



EYE-TO-EYE SHARK DIVES REOPEN SEPT. 10

Reconnect with sharks up close in the South Pacific Aquarium's Outer Reef

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TACOMA, Wash.—Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is reopening its Eye-to-Eye Shark Dives on Thursday, Sept. 10, with timed online tickets and enhanced safety protocols designed to help guests connect up close with sharks while staying safe and healthy. Timed online tickets will go on sale Aug. 28.

About Shark Dives

The 60-minute adventure allows up to four guests from the same household to experience the thrill of getting up close to more than a dozen massive sharks in the South Pacific Aquarium's Outer Reef habitat while learning about their biology and how we can protect them in the wild. Our dive experts will teach guests the basics of breathing air while underwater, then guide you into a sturdy cage in our 225,000-gallon warm water shark exhibit.

The South Pacific Aquarium is home to large crevalle jacks that swim amongst nurse sharks, sandbar sharks, a blacktip reef shark, a sand tiger shark and a zebra shark.

“We are beyond thrilled to be able to once again offer the opportunity for you to get Eye-to-Eye with the amazing sharks in our South Pacific Aquarium!” said Dive Safety Officer Heidi Wilken. “Our opening has been carefully orchestrated to keep you and our staff safe, and align with state and national guidelines for dive programs.”

The main message of Eye-to-Eye Shark Dives is one of [conservation and coexistence](#). The sharks themselves will show that being in the water with them is an awe inspiring, unforgettable experience. Guests will learn how these animals are misunderstood, unfairly maligned by pop culture and mercilessly hunted and killed by the millions for their fins.

“The main goal of this program is to inspire people here in Puget Sound to protect and conserve marine life,” said Wilken. “We want our visitors to leave with a pledge to take action that will help save sharks.”

The dive program highlights several actions people can take and messages they can share with family members and friends.

Those include:

- Not purchasing shark products such as shark fin soup, sharkskin items, pills made with shark cartilage or shark jaws.
- Choosing sustainable seafood caught in ways that don't accidentally catch and kill sharks.

- Urging members of Congress to pass federal laws to protect sharks.

Enhanced Safety Protocols

Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium is following all public health and safety guidelines for Phase 2 of Gov. Jay Inslee's Safe Start plan.

- Up to four people can dive in a group. All guests must be from the same household.
- Advance online tickets are required.
- Guests are required to wear face coverings throughout the Zoo (but not during the dive).
- We have increased sanitizing for shared land surfaces, such as doorknobs, bathrooms, pens and chairs.

Dive Details

- The Eye-to-Eye Shark Dive costs \$255 per non-member group, \$210 per member group. Up to four people from the same household can be in a group. The price includes admission to the Zoo.
- Dives are offered Thursday and Sunday.
- The water is a comfortable 74 degrees.
- We provide guests with a dry-suit that completely seals out water, so you can wear street clothes underneath. We recommend wearing comfortable clothing. It's unlikely you'll get damp, but bring a change of clothes and a towel just in case. Your hair will get wet, and hair dryers are not allowed inside the Zoo.

Requirements

- Ages 8 and up.
- Must be in good health and complete a medical questionnaire.
- Pregnant visitors may not dive.
- Maximum weight 275 lb.

To learn more about Eye-to-Eye Shark Dives and bookings, visit: pdza.org/sharkdives

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Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium, the Northwest's only combined zoo and aquarium, practices and promotes responsible stewardship of the world's resources. A member of the [Metro Parks Tacoma](#) family, the zoo creates a legacy of sustainability for future generations through education, conservation, research and recreational opportunities; it also embodies Metro Parks' mission of creating healthy opportunities to play, learn and grow. The zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA). [The Zoo Society](#), a 501(c)(3) organization, is an instrumental partner in the conservation, animal-welfare and education initiatives.

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