

*submitted by Richard Hoops*



QuikScience Challenge Ocean Leadership Awards 2012. Ryan Ashton, Quiksilver Foundation; Dr. Jay Vavra, High Tech High; David Meyer, Back Bay Science Center; Debby West, Oak Park Unified School District; Katherine Levensailor, University High School; Dr. Roberta Marinelli, USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies

## USC LAUNCHES 10TH ANNIVERSARY QUIKSCIENCE CHALLENGE

Environmental educators at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles have launched the tenth edition of the highly successful QuikScience Challenge with events on the USC campus in Los Angeles and the Cabrillo Aquarium in San Pedro. Final projects for the long-running science competition are due February 11, 2013 and winners will be announced at the Quiksilver, Inc. headquarters in Huntington Beach on April 4, 2013.

We kicked off this year's challenge in style on September 29th with 200 visitors joining us at the Cabrillo Aquarium. Participants visited the San Pedro beach and talked to the volunteer Sea Rangers, toured the aquarium, and watched videos of the previous middle and high school presentations. On November 12, about 100 students along with their teachers and chaperones, visited the USC campus for our QuikScience "Surfing Onto Science" rally. USC student mentors led the visitors on laboratory tours, talked to them about their current research, and met with the teams to brainstorm about their projects. The rally concluded with Ryan

Ashton, head of the Quiksilver Foundation, running a raffle for the students and giving away T-shirts, hats, water bottles, Quiksilver sunglasses, and an outstanding Quiksilver skateboard and a snowboard!

The QuikScience Challenge is a "science competition" for teams of middle school and high school students that create projects and portfolios on a science subject related to marine or freshwater environments. The challenge is a partnership supported by Quiksilver, Inc., the well-known producer and distributor of surfing apparel, and the Quiksilver Foundation and the USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies, housed in the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. USC graduate and undergraduate student mentors offer assistance to QuikScience Challenge teams.

The first place prize for the winning high school and middle school teams, and their teachers or advisors, is a week-long expedition to the USC Wrigley Marine Science Center on Catalina Island. The second place prize for the high school and middle school teams is a 4-day weekend trip to the island. Honorable Mention winners will receive a one-day trip to the Wrigley Marine Science Center.

For more information:

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*submitted by Richard Hoops*



Ryan Ashton,  
Quiksilver  
Foundation and  
winner, at the  
QuikScience  
Challenge "Surfing  
Onto Science"  
Rally

# Monsters of the Deep

The Traveling Sea, based in Colorado, presented a new program this Halloween, "Monsters of the Deep," for its After School Clubs. During the last week of October, three clubs participated in making a Black Smoker, Deep Sea Creature Match up and made an anglerfish out of clay with glow in the dark beads as a lure and eyes (see photo). Younger students made a Deep Sea Bottle. (see instructions on how to make one). In each program students make a craft to take home. I try to use recycled objects in the art. The students loved the Black Smoker activity and their bottles.

The mission of The Traveling Sea is to teach students that the ocean affects you every day even if you don't live close to it. Before and After school clubs are very popular programs. We also partner with teachers to teach hands on, standards based workshops in individual classes.

I find it a challenge to book schools programs. If anyone has any tips about that- I will take them! If you would like to stay in touch with what we are doing please find us on <http://www.facebook.com/TheTravelingSea>



## How to make a Deep Sea Bottle:

1 used plastic water bottle

\* Glow in the dark beads= Anglerfish lure (*Caulophryne jordani*) or Lanternfish photophore (*Stenobrachius leucopsrus*)

Red Glitter= Black Dragonfish (*Idiacanthus antrostomus*)  
Red bioluminescence

Blue and Green Glitter= bioluminescence

\* Metallic spiral confetti= Medusa (*Periphylla periphylla*)

\* Foam shrimp= Deep Sea Shrimp (*Sergestes similis*)

\* Foam whale= Deep diving Sperm whale

1. Each student gets a clean, used water/soda bottle. It is great if they can bring them from home. (But usually I raid recycle bins)
2. Put a few of each confetti, foam animals, and beads into bottle.
3. Add 1-2 shakes of glitter.
4. Add 2-3 drops red and and 2-3 drops green coloring to bottle.
5. Add water and screw on lid tightly. The water will turn brown/black and they can use a flashlight at home to look through it.
6. \* From Michael's Craft Stores

Submitted by Hilary Penner



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*Upcoming Events*

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**April 7 - 12, 2013**

**AZA Mid-Year Meeting at the South Carolina Aquarium, Charleston, South Carolina**

**July 22 - 26, 2013**

**NMEA National Conference, Spring Hill College, Mobile, Alabama**

**September 7 - 12, 2013**

**AZA Annual Conference at the Kansas City Zoo, Kansas City, Missouri**

## **Become a SWMEA member today!**

**The Southwest Marine/Aquatic Educators' Association (SWMEA) is a marine educators network throughout Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. Members receive four on-line newsletters each year and a subscription to our listserve. Receive discounts on our semi-annual professional development seminars as well as discounts in several SWMEA facilities.**

**For more information contact Sarah Swain at [SSwain@LBAOP.ORG](mailto:SSwain@LBAOP.ORG)**

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### *The SWMEA Connection*

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