



Have a Whale of a Time: Celebrate the Gray Whale at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa Monica, CA – Come celebrate the annual migration of the Pacific gray whale during “Whale of a Weekend,” February 19th & 20th at Heal the Bay’s Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, 1600 Ocean Front Walk, located beach level at the Santa Monica Pier. A host of whale-related activities will be ongoing both days from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. Visitors can feel the heft of a whale rib, check out bristly baleen and try on a layer of (simulated) whale blubber for warmth. Kids of all ages can have their faces painted and make a whale visor to take home.

The latest artifacts on display are two large segments of whale baleen, donated to the Aquarium by the Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito. Baleen are plates with hard bristles inside a whale’s mouth that trap and filter small organisms for nourishment. Learn more interesting facts about these gentle giants at the Aquarium through story time, film screenings and staff presentations on the impact of climate change on local marine life. Aquarium naturalists, along with representatives of the American Cetacean Society, will staff a wildlife observation station at the west end of the Santa Monica Pier. Those who stop by are welcome to spy for whales through binoculars and field guides will be available to identify local birds and other local marine life visible from the western end of the Pier.

Admission is free for children 12 and under when accompanied by an adult. For those 13 and older, a \$5 donation is suggested, with a minimum \$3 admission per person required. For groups of 10 or more, the fee is \$2 per person, regardless of age. Call 310-393-6149 for more information or visit our website at www.healthebay.org/smpa.

About the SMPA

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium is Heal the Bay's marine education facility located beach-level, just below the Carousel, at the Santa Monica Pier. The Aquarium is open to the general public during [public hours](#) and attracts more than 85,000 visitors per year. Since Heal the Bay acquired the Aquarium in 2003 from UCLA, more than 300,000 visitors have been welcomed during public hours and approximately 80,000 students have been educated during in-house [education programs](#).

About Heal the Bay

Heal the Bay is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to making Southern California coastal waters and watersheds, including Santa Monica Bay, safe, healthy and clean. We use research, education, community action and advocacy to pursue our mission.