The Tennessee Aquarium Launches a New Initiative with Chef Alton Brown

SERVE & PROTECT

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD
“Do you eat seafood?” That’s almost always the first question I get asked when people find out I study fish for a living. Along with many other biologists, my answer used to be an enthusiastic yes. I’m part of the food chain, and I love the many regional types of seafood, from shrimp po-boys or lobster rolls to fish tacos and cedar-smoked salmon. Lately, though, my yes has been a little less enthusiastic.

Every day we make decisions on what to eat. We may choose foods that are healthy, foods that are part of our cultural heritage, foods that are less damaging to our environment, or foods that reflect our moral values. Our decisions about whether to eat seafood are tied up in all of these reasons. There is no doubt seafood is healthy and is part of our cultural heritage. Some people may choose not to eat it because they are vegetarians. For me, the most difficult choice involves the impact on our environment.

Our ocean has been seemingly limitless in providing bounty for centuries. Because more than 70 percent of the Earth’s surface is ocean, we assumed that we would never run out of fish. Unfortunately, fish aren’t distributed evenly in the ocean, and our fishing methods have become so sophisticated that in some cases we are able to track individual fish. Over the last century, many fisheries have
collapsed, and overfishing is listed as a top conservation threat to our ocean. Understanding why not all seafood is sustainable is the first step towards making better food choices for our environment.

The demand for large, predatory fish as a food source threatens the survival of many species that are still commercially fished. Bluefin tuna, Atlantic cod, Chilean sea bass and many others provide textbook examples of how not to manage fisheries as catch limits did not allow for adequate reproduction each year. Because many of these top predators cannot be caught in sufficient quantities anymore, we began “fishing down the food web” and relying on smaller, shorter-lived species like bonito, mackerels, and sardines, among others. While shifting our focus to these species can be more sustainable, we have to make sure that even these catch limits don’t push another group of species to the brink of extinction, leaving us with a not-so-appealing dinner of zooplankton. Yum.

Beyond the impact on individual species, we also have to think of the impact of our fishing methods on fish habitat. Trawls are large nets that drag across the ocean floor. They destroy habitat in reef environments but are less damaging over mud or sand bottoms. Trawls and other fishing gear like gill nets, drift nets, or longlines, are not very selective and also capture less-desirable species known as bycatch. Most of the bycatch, including turtles, birds and mammals, are killed or injured in the process, and are discarded overboard.

Aquaculture isn’t always the answer, either, though it is a rapidly growing part of the food economy. Roughly half of the fish that we now eat comes from fish farms. One of the main concerns for aquaculture is that it may not reduce the pressure on wild fisheries. “Growing” many species of popular fish that are at the top of the food chain requires feeding them large amounts of wild fish that could have served as a lower cost food for humans. In addition, while we have well-developed methods for sustainably raising some species, like trout or catfish, we still don't know how to efficiently raise many species of marine fishes for market.

Though the overfishing crisis is too complex to have a single solution, the good news is that we all can make changes in our daily choices that help the problem. It starts with a simple conversation with your grocery stores and restaurants to ask about where their seafood comes from and how it was caught or raised. We support fisheries in the United States for a number of reasons. We not only have some of the strongest regulations in the world for both wild fisheries and aquaculture, we also have the political ability to push for stronger regulations if they are needed. Temporary moratoriums on fisheries for striped bass and redfish, in particular, resulted in substantial recovery of those fisheries. Shrimp trawlers in the U.S. are required to use exclusion devices to help sea turtles from becoming bycatch.

Just as importantly, though, American waters are our local food source, with far lower costs of transportation than catfish or prawns from overseas. By purchasing locally, we support our local fishermen and farmers. So look for a “Product of USA” label on any seafood you purchase as a first step in eating more sustainably. We’ll also highlight some recipes for both sustainable wild fisheries and farmed species that you’ll want to try.

Finally, one of the best ways to eat American seafood is to catch your own dinner. It’s hard to find a more selective technique that doesn’t damage habitat than hook-and-line, and as a bonus you can brag to all your friends about your prowess on the water. I hope to see you out on the water looking for panfish this fall!

With a rod and reel in hand, children reconnect to nature whether casting for a meal or enjoying a day of catch and release.
In 1999 Alton Brown, a relative newcomer to the world of celebrity chefs, was making a splash at the Tennessee Aquarium while taping a segment called, “Hook, Line and Dinner” for the first season of Good Eats. Hamming it up underwater on camera, Brown poked fun at a hogfish that seemed determined to get into a staring contest. “Wait your turn,” Brown quipped as he was introducing the seafood he would be preparing during that episode.

Alton Brown’s quick wit and effervescent sense of humor seem to fill a room a few seconds before he actually arrives. So it’s no wonder Good Eats and Iron Chef America are two of the most popular shows Food Network has ever aired. Self-described as, “Part Jacques Cousteau and part Julia Child,” Brown serves up seafood with a different connection than he feels for other dishes. “I am a SCUBA diver and I love being underwater and seeing fish in the ocean, lakes or rivers,” Brown said. “As I became a father, I realized that if my daughter, who is also a diver, was going to have fish to see and eat in the future, I had to do something.”

So twelve years after his first official appearance at the Tennessee Aquarium, he’s back with the perfect recipe for leading others to make sustainable seafood choices. According to Brown, the key to saving once bountiful seas hinges on reviewing the past while discovering new options. “Working as a chef and working on television, I know the number one answer to this problem is education,” Brown said. “Americans tend to eat a lot of a very few fish species. And there’s a lot more flavor available out there than just tuna, salmon and grouper.”

