

tributaries

MAGAZINE OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM



From the President

If you build it, they will come.

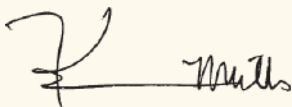
That's the premise of Area 51 and Area 53, the eerily named marine protected areas operated just off our coastline by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).

In this instance, they refer not to ghosts of baseball legends, aliens or other supernatural phenomena, but to imperiled fishes and species that might otherwise be overfished or depleted by other stressors. For almost two decades, SCDNR has kept the location of these areas secret, so that fish can spawn and congregate around artificial reefs without the pressure of commercial and recreational fishing. This increases the prospect that certain species, primarily snapper and grouper, can grow to maturity.

One persistent threat remains, however, in the form of voracious lionfish, an invasive species from Asia that has an insatiable appetite and no natural predator save one – humans. The South Carolina Aquarium is partnering with SCDNR to study the effects of removing lionfish from Areas 51 and 53, to determine changes to the abundance and diversity of other species.

Joining in the pursuit of knowledge and research about our marine environments is central to our mission. That's why the Aquarium is partnering with NOAA, South Carolina Sea Grant, the College of Charleston and others in staging the OCEANS 2018 conference in Charleston. This annual event brings together more than 2,500 of the world's leading scientists, technologists and oceanographers to examine critical marine issues and innovative solutions, and it is being held in the Southeast U.S. for the first time. The program is being completed as this issue goes to press, and you can learn more by visiting our website or oceansconference.org.

Our commitment to science and preserving the natural world is only made possible through the generous support of members like you. Thank you for helping us to protect what we love, and to sustain our oceans for future generations.



Kevin Mills, President and CEO



Leading the way to
connect people
with water, wildlife
and wild places.

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Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Aquarium News



Litter Sweeps Successful on Mosquito Beach

Alongside Island Breeze restaurant and Preserve the Gullah, a nonprofit focused on preserving the historical, economical and ecological legacy of the Gullah culture, we partnered to host a series of litter sweeps and educational programs throughout the summer to clean up the legendary Gullah Geechee community of Mosquito Beach on James Island. Despite pressure from developers, this waterfront community remains in its natural state, offering habitat for local wildlife. Using the Litter-free Digital Journal, a citizen science project of the South Carolina Aquarium, conservationists collected and logged hundreds of pieces of litter, including cigarette butts, straws, bottle caps, food wrappers and more.

Anyone can participate in or plan a litter sweep in their own community – visit scaquarium.org/citizenscience to learn more!



Becoming a Sensory-Inclusive Facility

We're working toward becoming a sensory-inclusive facility with the help of KultureCity, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating acceptance and inclusion for all individuals. Staff and volunteers will undergo training to better accommodate guests with sensory issues like autism, PTSD, Parkinson's, OCD, ADHD and stroke patients.

Some hurdles for guests with autism include bright lights, loud sounds, crowds and communication. Starting this November, we will have sensory kits available to help guests with autism and their families enjoy the Aquarium! Thanks to a grant from Volvo Car US Operations, the Lowcountry Autism Foundation will be able to test out the kits during a private Sensory Seas event onsite.

Kits include noise-cancelling headphones, fidget tools, maps that highlight quiet and sensory areas, identification tags and communication cards. These kits can be checked out free-of-charge upon arrival.



Renovations in the Saltmarsh Aviary

Beginning this fall, the Saltmarsh Aviary is undergoing some pretty significant upgrades! Along the perimeter of the exhibit, the mesh netting will be removed and replaced with new material. This will take approximately four months to complete. During this time, the Saltmarsh Aviary will be closed so that maintenance workers can place scaffolding inside the exhibit to make removal and replacement easy and efficient. Where will our birds go during this time, you might ask? Not to worry, they'll be enjoying a staycation in private quarters at Charles Towne Landing over in West Ashley until the renovations are complete! Stay tuned for details and updates.

What's Happening

SHRIMPING CLINIC WITH SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OCTOBER 20

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Melton Peter Demetre Park
(Sunrise Park), James Island

Get ready for shrimping season with this hands-on clinic in partnership with SCDNR and Good Catch partner, The Mills House – Wyndham Grand. Practice shrimping from a dock, learn the basics of shrimp baiting and get tips to make your shrimping efforts more successful. Afterwards, enjoy a Lowcountry boil! Recommended for ages 8 and up. \$15 per member. Reservations required; to reserve, call (843) 579-8518.



MORRIS ISLAND BOAT CHARTER WITH COASTAL EXPEDITIONS

OCTOBER 20

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Coastal Expeditions Shem Creek Campus

You can't go wrong with cruising over the inlet and viewing the Morris Island Lighthouse in the foreground. This outing is timed with a lower tide to allow for some walking on the nearshore bars that emerge around the lighthouse, giving photographers opportunities at different angles. As you take in the sights, you'll be greeted by a myriad of birds, dolphins and more! \$25 per member. Reservations required; to book, call Coastal Expeditions at (843) 884-7684.

