



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Contact: Shelley Dawicki
508-495-2378
Shelley.Dawicki@noaa.gov

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NOAA's Woods Hole Science Aquarium Offers Special Activities May 20 and 21 As Part of National Endangered Species Day Events

On-site coloring/drawing contest, special exhibits and hands-on activities for visitors

NOAA's Woods Hole Science Aquarium, the nation's oldest marine research aquarium, will be offering a number of special events for the public on Friday, May 20, in recognition of National Endangered Species Day. Activities will continue on Saturday, May 21, to raise awareness of endangered and protected species and research being conducted at the Woods Hole Laboratory, part of NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center. Admission to the Aquarium is free, but donations are accepted.

Visitors of all ages will be able to learn about Venus, a Kemp's Ridley sea turtle, and the Aquarium's longstanding turtle care/convalescence program. Staff from the NEFSC's Protected Species Branch will be available on Friday to discuss the NEFSC's research programs on marine protected species, recent and upcoming field programs focused on whales, sea turtles and sea birds, and show video and audio clips from recent projects. Aquarium staff and volunteers will be on hand with some special activities, including the conservation cart where visitors can touch various specimens and learn about protected species.

The Aquarium features approximately 140 species of animals of the Northeast and Middle Atlantic region, as well as a behind-the-scenes touch tank where visitors may find lobsters, horseshoe crabs, sea stars (starfish) and hermit crabs, as well as other animals found in local waters.

Students from elementary through high school grades can submit one 8.5 x 11 inch drawing of their favorite endangered marine species completed before May 20 or done that day on-site. Each drawing should be identified on the front as to the species, with the artist's name and contact information on the back. Special prizes will be announced that day.

The Woods Hole Science Aquarium is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed federal holidays). The seal pool area opens at 10:30 a.m., with seal feedings at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. most days. No off-street public parking is available, but limited on-street metered parking provided by the Town of Falmouth is available nearby.

For further information and directions, contact the Woods Hole Science Aquarium at 508-495-2001, or visit the Aquarium web site at <http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov>.

The public aquarium has been part of the federal fisheries laboratory on Water Street in Woods Hole since 1885, when a much larger marine science laboratory complex was completed at the current location after moving from original facilities established in 1871 on nearby Little Harbor. The Woods Hole Science Aquarium is the oldest continuously operating marine research aquarium in the United States.

To learn more about Endangered Species Day and other events being celebrated in the Northeast U.S. and throughout the country during the month of May, visit NOAA's Fisheries Services Office of Protected Resources at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/>.

-30-

Related links:

Endangered Species Day Events 2011:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/endangeredspeciesday/events.htm>

NEFSC's Protected Species Branch: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/psb/>

NEFSC Research Cruises: Follow the NEFSC's May 2011 Marine Mammal Survey Cruise: <http://nefsc.wordpress.com/>

NOAA Fisheries Office of Protected Resources: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/>