



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 26, 2017

SHARKS, SHARKS, AND MORE SHARKS! IT'S A SHARK EXTRAVAGANZA AT POINT DEFIANCE ZOO & AQUARIUM JULY 1-2

Tacoma, Wash. – SHARKS! They're mysterious. They're mesmerizing. And they'll be squarely in the spotlight at Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium this coming weekend during two days of events dedicated to these much maligned and misunderstood sea animals.



A slate of fun and interactive activities is scheduled all weekend, July 1-2. All activities except participation in Eye-to-Eye Shark Dives are free with admission or membership to the zoo.

The public can see a variety of sharks in the South Pacific Aquarium.

Epaulette and bamboo sharks 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 16 sharks circling gracefully in the main shark exhibit.

They include massive sandbar, sand tiger and nurse sharks, plus a smaller blacktip reef shark and an exotic-looking Japanese wobbegong shark.

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is a Northwest leader in telling the story of how very much in peril sharks are. Millions are killed every year just for their fins; others die when they're caught up in fishing nets.

People can learn how to help these amazing animals at www.pdza.org/savesharks.

Sharks! weekend is an opportunity to celebrate these graceful and intriguing creatures, get a deeper look at their behavior, and learn about their important role in the ocean ecosystem.

Watch shark, stingray, and fish feeds; touch small sharks; and see members of the public getting up-close underwater views from a cage during our Eye-to-Eye Shark Dive program.

Here's the schedule to watch, see, touch:

- **11 a.m. Saturday:** Watch a Shark Feed and see the animals receive enrichment with watermelon and fish in the South Pacific Aquarium.
- **11 a.m. Sunday:** View a Lagoon Feed of tropical fish, South Pacific Aquarium
- **1:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday:** See stingrays and small sharks fed at Stingray Cove, South Pacific Aquarium

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- **10:15 a.m. 11:45 a.m., 2:15 p.m., and 3:45 p.m.:** Watch members of the public participate in our Eye-to-Eye Shark Dive Program, where they will get unparalleled views of 16 sharks, South Pacific Aquarium (times may vary)
- **10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2 p.m.-5 p.m.:** Touch bamboo & epaulette sharks at Stingray Cove, South Pacific Aquarium

And here's the list of interactive activities for visitors. All run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, except as noted.

- **Ocean Word Art:** Visitors can join the Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium word cloud by answering this question: *"How you are connected to the ocean?"*
- **Scent Tracking:** Use a keen "sharky" sense of smell to find dinner.
- **Shark Food Toss:** Join in on a beanbag toss to discover what sharks eat.
- **Shark Hat:** Exercise creativity by fashioning a shark hat from craft materials.
- **Dress Up:** Step into a shark's fins by trying on costumes.
- **Shark Tagging:** Learn about the shark tagging conservation project supported by Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium.
- **Marine Discovery Center:** Shark-themed activities run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

For particularly adventurous visitors, Eye-to-Eye Shark Dives are available when reserved in advance. Each shark dive is a unique interactive experience that takes visitors into the underwater world of sharks to see things from the animals' point of view. For more information on Shark Dives, visit www.pdza.org/dive.

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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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