SOUTHERN SPIRITS AN AFTER HOURS EVENT

OCTOBER 26

7 – 10 p.m.

Aquarium

Celebrate Halloween with spooktacular tastings of some of the best spirits in the South! Come in tasteful costume and prepare your palates to sample drinks from local distilleries and beyond. Sustainably sourced small plates from Good Catch partners, entertainment and a beer and wine bar are also provided with purchase of your all-inclusive ticket. Event is 21+. Tickets are \$45 each, and member tickets are \$40. Learn more at scaquarium.org/afterhours.

THE LITTLE GYM

NOVEMBER 6, DECEMBER 4,
JANUARY 8 & FEBRUARY 5

10 – 10:30 a.m.

Aquarium

The Little Gym helps lay the foundation for children to become coordinated, confident and involved little people through activities such as warm-ups to directive music, tumbling and more! Recommended for ages 2-5. Free for members. Registration opens one month in advance, and space is limited. Reservations required; to reserve, call (843) 579-8518.



SIRENS OF THE SEA TRACKING LOCAL MANATEE MIGRATIONS

NOVEMBER 6

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Aquarium

At this Holland Lifelong Learning session, learn all about the sirens of the sea! Manatees, enormous yet docile marine mammals, visit the South Carolina coast annually. Despite their size, they are rarely seen. Learn more about this elusive animal and what tracking studies are uncovering with retired SCDNR veterinarian Dr. Al Segars. Buy tickets at scaquarium.org/lifelonglearning.

DANCE MOVES

NOVEMBER 8, DECEMBER 13,
JANUARY 10 & FEBRUARY 7

10 – 10:30 a.m.

Aquarium

Join us for a fun and energetic class from Dance Moves of Charleston! Explore basic ballet moves, warm-ups and stretches, movements across the floor, jumping and turning. Boys and girls ages 2-6 are welcome. Comfortable clothing or dance attire recommended. Free for members. Registration opens one month in advance, and space is limited. Reservations required; to reserve, call (843) 579-8518.

There's always more to explore

[SCAQUARIUM.ORG/CALENDAR](http://scaquarium.org/calendar)

MEET THE KEEPER (REPTILES)

NOVEMBER 10

10:30 a.m. – noon

Aquarium

Join our herpetologist, Joshua Zalabak, on a fun “edventure” and learn what it’s like to care for some of our scaly animals at the Aquarium. Find out how he handles venomous snakes, watch as he feeds a snake and learn how he gives Alabaster the albino alligator his annual physical. Recommended for ages 6 and up. \$5 per participant; chaperones attend free.

Reservations required; to reserve, call (843) 579-8518.

OYSTERFEST AN AFTER HOURS EVENT

NOVEMBER 16

7:30 – 10:30 p.m.

Aquarium

It’s open season for Lowcountry oyster harvesting! Join us for a shuckin’ good time at our biannual oyster festival featuring some of Charleston’s finest local cuisine and seafood fare. Sustainably sourced small plates from Good Catch partners, entertainment and a beer and wine bar are also provided with purchase of your all-inclusive ticket. Event is 21+. VIP tickets are \$75, general tickets are \$50 and member tickets are \$45. Learn more at scaquarium.org/afterhours.

TADPOLE EXPLORERS

NOVEMBER 17

8 – 9 a.m.

Aquarium

Guests from ages 1-3 get the Aquarium all to themselves! Enjoy stations in the Lower Ocean Gallery including animal encounters and foam block building. Snacks, coffee and muffins will be provided. \$10 per toddler; two adults free per toddler. Reservations required; to reserve, call (843) 579-8518.

HOMESCHOOL EXPLORERS CLUB OCEAN EXPLORATION

NOVEMBER 28

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Aquarium

Especially for homeschooling families! Come discover the world of ocean exploration. Learn why we explore, how we explore, what has been discovered, and who explores our oceans. Take home new ideas about how you can protect and conserve our planet’s oceans from the waves on our beaches to the deepest ecosystems in the world. Member tickets are \$9.50 (grades K-8) and \$13.50 (grades 9-12). Learn more at scaquarium.org/homeschool. To buy tickets, call (843) 577-FISH (3474).



HAVANA NIGHTS SEA LIFE BY STARLIGHT PARTY

DECEMBER 8

8 – 11 p.m.

Aquarium

Celebrate the holidays in steamy Havana Nights style and support a bright future for sea turtles at the 8th annual Sea Life by Starlight. Come salsa under the sea and enjoy delicious small plates from our Good Catch partners, an open bar, live music, dazzling entertainment and a silent auction – all included with your ticket. Wearing your finest Havana Nights attire, cha-cha-châ for the sea turtles until your fedora falls off. It will be a sultry night you won’t forget! Event is 21+. Buy tickets at scaquarium.org/slbsl.

HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA

DECEMBER 17

6 – 8 p.m.

Aquarium

Join us for a festive, family-friendly evening celebration! Enjoy light refreshments, pictures with Santa, cookie decorating stations, holiday crafts and animal encounters. Shop for friends and family with a one-day-only 20% discount in the Aquarium Gift Shop. \$10 per member adult; \$5 per member child; children 2 and under free. Registration opens November 1. Reservations required; to reserve, call (843) 579-8518.

LEGEND: MEMBERS ONLY / PUBLIC EVENT



Artificial Reefs:

CREATING UNDERWATER COMMUNITIES

WHAT'S IN THE WATER?

One glimpse in our Great Ocean Tank, a window to the underwater world, reveals the ocean is teeming with life. But similar to what you see across the Lowcountry horizon, most of the seafloor offshore is pretty flat. Though you can find underwater rock formations, called hard-bottom habitats, they aren't as abundant as we assume. With few natural habitats for marine life to safely stay and grow, where can they go? Artificial reef sites are giving fish populations a fin up with help from humankind.

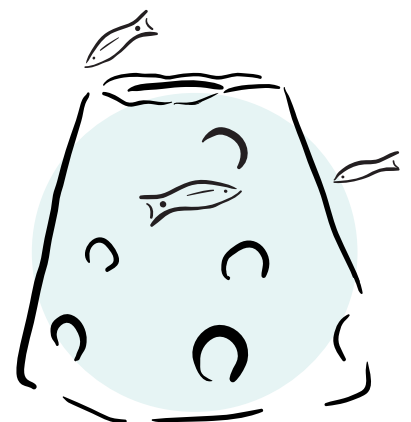
Artificial reefs are man-made structures serving as underwater apartment buildings for marine life. Currently, 48 sites comprised of thousands of artificial reefs are maintained by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). Bob Martore, artificial

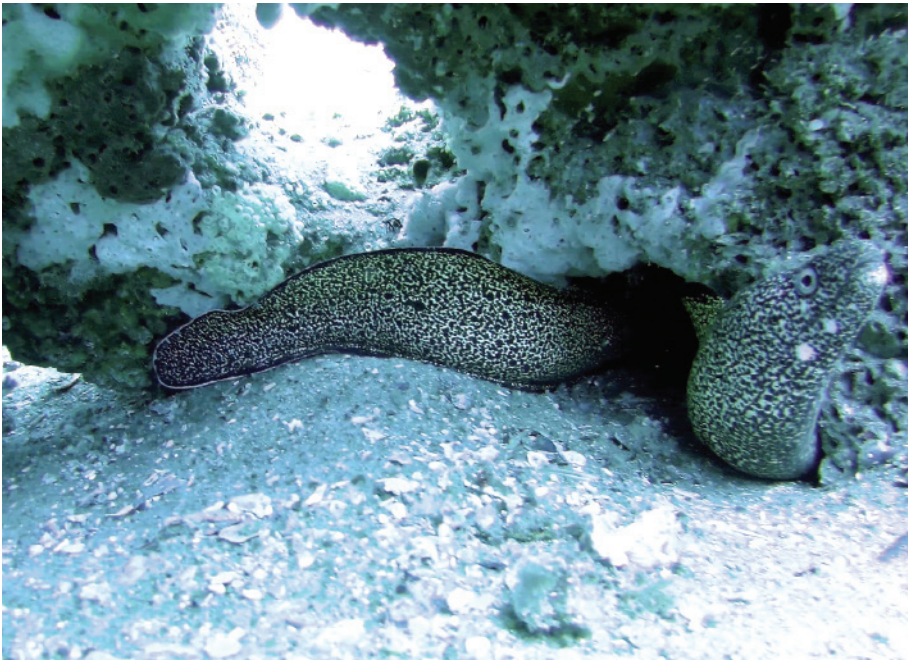
reef coordinator at SCDNR, and his team focus their daily efforts on helping local fish populations thrive by constructing and continuously improving artificial reef sites.

So what is an artificial reef?

Dotted across the seafloor off South Carolina lies a variety of artificial reefs that were purposefully sunk. This includes hundreds of vessels, such as old ships, tugboats or barges. You'll even find a Coast Guard cutter and the hull of a Navy destroyer submerged below. Some unconventional structures include things you wouldn't typically see in the water, such as army tanks and New York City subway cars. There's a bit of Charleston history beneath the sea, too. Tons of concrete rubble from the demolition of the old Cooper River bridges is currently underwater, functioning as a habitat for many

types of marine life. In addition to sinking pre-made structures, SCDNR also creates their own. They design molds to make box and cone-shaped reefs out of concrete, using PVC pipes to construct holes through which the fish can swim in and out.





