

A photograph showing three people in blue shirts floating in the ocean, each holding a sea turtle. The water is green and white with foam. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

PROTECTING  
WILDLIFE AND  
INSPIRING FUTURE  
GENERATIONS

SeaWorld  cares

[SEAWORLDCARES.COM](http://SEAWORLDCARES.COM)

**“We proudly care for  
one of the largest  
animal collections in  
North America...”**



## IN OUR PARKS

Our mission at SeaWorld® is to inspire guests to celebrate, connect with, and care for the natural world. Through education and encounters with sea life, our **guests become engaged and greater stewards** of marine animals and their habitats. More than 50 years of world-class care, state-of-the-art animal habitats, and commitment to animal welfare have earned our parks recognition as **global leaders in the zoological community**. We proudly care for one of the largest animal collections in North America, and the health and well-being of these animals is a responsibility our skilled professionals take extremely seriously.

## AROUND THE WORLD

Our commitment to animals also extends around the world through significant financial contributions and resource support for **conservation, education programs** and **wildlife rescue**. Our global commitment to animal welfare and conservation is focused in three areas:

- the rescue of ill, orphaned, and injured animals;
- research and conservation projects to help protect animals in the wild; and
- inspiring the next generation of conservationists and animal care experts.

# WILD ANIMAL RESCUE, REHABILITATION, AND RETURN

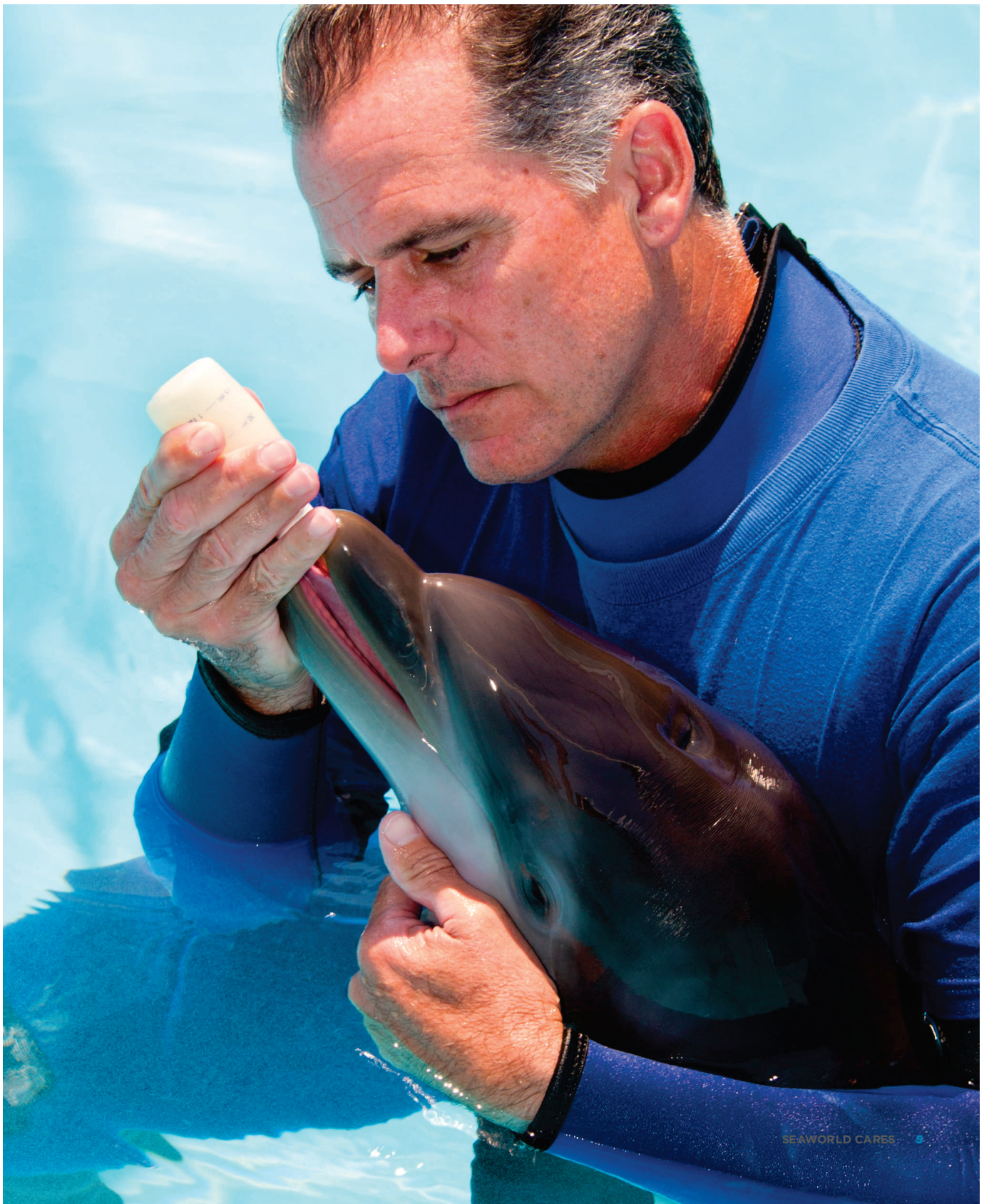
Our legacy of animal rescue spans more than 50 years and has benefited **more than 25,000** animals. Our SeaWorld Rescue Team is **on call 24/7**, 365 days a year, and is always ready to help an animal in need.