That’s why Brown is excited to be working with the Aquarium on a locally focused sustainable seafood program called Serve & Protect. To reel folks in, the program is a treble hook of education efforts. First, visitors will be enlightened about select species on display at the Aquarium. Then local chefs will offer specially prepared dishes featuring these fish at Chattanooga restaurants. Finally, Brown is developing recipes specifically for this program and providing information about how to purchase sustainable seafood at local markets. “Hopefully this will bring people to the point where they’re not only involved with understanding the fish, their habitats and what is sustainable, but then we’ll start putting food on the plate that hasn’t been there before,” Brown said. “It’s about opening doors rather than closing them. Instead of saying, ‘You can’t have THAT,’ I like to ask, ‘Have you tried this?’”
Persuading people to look at frozen fish is also an important hurdle for most people to overcome, Brown says. Many people mistakenly believe that fish must be purchased raw to be fresh. “I’m a HUGE fan of frozen seafood. Raw is sometimes as unfresh as can be. Whereas a fish that’s caught at sea and frozen very quickly is closer to its live state. And that is the actual culinary definition of fresh.”

In typical Good Eats style, Brown will use flair (and maybe even flares) in the Aquarium’s program to get people excited enough to try something new. He says that when it comes to preparing fish, basic technique is usually the best way to bring out the natural flavor. But that’s not sexy enough to capture most audiences. “But if I say I’m going to show you how to smoke a trout in a shoebox and it’s going to be wonderful, people will say, ‘Heck, I gotta try that.’ And a lot of people will try something for the first time because you’ve given them this weird on-ramp to a technique.”

Beyond flashy in-pan skills, Alton Brown points to health benefits as another reason many Americans should choose sustainable seafood. “Obesity is the number one killer of people in the United States. And I think the answer to that is to eat more seafood.” Brown said. “It’s a better source of protein than what Americans are used to. You can cook a fish without a pound of bacon fat. I know that’s crazy talk, but it can be done.”

This September Chattanoogans will have an opportunity to spend an evening with Alton Brown. On Thursday, September 22nd, the Aquarium’s first annual sustainable seafood program will begin with a cooking demonstration at IMAX®, another first for Brown. “I’ve always wanted to do an IMAX production. I just never imagined it would happen in front of a live audience,” he said with a smile. After thrilling guests with a little sauce, sizzle and secret ingredients (which he’ll share with those in attendance) everyone will move across the street to River Journey and Ocean Journey, where chefs from eight Chattanooga restaurants will serve up an elegant, seated seafood dinner paired with carefully selected wine.

Friday, September 23rd and Saturday, September 24th a Chattanooga “dine around” is planned. Local chefs will put their own special touch on recipes that feature the highlighted species in the inaugural program. Brown believes this opportunity to connect with area restaurants is an important step to sustainability. “I will be working with all of the chefs and wait staffs, because a lot of the selling of sustainable seafood is in the education and narrative,” Brown said.

“The then we’re going to turn it over to these chefs to put their creativity on display and show the real culinary possibilities of these fish.”

Alton Brown will wrap up this seafood school at the Chattanooga Market on Sunday, September 25th by hosting the Cast Iron Cook-off. This annual event challenges chefs to purchase ingredients from local farmers at the market and then prepare a dish on site within a specified time. They are provided the protein, which in this case will be sustainable seafood. Brown is excited about seeing the results of this fish frenzy in front of what will undoubtedly be a huge Market crowd.

And after this blitzkrieg of Good Eats wit and wisdom, the Scenic-City will again be inspired to live up to its growing reputation as an environmentally savvy community.
SUSTAINABLE GIVING

THE WATERSHED SOCIETY

Sustaining the Lupton Legacy

By Andree Herbert, development manager

While it’s easy to get caught up in the antics of playful penguins, the tales of tenacious sea turtles and the successes of stalwart sturgeon, each exhibit at the Tennessee Aquarium represents a chapter in a much larger story of our world – life can only thrive with sufficient resources in its watershed.

This is why our mission is to inspire wonder, appreciation and protection of water and all life that it sustains. It is why our exhibits examine the path of life water creates through our world’s watersheds. It is why we seek to educate the next generation to ensure our watersheds remain healthy in the future. And it is with this purpose in mind that our Board of Trustees recently established The Watershed Society, recognizing individuals who help plan for the Aquarium’s own healthy future and its enduring role as a community asset.

It was less than a generation ago that downtown Chattanooga was far from thriving, its magnificent watershed hiding behind urban disrepair. Despite its location amidst graceful mountain ridges, Chattanooga’s buildings were vacant and the river that once shaped the town’s history was no longer a scenic destination. Insightful community members recognized the desperate need for change, and the idea of the Aquarium was born. Spearheaded by Jack Lupton, thoughtful planning and tireless efforts brought the vision to reality. The Lupton family as a whole has inspired legions of donors, volunteers and visitors to awaken a tired city.

As the anchor for Chattanooga’s nationally-recognized “Renaissance on the River,” the Aquarium has been one of the main forces that brought the community back downtown and ultimately ignited the burst of urban activity that we all enjoy today. The Aquarium remains the center of tourism and economic redevelopment not only downtown, but also throughout the Tennessee Valley and Southeast Tennessee. Much of Chattanooga’s renewal can be credited to the work, wisdom and wealth the Lupton family poured into the Aquarium. The return on their investment has been estimated in the billions. But the value of bringing our city back to life is immeasurable.