BUILDING SAFE SPACES TO GROW UP

Martore and his team's hard work has immediate impacts as well as long-term benefits. Fish show up on artificial reefs within hours; after a year, a complete community can be seen swimming throughout. Sometimes a celebrity sea creature moves in too, like a nurse shark or a spotted moray!

Because of their varying shapes, sizes and locations, artificial reefs help fish throughout their life stages. Many species stay close to shore when they're younger because of plentiful food options and then swim offshore as they get older. Much like moving up a grade level in school, the differing artificial reefs act as stepping stones and serve as protective habitats as they age. When they outgrow one reef and ocean depth, they swim on to another. Eventually, they reach adulthood and begin spawning to create more fish.

Take for example black sea bass and red snapper. Ten years ago, they were considered overfished and the federal government placed restrictions on catching them. However, when Martore would dive on the artificial

reef sites during construction and upkeep, he saw over time that black sea bass and red snapper populations were dramatically increasing. Just recently, a limited harvest season opened for red snapper for recreational and commercial fishermen. And since local black sea bass populations are thriving, they're considered a great sustainable seafood choice under our Good Catch guidelines!



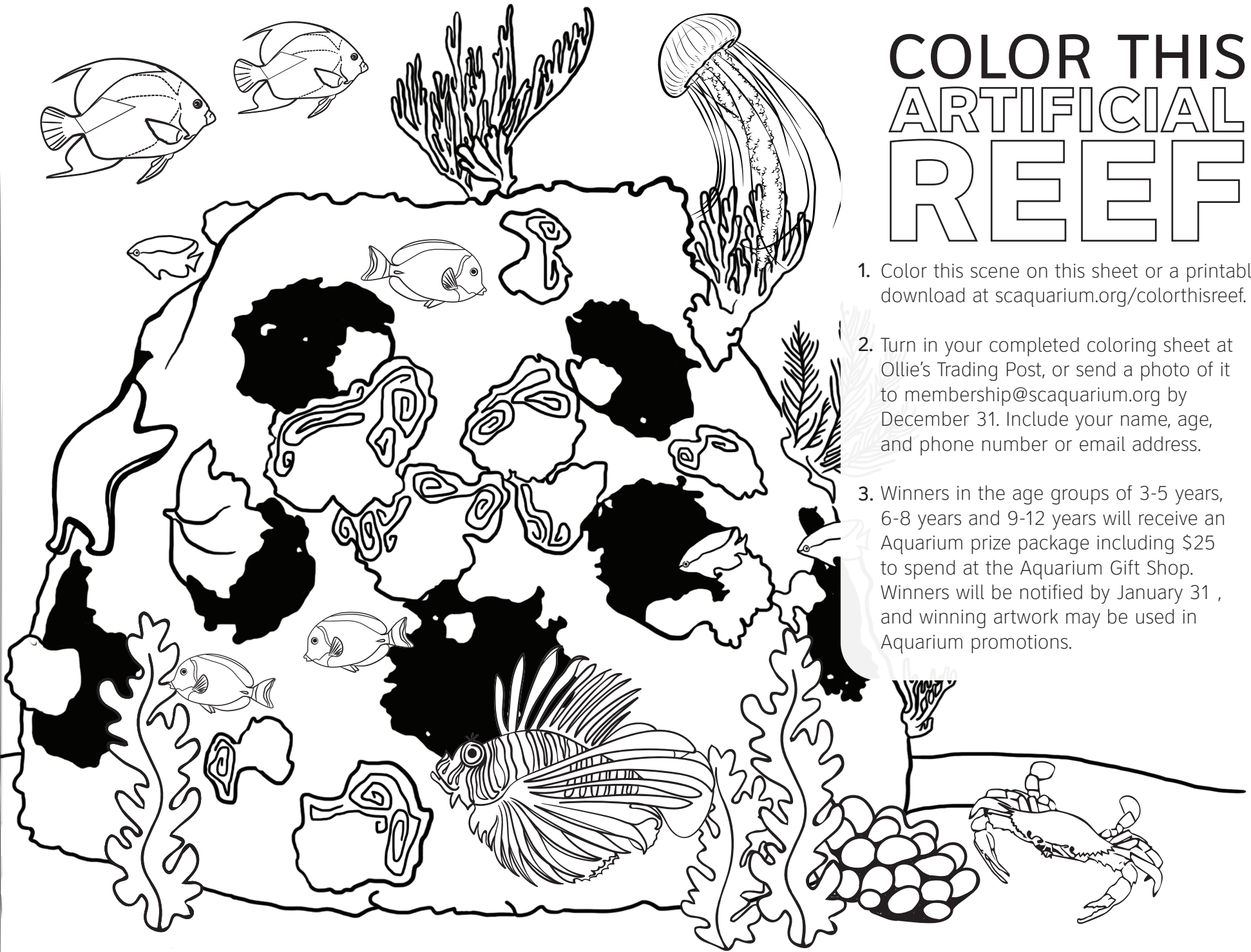
tribes

FOR KIDS



South Carolina
Aquarium

COLOR THIS ARTIFICIAL REEF

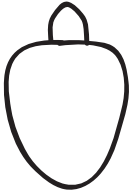


1. Color this scene on this sheet or a printable download at scaquarium.org/colorthisreef.