Working in partnership with state, local, and federal agencies, we help animals that are orphaned, ill, injured or in need of expert care. Our goal for every animal we rescue is to **successfully rehabilitate and return it to the wild**. The small percentage of animals with conditions that would prevent them from surviving in the wild are given lifelong care at SeaWorld or another accredited facility.

Our passionate team is continuously creating new ways to rescue and treat these animals, as no case is ever the same. Our inventive animal experts have:

- Created nutritional formulas and nursing bottles to hand-feed orphaned animals.
- Saved sea turtles with cracked shells using everyday items like honey and baby ointment.
- Crafted prosthetic beaks for injured birds.
- Developed an “animal wetsuit” to help injured manatees stay afloat.

The SeaWorld Rescue team moves into action when environmental events threaten wildlife – from hurricanes to oil spills. Our experts were on scene during some of the most significant events in recent history, including the Exxon Valdez oil spill, several major hurricanes, the South African oil spill of 2000 and the Gulf oil disaster of 2010. **We have rescued animals by boat, helicopter, and jet ski**, and helped save all types of wild animals including dolphins, manatees, sea turtles, whales, otters, birds and even sharks.



## RESCUE STORIES

### The California Sea Lion Crisis

In early 2015, hundreds of sea lion pups were found malnourished, dehydrated and otherwise ill all along the west coast of the U.S. We supported the response by helping rescue more than 800 stranded sea lions, and SeaWorld San Diego suspended their sea lion show so those trainers could join rescuers in the field.

### The Rescue of 19 Manatees from a Florida Drain Pipe

SeaWorld Orlando's animal care team received a phone call that there were six to eight animals stuck in a storm pipe, only to find 19 manatees trapped, including a mother and a calf. After several hours, the team was able to rescue and successfully release all 19 manatees into open water, after thoroughly checking and photographing each one in order to deem that they were healthy enough for release.

### Katrina's Story: One Gutsy Gator

Katrina, the Cajun gator, was named for the fierce hurricane she was tough enough to survive. A refugee of the storm, Katrina was given a caring home at SeaWorld San Antonio. Today, as an ambassador for her species, Katrina helps educate children about the effects of natural disasters on wildlife.

### Seeing the Light: Helping Hatchlings Safely Home

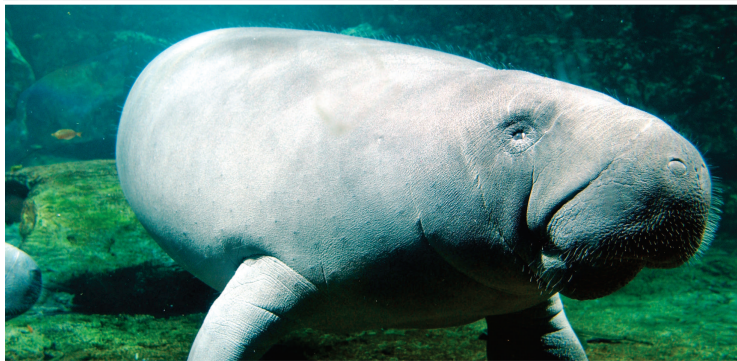
Hatched from beach nests at night, baby sea turtles depend on the moon's glow to guide them to the ocean, and can get disoriented and led astray by artificial lights. With support from the SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund, Florida's first statewide assessment of beach illumination – from a turtle's view – allowed officials to monitor lighting and identify trouble spots.

### Caught in a Trap: Unhitching Hitchcock

Hitchcock the manatee was found with both of his flippers caught in crab trap lines, his weight less than 350 pounds. In his year of rehabilitation at SeaWorld, both of his flippers healed. So did his appetite! Hitchcock was returned to the waters off Florida rehabilitated, healthy and weighing a whopping 600 pounds.

