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## **Santa to Visit Woods Hole Science Aquarium December 20**

Santa Claus will make his annual visit to the Woods Hole Science Aquarium on Saturday, December 20, from 12 to 2 p.m. The Aquarium, operated by NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center, is located at 166 Water Street in Woods Hole and will be open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aquarium staff will feed the seals at 11 a.m. and again at 2 and 4 p.m. on December 20.

Everyone is welcome to chat and have their picture taken with Santa. Light snacks will be served.

The Aquarium's live collection includes species of marine fish and invertebrates that are found in waters off the Northeastern U.S. Programs operated at the Aquarium in partnership with the Marine Biological Laboratory include those for marine animal health, summer internships for high school students, and special exhibits. The facility is also home for two harbor seals, LuSeal and Bumper, who cannot be released to the wild. Seal feedings, held at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. most days, are always a popular and informative event.

Exhibits highlighting some of the Science Center's research programs include the interactive "Sounds of the Sea" display featuring whale and other marine animal sounds. Other educational exhibits feature sea turtles, lobsters and sharks as well as information about endangered species and marine environments.

The Woods Hole Science Aquarium is open year-round Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is closed Sundays and Mondays, and all federal holidays. The Aquarium is a federal facility and will be closed December 25, December 26 and January 1. Admission is free; however, donations are accepted.

The public aquarium has been part of the federal fisheries laboratory in Woods Hole since 1875, four years after Spencer Baird of the U.S Commission on Fish and Fisheries, who also served as assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, established a summer research station on Little Harbor. A much larger, permanent marine science laboratory complex was completed in 1885 on Water Street, site of the current facilities on Great Harbor. The Woods Hole fisheries laboratory was the first marine research station in the United States.

The Woods Hole Science Aquarium is the oldest public marine aquarium in the United States. Visit the Aquarium on the web at [aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov](http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov)

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