It was fitting, then, that many of the same community members who ignited this renaissance reconvened at the Aquarium to pay tribute to Jack Lupton. With Lupton’s family in attendance, warm memories were shared about his love for Chattanooga and, more specifically, the Aquarium. While many commented on how far our community has come in less than 20 years, there remained a sense of enthusiasm of what the future may still hold.

In the River Journey lobby, Aquarium president Charlie Arant unveiled a marble tribute in memoriam of Lupton. The ceremony concluded as current Board Chair, Paul

“People were ready to make their town into something great. I think that spirit is still very much alive here.”
— Jack Lupton
April, 2002

TENNESSEE AQUARIUM ARCHIVES

“People were ready to make their town into something great. I think that spirit is still very much alive here.”
— Jack Lupton
April, 2002
Brock, announced the creation of The Watershed Society, a planned giving society that recognizes individuals who include the Aquarium in their lifetime gifts. Members of The Watershed Society will not only ensure that the Aquarium remains a vital part of Chattanooga's continued success, but they will also carry on the Lupton family's philanthropic spirit into future generations.

The Aquarium has operated throughout its youth on its great success as an institution and from the support of the community. Just shy of our twentieth birthday, we have begun to focus on the long-term sustainability of all aspects of our institution. From our green practices to our financial resources, our focus on sustainability is now all encompassing. Just as we need to be mindful of our sustainable use of natural resources, so too must we be good stewards of the financial resources that help the Aquarium foster an ever-changing and vibrant learning community. Because the gifts made by members of The Watershed Society will not be realized for years to come, we are planning now to carry our mission into a future we do not yet know.

Through planned contributions, the Chattanooga community will ensure that future generations enjoy the Aquarium as much as we do today. Thoughtful, planned generosity from our members will connect our children's children to the natural world with excellent exhibits, hands-on conservation activities and environmental education programs. As demonstrated by all of nature's watersheds, the cumulative effect of many modest gifts planned today will provide a powerful stream of funding in the future.

The journey of a raindrop to the sea has been the story of our exhibits since we first opened. The larger story of our institution is one of all things traveling to a shared destination. In the last 20 years, we have played an important role in re-establishing downtown as a shared destination. Today, we continue to build a vibrant learning community that is connected by its natural world. And because our story is not yet finished, we look forward to the many ways our institution and our community will be strengthened by The Watershed Society. The path to a better tomorrow never ends and, along with our powerful community, the Aquarium will continue to lead the journey.

“All living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community.”

— John Wesley Powell
American Explorer and Conservationist
23rd Annual Tennessee River Rescue Set for Saturday, October 1st

Unfortunately, plastic bottles and other trash end up in our waterways. The good news? Volunteers during Tennessee River Rescue are making progress. This year hundreds of individuals will fan out across 20 zones in Bradley, Hamilton and Marion counties to clean up the banks of the Tennessee River and some tributaries. “We have noticed significant declines in the amounts of garbage we are removing from some of the zones,” said event coordinator Christine Bock. “It would be nice to find ourselves out of business one day, but right now that seems like wishful thinking.” Organize a group or join the effort individually by logging on at: www.tennesseeriverrescue.com.

Message in a Milk Jug

Tennessee Aquarium senior educator Julia Gregory collected 1,000 milk jugs for an eye-opening freshwater conservation lesson. They were temporarily displayed on the Aquarium Plaza for two reasons. This striking photo-op will be used by educators to illustrate the volume of water in exhibits by using a household item. “I can hold up this picture in front of the Lake Nickajack exhibit and say this is one thousand gallons. And in this exhibit there are 138 of these one thousand gallons,” said Gregory. She also wants everyone to understand that even a tiny amount of pollutant can make a large volume of water unsuitable for drinking. What’s the message in these milk jugs? “That it’s vitally important for everyone to protect watersheds from sources of pollution.” (Go to the Aquarium’s YouTube channel to see the complete program.) At the end of this demonstration, the milk jugs were stomped flat and taken to a local recycling center.

Join the Aquarium Team — Volunteer Docents Needed

For the last two years, the Tennessee Aquarium has been rated as the #1 aquarium in the country for overall visitor satisfaction. Docents play a big role in that top ranking. “Our volunteers serve up animal facts with an extra helping of Southern Hospitality,” said Julie Piper, the Aquarium’s manager of volunteer services. “They also offer insider information that helps guests make the most of their time in Chattanooga.” If you love to be surrounded by amazing animals and share fascinating facts with visitors from around the world, go online and print out the docent application: www.tnaqua.org/GetInvolved/VolunteerOpportunities.aspx. Applications must be received by mail before Monday, September 12th.

Friendly docents are needed for all shifts, especially on weekends. You must be able to attend all seven training sessions, which begin on September 20th and are scheduled each Tuesday evening through November 1st. You’ll enjoy great benefits including family membership and special gift shop discounts.
## October

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>10 a.m.-Noon</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Ranger Rick's Big Backyard Clean Up</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>10 A.M.-Noon</td>
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<td>Family Nature Games</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>2:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Trekking with Tykes</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>6-8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Beer Tasting &amp; Brewer's Dinner</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>12:30-3 p.m.</td>
<td>A &amp; 12+</td>
<td>Wild Cave Adventure</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Rain barrel Workshop</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>1-3 p.m.</td>
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<td>Touring Kayak Clinic</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>6:30-8 p.m.</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Sensational Seafood Dinner at 212 Market</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>9-10 a.m.</td>
<td>2-3 A</td>
<td>Creepy Cateria</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Fri.</td>
<td>6:30-9:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Aqua-Scarium Halloween Party</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>9 a.m.-4 p.m.</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Chattanooga Waterfront – Photography</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
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<td>A &amp; 14+</td>
<td>Nickajack Lock-Through Paddle</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>A &amp; 10+</td>
<td>Hike to Laurel Falls</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>1:30 – 3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Beans, Bones &amp; Boo! A Haunted Family Cruise</td>
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## November