### JJ's Story: Our 10-Ton Baby

On a beach in California in 1997, a baby gray whale lay dying and weighing an emaciated 1,670 pounds. Severely dehydrated and malnourished, the calf was transported to SeaWorld for expert care. Fourteen months later, JJ became the largest animal successfully rehabilitated and returned to the wild, weighing a healthy 19,000 pounds.



**“Our goal for every animal we rescue is to successfully rehabilitate and return it to the wild.”**

## RESCUE MILESTONES

**1964**

SeaWorld opens in San Diego, Calif., where our first animal rescue team is formed.

**1963**

Hubbs-SeaWorld® Research Institute opens with a commitment “to return to the sea some measure of the benefits derived from it.”

**1976**

SeaWorld Orlando rescues its first manatee.

**1980**

First bottle-raised orphaned manatee, Marina, is rescued, successfully rehabilitated, and released.

**1989**

5,000-pound Bryde’s whale is rehabilitated after around-the-clock care and returned to the wild.

**1997**

JJ, an orphaned gray whale calf, begins her 14-month rehabilitation. She is the largest rescued animal ever returned to the wild.



**2000** 

SeaWorld helps save more than 20,000 oiled penguins and nearly 700 orphaned penguin chicks affected by the Treasure oil spill in South Africa. The same year the SeaWorld Oiled Wildlife Care Center, a public-private partnership for environmental stewardship, is formed.

**2003**

The SeaWorld & Busch Gardens® Conservation Fund is established. The Fund has since granted more than \$11 million to projects around the world.

 **2005**

After Hurricane Katrina, SeaWorld rescues 14 injured or displaced sea lions.

 **2010**

More than 300 cold-stunned, endangered sea turtles are rehabilitated after suffering the effects of record-setting cold—one of the largest rescue events in SeaWorld history.

SeaWorld Animal Rescue Team assists wildlife affected by the BP oil spill, including more than 100 endangered sea turtles.

 **2011**

SeaWorld Animal Rescue Team helps rescue and care for a large group of pilot whales that had beached just north of Key West, Fla. Two of the surviving whales were returned to the open ocean. SeaWorld is providing a permanent home for one of the other survivors.

 **2012**

Around Valentine's Day, SeaWorld San Diego team rescued a young sea lion with a severe bullet wound to her flipper. They named the sea lion Valentine, removed the bullet and brought her back to health. Valentine was then successfully returned to the ocean.

**2014**

SeaWorld helps rescue over 1,000 animals this year, including an entangled humpback whale and even a pregnant shark.

 **2015**

SeaWorld surpasses 25,000 rescues and celebrates the 50th anniversary of giving animals in need a second chance at life. In addition, SeaWorld rescues more than 800 sea lions during a stranding crisis in California.

**2013** 

After a mass stranding event in St. Lucie county, Fla. in 2012, SeaWorld Orlando successfully rehabilitates three young pilot whales.

# PROTECTING ANIMALS IN THE WILD THROUGH RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

## Research That is Impossible to Conduct in the Wild

Research is a key component of SeaWorld's larger commitment to conservation and animal welfare, and includes:

- publishing our own research,
- sharing our parks and animals as controlled research environments, and
- funding and supporting conservation projects around the world.

**Our parks provide a unique environment** that allows our team and outside researchers and scientists to better understand marine mammals. SeaWorld's animal health professionals contribute meaningful **science learned through the care of these animals**. Additionally, we are deeply integrated with universities and research organizations and provide **access to our animals for scientists** conducting studies on a variety of subjects. These studies complement and strengthen research efforts in the field.

The animal health team and scientists of SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment™ have contributed to more than **300 published studies** that advance the global scientific community's understanding of animals. SeaWorld's contributions have led to **advances in the care** of animals in both zoological facilities and wild populations.

## Protecting Whales in the Wild

In the **largest private commitment of its kind** ever made, SeaWorld has pledged **\$10 million in matching funds focused on threats to killer whales in the wild**, especially those identified by the U.S. government related to the endangered Southern Resident killer whale population. The matching funds will be in addition to killer whale research conducted by SeaWorld's scientists, which includes 50 studies to date.

As a part of this commitment, SeaWorld has partnered with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation through the Killer Whale Research and Conservation Program, which is dedicated primarily to providing support to aid in the recovery of the endangered Southern Resident killer whale population found in the coastal waters of Washington State and surrounding areas, known as the Salish Sea.



## RESEARCH STORIES

### Sustainability for Marine Ornamental Fish

Coral reefs face numerous growing threats including ocean acidification, pollution and over-exploitation. Additionally, many colorful marine inhabitants are collected in ways that are not environmentally friendly and can impact the entire reef ecosystem. Rising Tide Conservation was initiated by SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment™ to protect reefs by developing techniques for rearing marine ornamental fish. The program promotes commercial production as an alternative to reef collection.

