

# Spring 2011 iNDepth

A Deeper Look into the Newport Aquarium

NEWPORT AQUARIUM™  
A Million Gallons Of Fun

## Passholders Only

### Special Annual Passholders Penguin Palooza Preview

After months of planning & construction, the Newport Aquarium is proud to introduce our new exhibit that will have the whole town



talking. And Annual Passholders have the chance to see it before anyone else at our special Preview Event. Please join us when open the doors early on Saturday, March 26 from 9 to 10 a.m. It opens to the public at 10 a.m., but our valued passholders will be among the first to see it. No RSVP needed. Just show up with your Annual Pass.

In addition to the great new features in the new Penguin Palooza exhibit, you'll also have a chance to see two of the Aquarium's newest penguins. After another successful breeding season, there's a new Gentoo chick and a new Chinstrap chick in the collection. The Gentoo chick was born in December and now weighs 5.22kg. The Chinstrap chick was born in January and now weighs 3.32kg.

"We know our Passholders have gotten to know our penguins over the years," said Ric Urban, curator of birds and mammals for the Aquarium. "It's exciting that when they see the new exhibit, they'll also get to see these new chicks. With as often as some Passholders visit, they'll literally be able to watch the chicks grow up before their eyes."

### New 'Penguin Palooza' Set to Open March 26

It's a penguin party, and everyone is invited. Penguin Palooza, the brand new exhibit at Newport Aquarium, promises loads of penguin fun and one of the most diverse collections of cold weather penguins on display in the country. Opening on March 26, Penguin Palooza – sponsored by Kroger – will feature new species, a new habitat for the birds and new interactive opportunities for guests.

See the cool new Rockhopper penguins as they join the King, Gentoo and Chinstrap penguins in the exhibit. Sit right next to the 8,000-gallon tank in the new seating area and come face-to-face with the penguins as they swim and play. Enjoy the new interactive area, the Penguin Playground, where you can learn more about penguin habitats and conservation and take your picture next to life-size penguin sculptures. And don't miss the Aquarium's newest live show, featuring a presenter who will entertain guests with penguin facts and interact with several animated penguin characters on a new high definition video board, all made exclusively for the Aquarium's Penguin Palooza Exhibit.

For more details on the brand-new Penguin Palooza Exhibit, [click here](#) to visit the Exhibits page on the Aquarium web site.



### Get Ready for Sweet Pea's Birthday

Newport Aquarium will celebrate the birthday of one of its most unique animals, the rare Shark Ray, Sweet Pea. From April 23 through May 1, join the party with special weekend activities and fun for the whole family, including a special visit from our friends at Radio Disney on April 23 and April 30 from 2 to 4 p.m. Although Sweet Pea's actual birth date is a mystery, the Aquarium celebrates the anniversary from the date the Aquarium acquired her. When she made her debut, Sweet Pea was the very first Shark Ray on display in the Western Hemisphere. In February 2007, Scooter, a male Shark Ray joined her in the Aquarium's Surrounded by Sharks exhibit, making them the stars of the first Shark Ray breeding program in the world.



Special Thanks to our  
Kingdom of Penguins  
Exhibit Sponsor



## Biologist Profile

### Dan Clady

Some animals at the Aquarium require a little more hands-on attention than others. When the penguins are moved, the alligators need a water change or when Mighty Mike is brought in, those hands usually belong to Dan Clady, senior rainforest biologist.



With the Aquarium since April 2004 when he was brought in to help with the opening of the Rainforest exhibit, Dan's responsibilities include taking care of the animals in the rainforest exhibit, looking after the Aquarium's alligator collection and assisting in the care of the penguins. He had previously worked at the Cincinnati Zoo in the birdhouse.

"I like the hands-on aspect you get with these animals," he said. "You don't get to do that with the fish and some of the other animals."

Dan is a 1998 graduate of Miami University with a degree in zoology. He also volunteered for a wildlife rehab facility in northern Ohio, where he grew up, before moving to this area.

"I love working at the Aquarium," he said. "It's a great work environment, and there's always something fun to do."