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<td>Feeding Frenzy!</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>10-11:30</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>No Bones About It</td>
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## December

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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>10 a.m.-Noon</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Create a Festive Holiday Garland</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>6:30-9 p.m.</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Caroling with the Fishes Member Night</td>
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Harvest Sleep in the Deep for Families
Sept. 23 - 24 • 5:30 p.m. Friday – 8:30 a.m. Saturday
Celebrate the first day of fall on the official Autumnal Equinox when day and night are almost equal in length. Sleep in the Deep with your family and learn fascinating facts about Aquarium animals as you explore behind the scenes and get up-close encounters with our critters. At lights out, bed down in the Undersea Cavern in Ocean Journey surrounded by schools of tropical fish and toothy sharks. Includes overnight, IMAX movie, guided tours, special activities, pizza and continental breakfast.

Families with children ages 6 and older accompanied by an adult
$50/Member; $60/Non-Member per person
Minimum of 30; maximum of 40

Trekking with Tykes Backyard Safari
Sunday, Oct. 2 • 2 – 4 p.m.
Be Out There! Explore the wonders of nature with your little ones on a guided backyard safari. Join us for a naturalist-led adventure at Patten Park, a beautiful natural trail along a creek on Signal Mountain. This two-mile loop crosses Shoal Creek three times, once even across a swinging bridge. Bring your own snack or lunch and a drink.

Parents and young children - Limited to the first 6 families because of parking constraints - Free/Member; $5/Non-Member

Aqua-Scarium Halloween Party
Friday, Oct. 28
6:30 – 9:30 p.m.
Come in costume and celebrate Halloween with the wild ones at the Aquarium like stinging jellies and hungry sharks. In Ranger Rick’s Backyard Safari, dare to be surrounded by toothy piranhas and encounter slightly scary scales, tails and skeletons. Trick or treat for loads of goodies and interact with our loveable mascots in their own Halloween costumes! Do the Monster Mash on the dance floor, watch our popular costumed divers and win treasure as you play fun games. Pre-register by Oct. 26.

Families with young children (Children must be accompanied by an adult)
Member: $6 per person, Adult or Child (3-12) - Non-Member: $30/Adult; $20/Child (3-12)
Non-member price includes Aquarium admission
After Oct. 26, tickets available on Oct. 28 at the door.

Beasties, Bones & Boo! A Haunted Family Cruise
Sunday, Oct. 30 • 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Join us aboard the River Gorge Explorer for a fun family cruise haunted by our ghastly array of animal skeletons and skulls and dare to encounter scary, but not really so scary, live creepy critters. Discover cool facts about often misunderstood beasties with bad raps “that go bump in the night,” like bats, owls, toads and spiders. For more fun, come in costume and Trick or Treat as you leave for home.

All Ages - Limited to 69 • $24/Member Adult; $18/Member Child (0-12) • $20/Child (0-18) • $29/Non-Member Adult; $21.50/Non-Member Child (3-12) • $18/Child under 3

REGISTER NOW online at www.tnaqua.org/Events.aspx or mail form on page 16 or call 423-267-FISH (3474).
Bug Club 2011

Bug Club is for kids who love learning about fascinating multi-legged creatures. Clubs meet from 5-7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each summer month and membership includes a monthly newsletter, T-shirt and field trips. Games, snacks and experiments round out the fun. tnaqua.org/Education/BugClub.aspx

September — Goldenrod Jungle
October — True Bugs
November — Insects Did It First V

Ages 5-11 • $20 Member; $30 Non-Member per quarter (every 3 months) plus a one-time $15 initiation fee – Call Aquarium Educator Julia Gregory at (423) 785-4054 to register and pay. (The membership department does not take registrations for Bug Club!) Please alert us about any food allergies.

Focusing “Small Fry”

Saturday, Sept. 10 • 9 -10 a.m.

Ever feel like your youngest controls your family’s pace through the Aquarium? They may just need a special focus while touring the galleries. Create an interactive Aquarium Discovery Kit with your tyke to bring each time you visit. Then, tour a few exhibits in River Journey with an Aquarium educator to see how it can enhance your experience the next time you visit. Please alert us to any food allergies.

Ages 3-4, accompanied by an adult (register child only) • Limited to 10, minimum of 3 $8/Member; $13/Non-Member • River Journey, Delta Swamp Classroom

Ranger Rick’s Big Backyard Clean-up!

Saturday, Oct. 1 • 10 a.m. – Noon

Be a Ranger Rick’s River Kid by helping to clean up the Aquarium’s “big backyard” and keep the Tennessee River trash-free for many animals that call it home. Play fun earth-friendly games and meet a live critter. Then meet a huggable Aquarium mascot who will thank you with a special surprise for helping creatures living downriver all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. So, what are you waiting for? Get out there and “walk the talk” with Ranger Rick during the annual River Rescue! This clean up is safe for budding stewards of the earth. Wear old clothes and shoes and bring gloves and a drink. Meet under the white tent outside the Members Entrance.

Families with elementary age children (children must be accompanied by an adult) Free/Member and Non-Member (Optional Aquarium admission is additional)

REGISTER NOW online at www.tnaqua.org/Events.aspx or mail form on page 16 or call 423-267-FISH (3474).
OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

WOW — Women on the Water
Thursday, Sept. 8 • 7 - 9 p.m.