2. Turn in your completed coloring sheet at Ollie's Trading Post, or send a photo of it to membership@scaquarium.org by December 31. Include your name, age, and phone number or email address.
3. Winners in the age groups of 3-5 years, 6-8 years and 9-12 years will receive an Aquarium prize package including \$25 to spend at the Aquarium Gift Shop. Winners will be notified by January 31, and winning artwork may be used in Aquarium promotions.

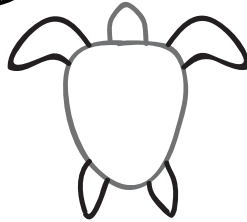
How to:

DRAW A SEA TURTLE

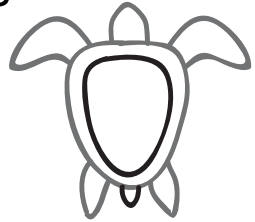
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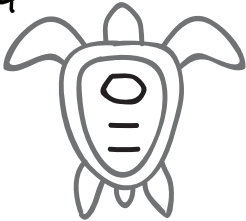
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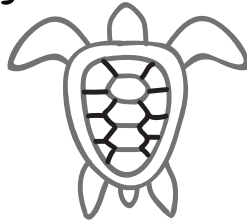
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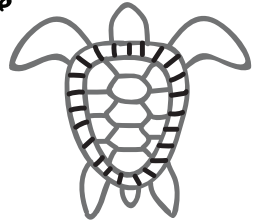
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WORD SEARCH

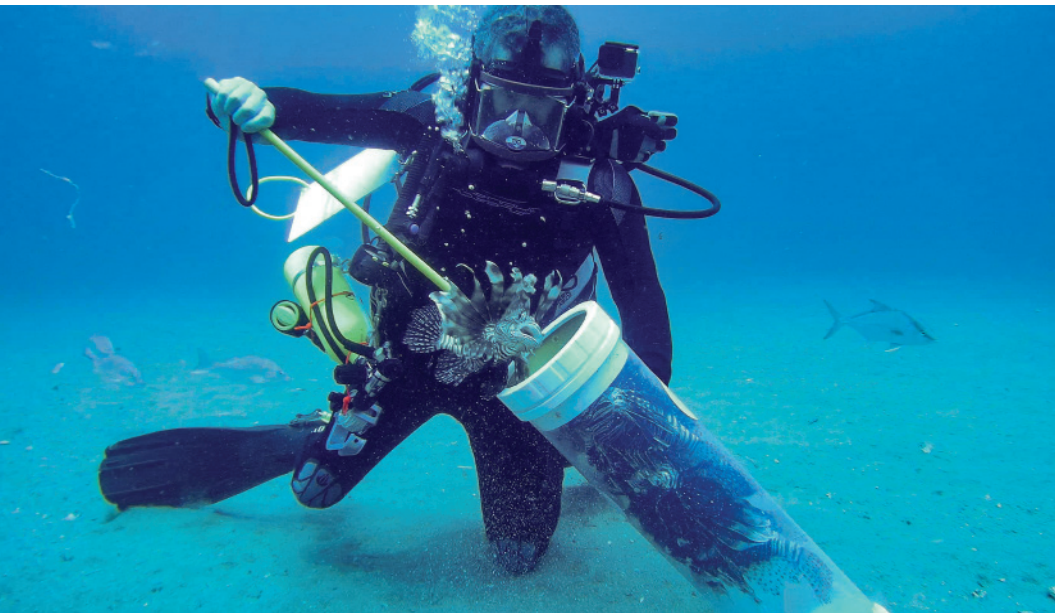
R O C S U R V E Y W
E C O L D I V E R U
E E N Z S H A R K M
F A E G R O U P E R
R N L I O N F I S H

Reef
Cone

Lionfish
Grouper

Diver
Ocean

Shark
Survey



Arnold Postell places a lionfish taken off of Area 53 into a Zookeeper, a specialized container that holds culled lionfish and protects divers from their venomous spines.

A PERMIT FOR EXTRA PROTECTION

Currently, most artificial reef sites are located in areas that both fish and fishermen can easily access. They are by fishing piers, in shallow water depths and areas where heavy boat traffic occurs. However, some sites hold such significance for maintaining a balanced ocean that they require extra protection to meet long-term goals.