Swainson Blue Mountain Lorikeet  
*Trichoglossus haematodus moluccanus*

### Mighty Mike Amazes Masses

Have you seen him yet? The largest alligator in the country outside of Florida currently calls Newport Aquarium home. His name is Mighty Mike and he's a 14-foot long, 800-pound American alligator. In other words, he is a gigantic.

"We wanted to do something big for our guests to kick off 2011," said Ric Urban, curator of birds and mammals at Newport Aquarium. "It doesn't get much bigger than Mighty Mike."

The story of how Mighty Mike, believed to be around 50 years old, became the over-sized ambassador for crocodylian conservation is one of luck and timing. In 2000, there was concern when an 800-pound alligator began living near a boat dock on Lake Talquin, Florida. Especially large alligators are considered threats to the local residents. Wildlife authorities declared the animal a nuisance and ordered it destroyed, as required by state law. However, the trapper who caught the giant alligator knew it was special because of his size. He asked local reptile expert Bruce Shwedick, now Mighty Mike's keeper, to provide the alligator with a new home.

In addition to caring for Mighty Mike in Florida, Shwedick travels with him around the country. He says because of his size and his backstory, Mighty Mike is a champion for conservation.

Mighty Mike is on temporary loan to the Aquarium from a private collection in Florida. Be sure to see him before he leaves in early May.



### Animal Care Update

*Note: This is one column in a series from Aquarium Veterinarian Dr. Peter Hill and Aquarium Animal Health Specialist Jolene Hanna about updates on the wellness of our animals.*

The Aquarium's Vet Lab staff recently focused our attention on snakes. We currently have five varieties of boa constrictor in the collection: Emerald tree boa, Rainbow boa, Madagascar tree boa, Amazon tree boa and the Red tail boa. Our goal with this year's physical exams was to establish consistent thyroid levels with this group. Snakes' thyroid glands are directly involved with shedding cycles and growth. By gaining information on normal levels of this hormone within our boa constrictor collection, we can actively manage our snakes' health and wellness.



Rainbow Boa  
*Epicratis cenchria*

Special Thanks to our  
World Rivers  
Exhibit Sponsor



## Passholders Only cont...

### Family Overnight Adventure Saturday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m.

More awe-inspiring than sleeping under the stars, the Sleep with the Sharks Family Overnight Adventure lets families spend the night with more than 55 sharks and thousands of aquatic animals from around the world.



The fun begins at 7:30 p.m. Friday and continues until 9 a.m. on Saturday.

- Activities for different age groups and families including a Behind the Scenes Tour and an Animal Encounter
- Snack provided
- Sleeping with the fishes
- Cereal breakfast in the morning

Overnight Adventures are normally reserved for larger groups, so take advantage of this opportunity for your family.

#### Annual Passholders

- **\$25 for children** (6-12 years old)
- **\$30 for adults** (13 and older)

#### Annual Passholder Guests

- **\$40 for children** (6-12 years old)
- **\$50 for adults** (13 and older)

Due to the nature of this event, children under the age of 6 can not be accommodated.

Space is limited, so make your reservations now. Visit the Information Desk in the Newport Aquarium lobby or call (859) 261-7444 and ask for "Passholder Overnight Reservations" by March 14. Your non-refundable payment is due when you make your reservation.

Due to space and safety concerns, air mattresses can not be accommodated. Newport Aquarium reserves the right to cancel events. If cancelled, every effort will be made to contact guests with reservations and payments will be refunded.

### Easy Being Green

*Note: This is one column in a series from Aquarium Husbandry Director Chris Pierson about tips that every family can use to be more eco-friendly.*

The Penguin exhibit at the Newport Aquarium is kept at 30 degrees year round. With just a few inches of insulation separating the hot summer sun from our freezing Antarctic penguins, any noticeable energy loss is unacceptable. So while we had access to the ceiling of the penguin exhibit during our exhibit renovation, our engineering staff took the opportunity to add insulation. We're estimating nearly 10 percent energy savings, just in this space. You too can make similar strides at home. Read up on ways you can make your home more thermally efficient. Remember: we can choose to create a healthier world for each other every day.