Ladies! Strap on a pair of water sandals and paddle with us on a laid-back adventure as we explore local rivers and lakes with other women. All equipment is provided, including single touring kayaks and a female guide. Meet at Greenway Farm. BYO snack & drink.

Adults (women only) • Limited to 12; minimum 8 • $20/Member; $25/Non-Member

Family Canoe Trip
Sunday Sept. 11 • 1 – 3 p.m.

Get up close and personal with creek critters as you float the pastoral waters of the North Chickamauga Creek in single canoes with guides from Outdoor Chattanooga. All equipment and transportation are provided. BYO snack and drink. Meet at Greenway Farm.

Adults and ages 5 and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 16 per session; minimum of 10 • Child (5-12): $12/Member; $17/Non-Member

Touring Kayak Clinics
Saturday, Sept. 24 • 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. & Sunday, Oct. 16 • 1 – 3 p.m.

Learn kayaking basics from the experienced guides of Outdoor Chattanooga. You’ll practice proper paddling techniques, how to adjust, enter and exit a boat, safety guidelines and what to do if you turn over. Dress in clothing that may get wet and bring dry ones in case you want to experience a wet exit first-hand.

Adults and ages 14 and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 12, minimum 8 • $20/Member; $30/Non-Member

Little River Day Paddle by Kayak
Saturday, Sept. 24 • 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Join Aquarium naturalist Christine Bock in Mentone, Alabama for a guided trip on the West Fork of the beautiful Little River in the Little River Canyon National Preserve. Paddle sit-a-top kayaks that are easy to maneuver on this scenic flat-water adventure through unspoiled hardwood forests, native plants and sandstone cliffs. Don’t miss this very special place in the Southern Appalachians. Includes equipment, guides, snack and drink. Please bring a water bottle and your own sandwich lunch. Mentone is about a one-hour drive from Chattanooga, directions provided.

Adult & ages 12 and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 16; minimum of 10 • $30/Member; $35/Non-Member • Registration Deadline: Sept. 7

Downtown Sunset Paddle by Kayak
Thursday, Sept. 29 • 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Launching single touring kayaks at Coolidge Park, we will paddle around the Maclellan Island bird sanctuary and past Chattanooga’s beautiful riverfront. Includes all equipment and guides. BYO drink and snack.

Adults and ages 14 and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 12, minimum 6 • $25/Member; $30/Non-member • Meet at Coolidge Park

Wild Cave Adventure
Saturday, Oct. 8 • 12:30 – 3 p.m.

Explore a natural cavern inside Raccoon Mountain with Aquarium educator George Bartnik and experienced cave guides on a two-hour tour through an underground maze. Slither through low passageways, scramble over rocks and slide down slippery slopes while discovering fossils and cave wildlife such as salamanders, millipedes, crickets and, we hope, the Crystal Caverns cave spider. Suit up in full spelunking gear — helmet with headlamp, kneepads and gloves (which are included) for an adventure on the wild side.

Adults and ages 8 and older (children must be accompanied by an adult) • Limited to 24 • $28/Member; $33/Non-Member

Nickajack Lock Paddle
Saturday, Oct. 29 • 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Kayakers — paddle en masse through the lock system of the Nickajack Dam between Nickajack and Guntersville lakes. The adrenalin builds as the huge doors of the lock close and the waters lift kayakers 41 feet to the adjoining reservoir to explore wildlife! BYO lunch and water. Previous kayaking experience is highly recommended.

Adults and ages 14 years and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 12; minimum 6 • $35/Member; $40/Non-Member • Meet at Greenway Farm

Hike to Laurel Falls
In the Laurel-Snow State Natural Area
Saturday, October 29 • 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Join Aquarium educator and naturalist George Bartnik for a hiking adventure at this beautiful natural area near Dayton, Tennessee. Our goal is to reach Laurel Falls, a spectacular 80-foot waterfall where we’ll break for lunch. Along the way, we will encounter scenic creeks, steep gorges, geologic features, historical resources and of course fall colors. Includes a guide, snack and drink after the hike; please bring your own drinks, snacks and lunch. (5-mile round-trip hike with an elevation change of 1,200 feet.

Adults & children ages 10 & older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 20 • $15/Member; $20/Non-Member • Meet at Laurel-Snow State Natural Area

REGISTER NOW online at www.tnaqua.org/Events.aspx or mail form on page 16 or call 423-267-FISH (3474).
**“Fall” for a Colorful Spring**

*Tuesday, Sept. 20 * 5:30 – 8 p.m.*

Get a head start on spring, by planting in the fall! You will take away great ideas for planting flowering native shrubs, bulbs and perennials this fall for a gorgeous garden this spring. This workshop will be led by Craig Walker, head of The Barn’s perennial department, whose own garden has been on many local garden tours, and Tennessee Aquarium Lead Horticulturist Christine Bock who specializes in native plants and flower gardens. For personal advice, bring a printed photo or simple sketch of your yard and know whether it has a northern or southern exposure. Receive a $10 gift card to use at The Barn Nursery.

*Adults • Limited to 15 • $20/Member; $25/Non-Member (includes $10 gift card)*

**Rainbarrel Workshop**

*Saturday, Oct. 8 * 10 a.m. - Noon

A rain barrel collects water from gutters and stores it for future uses like watering plants and washing cars, especially during periods of drought. Go green and convert an empty 55-gallon Coca-Cola syrup drum into a working rain barrel by attaching connectors during the program with the help of experts with Ace Hardware. Learn how to install your rain barrel onto your downspout at home and the importance of practicing water conservation. Includes a pre-drilled barrel and a kit with hose adapters, spigot and basket for trapping debris. Bring a vehicle to accommodate a 55-gallon rain barrel.