Two artificial reef sites located 40+ miles offshore were recently designated as marine protected areas (MPAs) by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. These are the first of their kind in the nation! Under MPA guidelines, no bottom fishing is allowed here, unlike other artificial

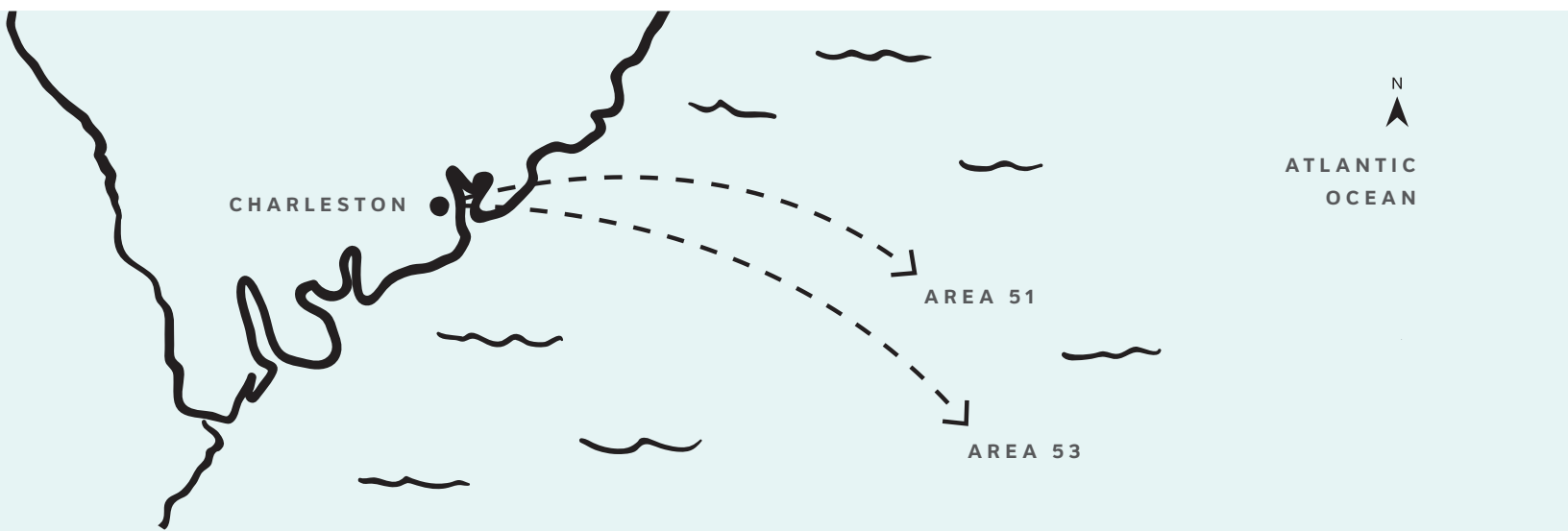
reef sites in South Carolina. For snapper and grouper species, who are pivotal in balancing the food chain, these MPAs are especially important. Not only do they take years to reach adulthood, but they also favor the deeper water for spawning.

Even though bottom fishing is banned in MPAs, they can still benefit fishermen down the road. If fish don't face the impending threat of being baited and caught, they grow with minimal threats in these protected habitats. In turn, they spawn and increase their population. Over time, the MPAs will become overcrowded and the fish will float into unprotected waters. This is known as "spillover." When spillover occurs, it's every fish for himself, and fishermen are free to catch!

REEF RESEARCH

Though these MPA designations help remove man as a predator, underwater threats still exist. After all, artificial reefs are still an attractive housing unit. Lionfish, invasive to the Atlantic Ocean, are a potent fish with venomous spines and a voracious appetite that have settled into natural and artificial reefs. They'll feast on anything and everything, but they're especially a threat to young fish living in the MPAs. If many don't reach adulthood because they're too tasty for lionfish to turn down, what will their population look like 20-30 years from now? We can't just sit back to wait and see.

Through the Aquarium's new Reef Research program – made possible through the generous support of Jordana and Scott Snider – our dive operations team is studying the impact of lionfish on these MPAs in the pilot research project. On a monthly basis, staff and volunteers are boating 90 minutes offshore to dive on the MPAs. Initially, we are removing lionfish from certain areas while leaving others untouched. We are also capturing underwater video footage to survey the surrounding fish, paying close attention to the different species and quantities. Hopefully, we'll be able to unmask the impact lionfish are having on local fish populations, in turn helping SCDNR with their efforts to develop effective fish management programs for the future.



