



at Fort Fisher

900 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach, NC 28449 • (910) 458-8257 • Fax: (910) 458-6812
www.ncaquariums.com

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Contacts: Amy Kilgore: 910/458-8257 Ext 211
Peggy Sloan, 910/458-8257 Ext 230
www.ncaquariums.com

Leadership in Education

*Our Mission: "Inspiring appreciation and conservation
of North Carolina's aquatic environments."*

All three North Carolina Aquariums work to ensure that everyone who participates in shaping environmental policy – the voters of today and tomorrow – are well informed about the consequences of their decisions.

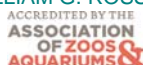
The North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher, since completing its expansion in March 2002, has helped nearly two million visitors understand the beauty, complexity and value of our natural environment.

Exhibits: On a given day, hundreds – sometimes thousands – of visitors tour the facility and its exhibits. A freshwater conservatory displays the life found among the diverse inland habitats of the Cape Fear River basin, the state's largest. The Coastal Waters Gallery showcases the spectrum of life within estuaries, salt marshes and surf-zone habitats. The Open Oceans Gallery includes a wide array of saltwater species, from sharks and stingrays to jellyfish and octopus. In 2005, the aquarium installed a new gallery of "strange and beautiful life," not native to North Carolina. Five exhibits, collectively titled Exotic Aquatics, is home to spiny lobsters, Hawaiian fishes, lionfish, Pacific reef fishes, and dart frogs. A standard visit is quite affordable – \$8 for adults – and is free to children ages 5 and under and to registered groups of North Carolina school children. In 2007, more than 34,000 school children participated; overall, nearly 35% of aquarium visitors are admitted free.

Free Programs: Most guests take advantage of the variety of free education programs available during a standard visit. In 2007, aquarium educators presented 3,400 such programs, including "creature-features," diver-dialogs, touch-pool discussions, narrated animal feedings and "Aqua-talks" in the auditorium.

Helping Schools: The aquarium actively participates in community education projects, such as curriculum development, teacher workshops and student mentoring, all at no charge. Sea Scholars, the aquarium's three-hour salt-marsh study program, is part of the required curriculum

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
MICHAEL F. EASLEY, GOVERNOR • WILLIAM G. ROSS JR., SECRETARY • DAVID R. GRIFFIN, DIVISION DIRECTOR





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for all 5th-graders in New Hanover County public schools. Many students from other counties opt to participate in Sea Scholars studies to enhance their visit. Education staff members also travel to outlying schools for special presentations.

Special Activities: A broad range of reasonably priced, reserved-space educational activities are available for visitors of all ages. Programs include day camps, summer camps, salt-marsh expeditions, canoe trips, surfing lessons, surf-fishing workshops, Scout badges, sleepovers and birthday parties. Each program is designed to help every participant learn more about the natural environment.

Community Involvement: Our mission of education, conservation and research includes contributing to community efforts. In 2005, the aquarium donated \$6,000 from a special fundraiser for Hurricane Katrina relief to the Governor's N.C. Helping Neighbors Fund.

Research and Conservation: Biologists in the aquarium's husbandry department have developed successful on-site propagation projects for moon jellies, sea horses, and pygmy sunfish, and have recently achieved success in the breeding and birthing of yellow stingrays and guitarfish. Education and husbandry staffs have participated in a variety of volunteer research projects involving sea turtles, blue crabs, horseshoe crabs, bottlenose dolphins and habitat restoration.

Why We're Proud: The North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher is a community resource, committed to being a positive presence and to representing the natural world for anyone interested in exploring its wonders. We take pride in assuring everyone can experience and learn about North Carolina's natural history.

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For details, contact Amy Kilgore or Donna Moffitt at (910) 458-8257. For complete information and program schedules, visit: www.ncaquariums.com