*Adults • Limited to 20
$25/Member
$30/Non-Member
Location: IMAX Center Classrooms*

**Chattanooga Waterfront — In-Depth**

**A Day-Long Photo Safari**

*Saturday, Oct. 29 * 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.*

Join professional photographers Tom and Pat Cory for this photography seminar with the Tennessee Aquarium. Begin with a photo shoot inside the Aquarium before it opens to capture images of exotic butterflies, stunning jellyfish, playful penguins and colorful reef fish. Throughout the day we will alternate being “in the field” with classroom instruction that explores artistic and technical considerations when photographing nature and architectural subjects. The Cory’s will provide hands-on help inside Aquarium galleries and outside along the beautiful waterfront including the historic Delta Queen, sculptures, bridges and more. This fun and educational day is perfect for any experience level, from point and shoot to DSLR. Includes Aquarium admission, instruction, one-on-one help, refreshments and a BBQ lunch.

*Adults • Limited to 15
Minimum 10
$75/Member
$95/Non-Member*

**Create a Festive Holiday Garland**

*Saturday, Dec. 3 * 10 a.m. - Noon

Get ready for the holidays by creating a lovely garland of fresh greens, berries and bows to decorate your front door, mantel or railing. We’ll put you in the mood with music and spiced cider as lead horticulturist Christine Bock shares other natural holiday decorating ideas. Includes fresh greenery, artificial berries and bows. Please bring garden clippers and a glue gun if possible along with any special bows or decorations you’d like to add.

*Adults • Limited to 20 • $15/Member; $20/Non-Member*
**Oktoberfest Beer Tasting and Dinner**

At Big River Grille & Brewing Works  
**Tuesday, Oct. 4 • 6 – 8:30 p.m.**

Meet the Brew-master and the Brews! Become beer-savvy during a beer tasting with brew-master David Sharpe to learn the nuances of evaluating fine-crafted brews. Keep tasting notes about the appearance, aroma, texture and finish of specially selected beers as you munch on house-made pretzels with a beer mustard sauce. Then enjoy a delicious four-course Brewer's Dinner paired with appropriate beers. Big River Grille and Brewing Works features hand-crafted beer and made from scratch regional cuisine. 

Adults Only • Limited to 40 • $35/Member (Aquarium or Big River Passport Members); $45/Non-Member • Please add your own tip. • Location: Big River Grille Downtown

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**Spring Wildflower Weekend**

In the Great Smoky Mountains National Park  
**Thursday, April 19 • 9 a.m. - Saturday, April 21, 2012 • 3 p.m.**

Discover the special beauty of spring in the Smokies during the peak of wildflower season! From the tiniest spring ephemerals to White-fringed Phacelia, so thick it looks like snow, we’ll pay witness to this world-renowned preserve of wildflower diversity. Experienced guides will lead you on their favorite trails and share their extensive knowledge about the interesting names, historical uses and folklore of mountain plants. 

Aquarium Lead Horticulturist Christine Bock, an 18-year veteran Wildflower Pilgrimage leader, will be joined by well-known local naturalist and outdoor educator Wanda DeWaard. 

Overnight at the charming Lazy Bluff Lodge in Townsend, nestled in a peaceful setting with three cozy wood fireplaces. 

Included: naturalist guides, transportation by Aquarium van, 2-night’s lodging in group accommodations, one continental breakfast, picnic lunch and dinner. (level walks on unpaved trails) 

Adults • Limited to 12, minimum of 8 • Call 423-785-3008 for more info.
San Diego Photo Safari

**Sunday, Oct. 16 – Saturday, Oct. 22, 2011**

Join professional nature photographers Tom and Pat Cory to focus your lens on a wide diversity of subjects, from rugged seacoasts and sunsets, to Spanish missions and naval vessels. Photograph colorful wildlife at the famous San Diego Zoo, capture images of the old lighthouse, sandstone cliffs and tide pools at Point Loma. Visit a picturesque vineyard after an open-Jeep safari at the Zoo’s Wild Animal Park! *Casual photographers welcome!*  

Patagonia: Chile’s Remote Wilderness

**November 26 – December 4, 2011**

Patagonia is the very definition of wildness. Explore her crowning jewel, Torres Del Paine National Park, renowned as one of the most beautiful and unspoiled destinations on the planet at the edge of a great continent. Naturalist guides will lead you on daily excursions by vehicle, on foot and by boat to see dazzling landscapes, magnificent condors, foxes, puma and glaciers – plus a Magallenic penguin colony! *Extensions include Easter Island and a Chilean fjords cruise.*

Costa Rica — Off the Beaten Path

**Butterflies, Volcanoes and Rainforests**

**Feb. 7 – 16, 2012**

Join us on a nature expedition to Costa Rica where our professional native guide promises to show you the real side of his beautiful country. Walk among hundreds of tropical butterflies at The Butterfly Farm where the Tennessee Aquarium attains chrysalis for its Butterfly Garden. Discover coffee’s colorful history on an interactive tour of Café Britt Coffee Plantation with humorous but insightful guides. Traverse a lush virgin rainforest en route to meet a butterfly farmer who raises these jeweled beauties to supply The Butterfly Farm. Explore the Arenal Hanging Bridges that overlook a dense rainforest canopy with close-up looks at wildlife and fantastic views of the Arenal Volcano. We’ll hike to majestic waterfalls, search for Quetzals and watch for monkeys, birds and crocodiles on a nature river float, and immerse ourselves in relaxing mineral springs. Stay at quiet authentic resorts, even at a sustainable organic ranch on beautiful Lake Arenal with optional activities like zip-line canopy tours, horseback riding, kayaking, massage or Yoga in a rainforest.