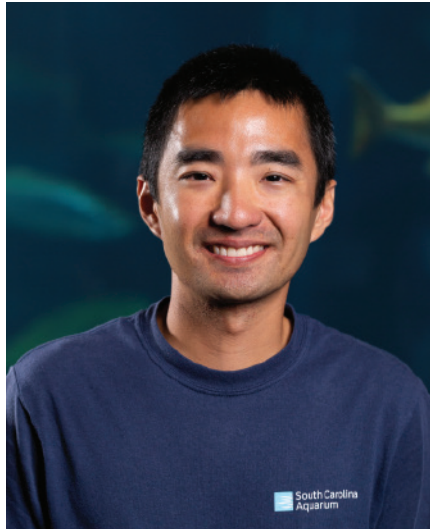
WHO'S BEHIND THE MASK? MEET THE DIVE OPERATIONS TEAM



Arnold Postell

Dive Safety Officer and Senior Biologist

Arnold's Aquarium tenure dates back before our doors opened! After graduating from the University of Georgia and a two-year research stint in the Costa Rican rainforest, Arnold returned to his native Charleston as the Aquarium's horticulturist. Soon after, Arnold became dive safety officer and biologist for the Great Ocean Tank. He's been instrumental in developing our dive program to meet commercial and scientific dive standards and gain membership into the American Association of Underwater Sciences (AAUS). He also helped formulate dive safety guidelines and manuals for Association of Zoos and Aquariums facilities. Aligning with his personal and professional experiences in the dive industry, Arnold is the principal investigator for Reef Research. He manages all facets of the program, including lionfish removal efforts.



Ryan Yuen

Assistant Dive Safety Officer

Ryan is a California transplant who has worked as a diver, aquarist and instructor in various facilities throughout the Golden State. He's also a trained AAUS scientific diver and participated in thresher shark research in the Philippines. Currently, Ryan is our scuba safety guru and gear repair technician at the Aquarium. He's leading diver training for Reef Research as well as facilitating dive safety protocol and capturing footage offshore.



Markus Pallos

Research/Maintenance Diver

Markus' diving career has led him from Massachusetts to around the globe. He's worked as a divemaster and instructor in Indonesia, Florida, the British Virgin Islands and Vietnam. He's also participated in numerous artificial reef monitoring projects worldwide, giving him ample experience for Reef Research. A former intern with the Aquarium, Markus now works full-time helping organize the dive research trips, including captaining the boat, capturing footage and creating diver training materials.

FOLLOW REEF RESEARCH

Interested in seeing what our divers discover? Follow along on our social media channels for footage and updates.

For more information on our work, visit

scaquarium.org/reef-research.

Conservation Matters

GIVE THE GIFT OF GREEN

At the South Carolina Aquarium, we're committed to conserving water, wildlife and wild places. As the season of giving starts, so does the search for the perfect present. Why not protect what you love and give gifts that give back to the planet this holiday season? Below are some sustainable and conservation-minded options sure to spread cheer throughout the year!



1 Gift your loved one with a South Carolina Aquarium membership. Not only can members visit the Aquarium as often as they like, but they'll receive exclusive benefits like special discounts, invitations to member-only events, a subscription to our member magazine and more. It's truly the gift that keeps on giving!



2 Do you have a seafood lover on your list? Get them a gift card to one of our Good Catch partner restaurants! Good Catch partners serve a higher percentage of sustainable seafood sourced from southeast regional fisheries, and Platinum partners also commit to reducing their single-use plastic use. For a full list of our Good Catch partners, visit scaquarium.org/goodcatch.



3 Continue to help create healthy habits by gifting other alternatives to single-use plastic, such as reusable bags, water bottles and coffee cups, produce bags, sandwich wrappers, eating utensils and even toothbrushes! There are tons of eco-friendly substitutes for everyday items, so you can help your loved ones minimize their plastic waste and maximize our planet's health and well-being.



4 Shop for the sea turtles with Strawesome and Aardvark Straws. Strawesome has reusable glass straws and Aardvark Straws has paper straws for purchase, each perfect alternatives to single-use plastic straws. They're both adorned with adorable sea turtles so your friends and family can suck in style! Lastly, a portion of the proceeds from sales go toward our Sea Turtle Care Center™.



5 Invest in the Aquarium's mission in honor of a friend or family through Pillars of Support. With a gift starting at \$500, your loved one's name will be beautifully and artistically displayed on a legacy fish on one of four lighted pillars, prominently exhibited within the Aquarium's Great Hall. Learn more at scaquarium.org/pillars-support.



6 Help your friends make their daily skincare routine a daily earth care routine, too! Many skincare items and over-the-counter drugs, especially exfoliators, contain plastic microbeads that go down the drain and into our waterways. Make a DIY body scrub out of coconut oil and sugar or honey and oats. And don't forget the eco-friendly container! Mason jars are durable, made in many different sizes and are great for homemade gifts.



NEWSPAPERS
make great wrapping
(and reading) material



BROWN PAPER BAGS
carrying groceries can then be
used to carry gifts



FABRIC
is a durable and decorative option for
gifts of odd shapes and sizes



COLORED YARN
is a fun twist on ways
to tie up a gift



CRAFT RIBBON
comes in many designs and adds the
perfect finishing touch



SCRAP PAPER BOWS
are simple to make and a great way to
reuse old paperwork

GREEN UP YOUR GIFT WRAPPING

The possibilities are truly endless,
so don't be afraid to get creative!