### Killer Whale Metabolism: How Much Do Whales Need to Eat?

Together with Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute, SeaWorld recently conducted groundbreaking research to answer the question: how many calories does a killer whale burn at rest (known as the resting metabolic rate). These findings help scientists understand how much food a killer whale needs to survive. This has important implications both for wild whales and the habitats in which they live, particularly the endangered Southern Resident killer whales. Scientists believe that one of the reasons this population is imperiled is because of the declines in their principal food: salmon.

**“One area of focus is centered on how vocalizations might be a measure of health – or distress – in the wild.”**



Knowing killer whale food requirements will help scientists to understand the impact of that decreasing salmon population, as well as the impact the whales themselves have on fish and other animals in that environment.

Also, research on SeaWorld's killer whales' milk composition will help scientists understand the nutritional requirements for mothers and calves. By understanding how much energy goes into producing milk, we can determine if available prey are sufficient to meet the nutritional needs of killer whales in the wild.

### **Breakthrough Nutritional Assessments Using Unmanned Aerial Drone Technology**

Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) took a series of precise body measurements of the killer whales living at SeaWorld, including pregnant whales. Now they are using drones to photo-document wild killer whales, and based on the images collected at SeaWorld, are able to monitor the wild population's nutritional and reproductive states.

### **Understanding How Killer Whales Metabolize Toxins**

Research into pregnancy and lactation will help scientists understand how killer whales metabolize toxins. This study is looking at how toxins are transferred during pregnancy and lactation to offspring. Toxins are identified as a major health concern for wild killer whales. They have been proposed as causes for reduced pregnancy success and increased health issues in wild whales. By studying the whales at SeaWorld, we can create an effective model to better understand how these toxins impact wild killer whales.

### **Killer Whale Vocalizations**

For more than 10 years, SeaWorld has been supporting long-term studies to enable us to characterize the vocal patterns of different populations of killer whales. By studying the development and variations in these vocal patterns, we get a better understanding of the vocal development processes of this species and how killer whales use vocalizations to communicate. One area of focus is centered on how vocalizations might be a measure of health – or distress – in the wild. A study published in 2013 showed that Pacific Northwest killer whales have grown quiet compared to years past. Scientists don't know the cause, and the results of these long-range vocalization studies may help us find out.

We can monitor the vocalizations of wild killer whales. But only at places like SeaWorld can we listen to specific individuals over many years to get the full picture of how they vocalize and how it relates to their world.



## CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION

We have spent millions of dollars conserving wild animals and wild places, as well as supporting critical conservation work on every continent. The SeaWorld® & Busch Gardens® Conservation Fund supports **wildlife research, habitat protection, animal rescue and conservation education in the U.S. and countries all over the world.** The Fund provides an outlet for park visitors to help protect wildlife and, because SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment provides all administrative and development costs as well as staffing and infrastructure, commits 100 percent of donations to on-the-ground wildlife conservation efforts.

## CONSERVATION FUND STORIES

### Rescuing Cetaceans and Other Marine Life

With support from the Fund, Wildlife in Need has developed training and resources to bolster the Philippine Marine Mammal Stranding Network. Through their Cetacean Stranding Response Workshop, they have trained more than 2,000 government staff and local stakeholders and more than 50 veterinarians have attended the Medical Management of Stranded Marine Mammals Workshop. These trainings are critical to growing and creating a sustainable network of marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation efforts.

### Protecting Sea Turtles in the Caribbean through Education

Community involvement is the key to provoke a long-term positive impact on sea turtle conservation. The sea turtle rescue and conservation center in Pacuare beach, Costa Rica, enhances conservation efforts through the protection of nesting females and their nests as well as raising awareness about the critical situation of marine turtles and their habitat. With the Conservation Fund's support, WIDECAS developed and implemented educational outreach in coastal communities that reduced the human threats for sea turtles in the area and recruited participation in beach monitoring and habitat protection.

### Gorilla Research and Monitoring

Mountain gorillas have a population that is incredibly fragile with only 480 individuals inhabiting the Virunga massif and a total of only an estimated 880 gorillas in the world. Daily protection efforts are the primary defense against significant threats such as snares, animal trafficking, disease, and illegal forest use. Through the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International's Karisoke Research Center

in Rwanda, the Conservation Fund supports their efforts of dawn-to-dusk protection to approximately 25 percent of the remaining Virunga mountain gorillas.