Mongolia: Land of the Blue Sky

**August 27 – Sept. 7, 2012**

If you treasure exploring unspoiled and less-traveled places and learning from the diverse and wondrous cultures of the world, travel with us to Mongolia. Explore cosmopolitan Ulaanbaatar before venturing into “Outer Mongolia” and staying in authentic felt-lined Gers, the Mongolian equivalent of African tented camps. Our journey takes us from the vast rolling grasslands of the steppe and forested mountains of the north, south to the shifting sand dunes and stunning landscapes of the arid Gobi Desert. This trip promises to change you forever!

Contact Betty Miles for a trip brochure: ebm@tnaqu.org or 423-785-3008

Renew your Membership — anytime! Visit www.tnaqua.org/Membership.aspx
Registration is required for all programs with payment in full.

**ONLINE:**  
www.tnaqua.org/Events.aspx

**PHONE:** 423-267-FISH (3474) or 800-262-0695, ext. 3400, 8:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. weekdays. Please have event and credit card information ready.

**PAYMENT** is required by credit card, cash or check when registering.

**CONFIRMATION** with event details will be mailed upon receipt of event fees.

**CANCELLATIONS/REFUND:** We cannot provide refunds for no-shows. Unless noted differently, cancellations must be received no less than two weeks prior to event date for a refund. A full refund is made if the Aquarium cancels an event or if an event is full.

**PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Date/Time</th>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Indicates second choice of date/time if program is offered more than once.

**Guests who are not members must pay non-member fees.

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**Let’s Stay in Touch**

Do you have your current email address? If you would like to stay on top of the latest Aquarium news, get notifications on new events, receive personalized membership updates and timely renewal reminders, register for our new online community at: www.tnaqua.org/membership.aspx.

**Go Green!**

*Riverwatch* is also an electronic magazine that contains the same great articles, vivid photos, and listings of fun-filled events as the print version. You can now receive a full-color *Riverwatch*, enhanced with interactive features, delivered directly to your inbox. It’s a great way to be “green” and support the environment. Visit www.tnaqua.org/membership/riverwatch.aspx to sign up today. And remember, you can also renew your membership online anytime and continue to receive the great benefits of unlimited admission, exclusive discounts, and more without interruption. Visit www.tnaqua.org to renew — it’s fast, convenient and paperless!

**Join us on Facebook, Twitter and Flickr**

Not only can you join in the conversation, you’ll be surprised by some of the things that don’t make the pages of *Riverwatch.*
Hey Kids! In each Riverwatch issue, look for fun activities in this section. Collect the Tennessee Aquarium’s Animal Trading Cards, send us your own Animal Art or Silly Animal Jokes and Riddles and ask us your “How Do They Do That” questions. Send all submissions (along with your name & age) to jal@tnaqva.org.

CONTENT FOR "GETTING OUR FEET WET" PROVIDED BY THE TENNESSEE AQUARIUM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

SUSTAINABLE FISH STICKS

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4):
- One pound local catfish or trout fillets, cut into 1/2-by-3-inch strips
- Non-stick cooking spray (baking) or olive oil (frying)
- One cup wheat germ
- ½ teaspoon lemon pepper
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon sea or Kosher salt
Optional:
- Two large egg whites, beaten: Coating will stick without a batter.

Baking instructions: Pre-heat oven to 425° F. Spray a baking sheet with a non-stick cooking spray. Wash fish fillets with clean water and cut into strips. Mix dry ingredients in a bowl and roll each fish strip until coated. If using the batter option, dip fish strips into egg whites before rolling in the dry mix. Place on baking sheet two inches apart and bake for 10-15 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

Frying instructions: Heat ½” of olive oil in a frying pan on medium heat. Place strips carefully into the hot oil and fry for three to four minutes on each side (or until golden brown). Drain and serve.

Serving suggestions: Pair with fresh greens from your local market or vegetables of choice. For children, other finger foods are a great addition! Use grapes, carrot sticks, apple slices, etc.

TODD STAILEY

HOW DO THEY DO THAT?

How do they get the Ranger Rick® birds to do tricks?

Any time you want to train a behavior in an animal (such as the family dog) the best way to do it is with a reward. That is what we do with our animals at the Tennessee Aquarium. We train many of our education animals, but the ones you’ll notice on your next visit are the birds working in our new Ranger Rick’s Backyard Safari. We observe the natural behaviors of these birds and determine if we can fit that behavior into our programming. Food is the one thing these birds like best, and they have their favorites, whether it is pine nuts, dried fruit or breakfast cereal. Once they realize they will get a treat for doing the right thing, these birds will work hard to understand what we want them to do. Eventually they will be able to do it on cue (when a signal is given).
FISHING FOR FUN!

This fun craft will give you hours of fishing fun. The best part is that once you catch this fish, you can throw it back to catch again and again!

MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED:
- A long pole (2-3 feet long)
- A long piece of sting or yarn (3-4 feet long)
- Glue
- Large paper clip
- Scissors
- A magnet*

*Make sure the magnet is strong enough to be picked up by the paper clip.