What's Your Story?

The Establishment

Nestled amid the palm-lined streets and historic brick buildings characteristic of the Holy City, you'll find one of Charleston's newest seafood restaurants, The Establishment. Dedicated to sourcing fresh ingredients directly from local farmers and fishermen, executive chef Matt Canter has always placed special emphasis on supporting sustainable seafood and other tenets of the Aquarium's mission.



The Establishment became a Good Catch platinum partner before opening its doors, vowing that at least 50% of its seafood would be locally and sustainably sourced and that they would do away with single-use plastic. The restaurant also recognized that more could be done to ensure that diners not only enjoyed a fine selection of seafood dishes, but that while doing so they were educated on the importance of maintaining a balanced ocean.

The culmination of their goals and discussions with the Aquarium's team was the creation of a quarterly dinner series beginning this fall at The Establishment. Featuring Arnold Postell, principal investigator of Reef Research, these dinners will showcase the team's current findings and ongoing fieldwork efforts. Additionally, they'll highlight the importance of removing invasive species, such as lionfish, and how the community can play a part in protecting our oceans, both locally and globally. Each dinner will comprise wine pairings alongside an exclusive menu specially created to coincide with the discussion. A portion of proceeds from each dinner will directly support the Reef Research program, creating a sustainable funding stream to support the continuation of our important ocean conservation work.

As an advocate for ocean health and conservation, The Establishment is excited to host members of the Aquarium family any night of the week, including all of you!

Show your membership card while dining at The Establishment and you and your guests will be warmly welcomed with a complimentary champagne toast for the table.

What's your story?

THE WATERSHED CAMPAIGN
Come together at
scaquarium.org/watershed

How it's Made: Kids Coast

We are excited to introduce the completion of Kids Coast this fall with the addition of a new interactive wall dedicated to connecting young explorers with STEM schematics. Kids Coast was the ideation of an early learning initiative brainstorm for the Watershed Campaign, aimed at expanding the Aquarium's education programming to toddlers and our pre-K audience. Phase II of Kids Coast encompasses an exciting environment where children can learn nature-based concepts through discovery and exploration. These concepts include water movement, oxygenation, mechanics, engineering, simple machines and more!

HOW DID WE BRING THIS EXHIBIT TO LIFE?

The Aquarium is lucky to have extremely talented staff that can take a concept, turn it into a vision and then produce what members and guests will see in our main galleries. The rendering you see here is the exhibit blueprint, created by our own Kevin Kampwerth, director of brand identity and Aquarium experience. Next, our exhibit specialists Jon and Nigel took that 2-dimensional depiction and turned it into reality. This included weeks of research, trial and error and creative imaginations. After creating a series of prototypes that underwent numerous tests and modifications to ensure functionality, the final product was sent



to a professional fabricator to be laser cut for in-house assembly.

Once received, it's on to installation by our exhibits team. Look for the newest addition along the second-floor corridor near the existing Kids Coast play area, officially opening in October!

Kids Coast came to life thanks to a \$150,000 grant from the PNC Foundation, which is funded by the PNC Financial Services Group, the parent company of PNC Bank.



AN ARTIST'S RENDERING OF KIDS COAST



Sea Turtle Care Center™ Update



WHAT'S CURRENT WITH OUR EXERCISE TANK



With the inception of our in-house research facility, the McNair Center for Sea Turtle Conservation and Research, we've had more opportunity than ever before to study the best healing techniques for our sea turtle patients, particularly through our new exercise tank. At 3,142 gallons, this rectangular tank is the second largest tank in the Sea Turtle Care Center. It can function as an "endless pool" with a continuous current simulated by four small jets and one large river jet. Providing exercise and therapy opportunities for our patients, it allows them to "stretch their flippers" before release into the wild.

Since its installation, Sea Turtle Care Center staff, under the

guidance of the McNair Family chief veterinarian Dr. Shane Boylan, has been assessing behavioral shifts depending on the level of current. Two loggerheads and three kemp's ridleys have utilized (or exercised in) this tank so far. Preliminary results suggest that a rectangular shape promotes increased activity more than a rounded tank in both species. Additionally, results indicate that the jets are not powerful enough to significantly modify loggerhead swimming behavior. However, the exercise tank does promote swimming by Kemp's ridleys in its current set up.

Our ongoing goal is to evaluate and increase rehabilitation success across all species of sea turtles and prepare our patients for the best chance of survival after release. Currently, staff is using it for weekly physical therapy sessions for one of our longer-term patients, Kathy, who suffers from spinal trauma.

Based on our observations so far, we believe this multifaceted tank has the potential to revolutionize the sea turtle rehabilitation process and is a great addition to the Sea Turtle Care Center and the McNair Center for Sea Turtle Conservation and Research.



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Nights

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8
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