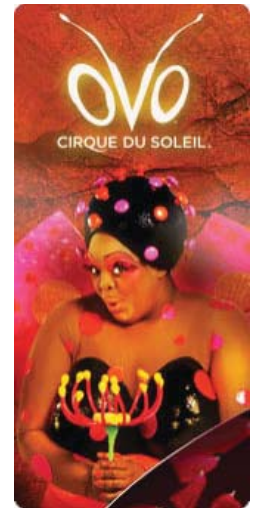
### WAVE Launches E-Store

Looking for that perfect gift for someone special? Check out the WAVE Foundation's new on-line store for a unique gift that will help support WAVE's conservation and education programs. Take part in the "Adopt a Fishy Friend" program, purchase an original piece of Penguin Art, or purchase other WAVE Foundation merchandise all on-line and have them sent directly to you. [Click here](#) to view the WAVE Foundation's on-line store.



### Special Offer: See OVO by Cirque du Soleil

Cirque du Soleil is coming back to town with the new OVO show, and Newport Aquarium has a great offer for you and your family to see it. Stop by the Aquarium to pick up a coupon for 15 percent off select seats and performances. Note: you must purchase the tickets on-line with the coupon code to receive the offer. Coupons will not be accepted at the box office. The offer is valid through May 15. OVO by Cirque du Soleil is a headlong rush into a colorful ecosystem teeming with life, where insects work, eat, crawl, flutter, play, fight and look for love in a non-stop riot of energy and movement. Performances open on April 21 under the Big Top at Coney Island.



Special Thanks to  
our Sponsor



## Did you know...?

### Rockhopper Penguins

Among its many new features, the Penguin Palooza Exhibit-sponsored by Kroger - will host a new penguin species: the Rockhopper penguin.



Six Rockhopper penguins will join the Aquarium's King, Gentoo and Chinstrap penguins already home to the cold penguin exhibit, making this display one of the most diverse penguin collections in the country.

Here's more on the hoppin' little birds:

- Rockhoppers are among the smallest of the world's penguins, having an average length of around 20 inches, and an average weight of about 6.5 pounds.
- Rockhoppers are distinguishable from other penguin species due to their unusual color and cresting. A yellow stripe above each eye projects into a yellow crest, and these are joined behind the head by a black occipital crest.
- Their eyes are red, the short bulbous bill is reddish brown, and the feet and legs are pink.
- A recent large-scale decline in the Rockhopper population in the wild has caused the species to be placed on the globally threatened list.

### Plan Ahead for Great Group Deals

Specialty Weekends and Home School Days are a great way for groups to experience everything the Aquarium has to see and do at a great price. For more information or to book your group visit on these specialty days listed below, call the Group Sales line at (859) 815-1471.

#### Faith Weekend March 12-13

Newport Aquarium will be hosting members of churches with an amazing deal - only \$12 per person, a savings of \$10 off general admission. Tickets must be purchased in advance of your visit by phone, fax, mail order or on-line. Order deadline is March 9.



#### Home School Days May 3-4

Visit the Newport Aquarium during the 2011 Home School Days. Join hundreds of other home-school families and learn about sharks, penguins, sea turtles and frogs. Purchase tickets for just \$11 each. Tickets must be purchased in advance of your visit by phone, fax, mail order or on-line. Home School families can enhance the school day with a Classroom Experience. Order deadline is April 29.

#### Scout's Honor Weekend May 14-15

Join hundreds of local girl and boy scouts and explore the Newport Aquarium. We will have special mascot appearances and animal encounters throughout the weekend. Purchase tickets for just \$11 each. Tickets must be purchased in advance of your visit by phone, fax, mail order or on-line. Order deadline is May 11.

Scouts also can join us in the Riverside Room for a 45-minute "Career Talk" presentation with a Newport Aquarium Biologist and a Newport Aquarium Diver. The session ends with a live animal encounter. This is a great activity to help fulfill individual patch or badge requirements. Career Talk tickets are \$5 per person (and requires an admission ticket to the Newport Aquarium).



#### How To Order:

Phone: (859) 815-1471 | Fax: (859) 261-3300 | [www.newportaquarium.com](http://www.newportaquarium.com)