

# Micro Biologists Fall 2016 Curriculum

## **September 26: Pollution Makes Me Sea Sick**

Here at the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium, we believe good environmental stewardship starts early. With lessons that follow the trail of pollution down the watershed into the ocean, students will see how careless behavior can affect the health of our oceans and threaten wildlife. Most importantly, through games and stories, students will learn how to prevent pollution and keep our oceans clean and healthy

## **October 17: Kelp Forests: Forests Under the Sea**

Southern California is home to a diverse and unique habitat, called the kelp forest. In this class, students will learn all about the animals that call the kelp forest home, various fun facts about algae, and why it is so important to humans (think ice cream)!

## **October 31: Halloween at the Aquarium**

In this Halloween-themed class, kids will discover the many marine animals that appear “costumed” as other animals, including the elephant seal, frogfish, and butterfly fish. Other animals may appear strange or spooky, such as the vampire squid, ghost shrimp, goblin shark, and the fangtooth/ogre fish. The dangers of littering will also be reinforced with a fun, active game of “catch the candy wrapper”.

## **November 14: Ocean Life Large and Small/From the Biggest Whale to the Tiniest Crab**

This class introduces the concept of food chains, using some basic ocean food chains as examples. Food Chains and food webs illustrate the transfer of energy through organisms in an ecosystem. The class will also focus on the size of animals in the ocean, specifically very small and very large animals.

## **November 28: Ocean Commotion**

Wow, it's a noisy ocean! Micro Biologists will spend the day learning about all kinds of ocean sounds. We'll listen the vocalizations of blue whales and sea lions and do our best to click like dolphins and scritch-scratch like crabs.

## **December 5: Funny Fish Faces: Adaptations of the Sea**

The focus of this class is the adaptations of marine animals. Adaptations; behavioral and physical characteristics that aid in survival, exist in all organisms and are generally suited to the specific environment of that organism. Adaptations discussed in this class are camouflage (halibut, kelp fish, pipe fish) body shape (pipe fish, halibut), defenses (sea cucumber guts, puffer fish) feeding (kellet's whelk proboscis), and protection (kelp crab, sea urchin spines).

## **December 19: Cold Water Critters**

Just in time for winter, this class focuses on the adaptations and behaviors of cold-water marine animals, in particular penguins and polar bears. While having fun with a model iceberg activity and a water temperature demonstration, kids will learn about the characteristics of the North and South Poles. Students will experience the insulating properties of blubber first-hand, as well as the challenges faced by penguins to keep their eggs warm.