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Media Contact:

Beth Chee

bchee@ucsd.edu

(o)858.534.8555/(c)858.775.4574

Whale Fest Makes A Big Splash

Fin-tastic marine mammals are the stars of Birch Aquarium's Whale Fest on February 2-10

La Jolla, Calif. (Jan. 16, 2019)—Whales are taking over Birch Aquarium at Scripps for a week-long celebration of family fun. Winter is the peak time to see Gray Whales off the coast of San Diego, and Whale Fest highlights these marathon-migrators and their cousins Feb. 2-10.

Every day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., guests will learn how to spot whales from the panoramic Tide-Pool Plaza; get hands-on with whale biofacts like baleen and bones; learn about unique ways whales and dolphins survive in their aquatic home; dive deeper into whale evolution and conservation; and join a Gray Whale's journey on a story path through the *Hall of Fishes*. Whale Fest is an opportunity for guests to become experts in local whale and dolphin species, which will be highlighted at the event.

In addition to the daily activities, on weekends guests will meet whale scientists from Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego. These scientists study everything from the sounds whales make to the food they eat, and will discuss the latest whale research and conservation efforts. Weekends include additional activities and take-home crafts.

Whale Fest will also feature a multisensory acoustic listening experience, created in partnership with UC San Diego sound artists and Scripps Oceanography scientists, which highlights whale calls and the sounds from their ocean environment. Guests will be able to move through an outdoor sonic experience that projects the squeaks, moans, and grunts associated with marine mammals and while learning about the impacts of noise pollution.

"Whale Fest is an opportunity for our guests to dive into the amazingly diverse underwater world of whales and dolphins," said Danny Beckwith, Manager of Public Engagement at Birch Aquarium. "We hope to spark curiosity about these mesmerizing creatures and inspire our guests to take action to protect marine mammals near and far!"

Whale Fest occurs in conjunction with whale watching season. [Twice-daily tours featuring Birch Aquarium naturalists](#) depart from the Flagship Cruises & Events dock in downtown San Diego.

Whale Fest activities are included with Birch Aquarium admission, which is \$19.50 for adults and \$15 for children ages 3 to 17. [Annual memberships](#) are also available. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit aquarium.ucsd.edu or call 858-534-FISH.

About Birch Aquarium at Scripps

Birch Aquarium at Scripps is the public exploration center for the world-renowned Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego. Perched on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the aquarium features more than 60 habitats of fishes and invertebrates from the cold waters of the Pacific Northwest to the tropical waters of Mexico and the western Pacific. An interactive museum showcases research discoveries by Scripps scientists on climate, earth and ocean science, and features interactive elements. Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Birch Aquarium has an annual attendance of more than 460,000, including 50,000 school children.