### Stopping Rhino Poaching

The Wilderness Foundation and the Fund have partnered to take a three pronged approach to rhino conservation in South Africa. First, the Wilderness Foundation is tracking rhinos in the Eastern Cape and maintains a DNA database of the population. This assists in population studies and also provides evidence that can be used against poachers. Secondly, we are increasing the capacity of veterinarians to care for rhinos injured by poachers in Kruger National Park. Finally, the Fund's support provides a dedicated anti-poaching unit in the Stanley and Livingstone Private Game Reserve to protect the only viable rhino population in the area against potential poachers. These programs, along with several other projects conserving rhinos throughout Africa, may just be saving this species from extinction.

### Supporting Wildlife Triage Centers

Since 1972, Project Wildlife has been committed to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of local wildlife throughout San Diego County. Project Wildlife has grown into one of the largest wildlife rehabilitation organizations in the country serving nearly 10,000 animals and performing 14 percent of all animal rehabilitation in the state of California. The Fund supports Project Wildlife's Triage Centers where wildlife patients are examined and stabilized by medical staff before being transferred to their next phase of care.



## EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION

Over the past 50 years, **more than 400 million guests** have visited a **SeaWorld park** and experienced attractions, shows and habitats designed to educate and inspire them to care about the world.

Hundreds of thousands of students have visited the parks to participate in instructional field trips. And tens of thousands of teachers have participated in our teacher workshop programs.

In addition to our extensive in-park efforts, SeaWorld's educational programs also extend into homes and classrooms across the world through innovative online sites, national television programs and teacher resources. We were one of the first zoological institutions to develop an online animal information database, provide distance learning programs live to schools, and create zoological residential programs that provided week-long, intensive programs for youths interested in zoological careers. Our programs speak to students from pre-school age to senior adults.



## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EXAMPLES

### Instructional Field Trips

Hundreds of thousands of school children visit our parks each year to participate in programs that are grade-specific and align with state science curriculums and the national Next Generation Science Standards. These programs include activities to enhance learning before, during and after a visit to our parks.

### Outreach

Each year our education team visits school children throughout the country that may not be able to reach our parks and interact with our animals. Our animal ambassador program brings both native and exotic wildlife into schools to teach youth about how their behavior can impact the conservation of species worldwide.

### Educational Television

Sea Rescue™ is the Emmy-nominated TV show that tells the stories of how the SeaWorld Rescue Team and partner organizations rescue, rehabilitate and return sea life back to its natural habitat. In the Wildlife Docs™ TV series, we go behind the scenes to illustrate the care given to more than 12,000 animals that live in Busch Gardens, Tampa. These programs reach millions of viewers each year and inspire youth to both protect wildlife and consider careers in conservation.

### Digital and Online Education

SeaWorld.org, is a resource for students and teachers alike. The SeaWorld/Busch Gardens ANIMALS Website features 4,000 pages of educational material, including species reference resources, classroom curriculum, conservation project calls-to-action, zoological career information, and environmentally focused family activities.

### Teacher workshops and resources

SeaWorld offers numerous teacher workshop series and extensive classroom resources, activities and teachers' guides. These resources, which have been honored with several Teachers' Choice awards, benefit thousands of students each year.

**“SeaWorld’s educational impact also extends into homes and classrooms across the world through innovative online sites, national television programs and teacher resources.”**

# OUR ANIMAL CARE STANDARDS

At SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment™, we proudly care for one of the largest animal collections in North America. Our more than 50 years of world-class care, state-of-the-art animal habitats, and commitment to animal welfare have earned our parks recognition as global leaders in the zoological community.

- Our animals live in safe, sophisticated habitats and receive world-class care.
- Our more than **1,500 zoological team members** are committed to the care of all of the animals in our facilities.
- Our advanced programming includes behavioral enrichment, preventive health, veterinary medicine and facilities design and management.

Our programs and policies are recognized by many federal and state laws, including the Animal Welfare Act, Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act and other comprehensive regulations.

The quality of care we provide these animals is further evidenced through the stringent accreditation process of two of the foremost professional zoological organizations to which we belong: The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks & Aquariums (AMMPA). **Fewer than 10 percent of the animal exhibitors in the U.S. are AZA accredited.** The accreditation process for both these organizations is rigorous, and includes a detailed accreditation application as well as a multiple day on-site inspection by a team of experts from around the country. According to AZA, **SeaWorld is “meeting or exceeding the highest standard of animal care and welfare of any zoological organization in the world.”**

**“Our advanced programming includes behavioral enrichment, preventive health, veterinary medicine and facilities design and management.”**





To ask questions about the care of our animals,  
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