DIRECTIONS:
1. Cut out and color the fish below.
2. Glue the sides together.
3. Glue the magnet to the fish’s mouth.
4. Tie the string to the end of the pole.
5. Tie the paper clip to the end of the string.
6. Place the fish on the ground and use your pole to catch it!

Channel Catfish
Ictalurus punctatus

- **Habitat** — Native to North America and distributed in southern Canada, the eastern and northern United States and northern Mexico. They thrive in warm-water rivers, lakes and ponds.
- **Diet** — As bottom feeders, these omnivores eat aquatic insects, crayfish, mollusks, crustaceans, aquatic vegetation and other fishes.
- **Size** — Channel catfish average two to three pounds. Maximum age is around 24 years.

**WOW!** Channel catfish are the Tennessee state commercial fish and are a sustainable food choice.

Channel catfish can be found in the Nickajack Lake exhibit on the first floor in River Journey.

Rainbow Trout
Oncorhynchus mykiss

- **Habitat** — Though native to Pacific drainages of North America from Alaska to northern Mexico, rainbow trout have been introduced to many areas worldwide that have clear, cold water.
- **Diet** — Young eat aquatic insects while adults feed on insects and small fish.
- **Size** — At maturity, rainbow trout are usually two to three years old, 10-12 inches in length and weigh around one pound.

**WOW!** Trout are very sensitive to changes in water temperature and quality. Rainbow trout are often farmed and are a sustainable food choice.

Rainbow Trout can be found in the Cove Forest exhibit on the fourth floor in River Journey.

Black Crappie
Pomoxis nigromaculatus

- **Habitat** — Originally found in the Mississippi Valley, Texas and southeastern US, the black crappie is now found in larger cool, clear waters in all continental states.
- **Diet** — Starts out life preying on micro-crustaceans and insects and switches over to eating small fish as it matures.
- **Size** — An average mature black crappie is roughly 10 inches long and weighs a little less than one pound.

**WOW!** Black crappie are a sustainable food source that you must catch yourself to eat. There is no commercial fishery for this species, and they are not cultured for markets.

Black Crappie can be found in the Reelfoot Lake exhibit on the second floor of River Journey.
Get Ready for Fall Color Cruises on the River Gorge Explorer

Crystal clear blue skies are often the rule in October and early November, setting the perfect stage for viewing fall color aboard the River Gorge Explorer. The carpet of color begins at the crest of the mountains and cascades down slope toward the water’s edge as the season progresses. Peak viewing usually occurs between October 15th and November 7th. That’s when the combination of warm, sunny days and cool, crisp autumn nights produce the vibrant reds, oranges and yellows seen in “Tennessee’s Grand Canyon.” Reserve your cruise today at: www.tnaqua.org/RiverGorgeExplorer.aspx

You’ll Flip Over NEW Flipbooks!

As children we made flip-books by drawing stick figures on the margins of pages and flipping them quickly. Fast forward to today and check out a high-tech flip-book, featuring you! Just stop by the Animation Station in the Tennessee Aquarium IMAX® Gift Store and create your own flip-book. Simply choose a background, then dance around or act silly in front of a camera. Voilà! You’re laughing with friends and family at your own animated antics. Waddle like a penguin, pucker up like a puff er-fish or monkey around like an orangutan. It’s a great way to remember your next trip to the Tennessee Aquarium.

Don’t forget to check out our online gift shop for all of your shopping needs! Visit http://store.shopaquarium.org. In honor of Born to be Wild 3D, Aquarium members can receive their discount by typing ELEPHANT into the discount line at checkout.

Tennessee Aquarium Business Partners

We gratefully acknowledge the following Business Partners of the Tennessee Aquarium, IMAX® 3D Theater and River Gorge Explorer. These partners help support the Aquarium’s many conservation, education and research programs. To learn how you can become an Aquarium Business Partner, contact Meredith Lewallen at (423) 785-3019 or email at mml@tnaqua.org.

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Y ou’ll Flip Over NEW Flipbooks!
Marvels of MOLTING

By Loribeth Aldrich, aviculturist

Have you ever seen a bird feather on the ground, empty shells at the beach or noticed the thousands of empty cicada exoskeletons of this summer? If so, you’ve observed the result of molting among different species of animals.

Molting, shedding, is a term used to describe the renewal process of skin, hair, feathers or other outer coverings. When an animal needs to grow or needs to replace worn feathers or skin, they go through a molting process. Although it may be easier for some animals than others, it is a very delicate time for the animal. There are several creatures at the Aquarium that undergo this process at least once a year, some even more often than that.

One such creature is the giant Japanese spider crab. As an arthropod, it has a rigid exoskeleton that must be shed in its entirety to allow for growth. While there is no exact time of year for molting, the length of day, temperature and amount of food eaten all affect how often molting will occur. The process begins as the spider crabs form another exoskeleton under the first one. During their molt, the crabs’ bodies produce enzymes that help them wriggle out of the outer exoskeleton. For a short period after shedding the outer layer, their bodies are soft. As a result, they must be very careful to avoid injury and predators until the new exoskeleton hardens. They may swallow gulps of water to increase their size and help the exoskeleton to harden smoothly. Usually the exoskeleton gets broken apart in the ocean, or eaten by other animals, but here at the aquarium we may be able to collect it in one large piece. It looks just like the spider crab, but it is only a hollow casting of the crab.

Similar to the spider crab, tarantulas also shed their exoskeleton. They may not eat for a short period of time prior to molting. As the tarantula begins to molt, it lies on its back and may appear motionless. The exoskeleton then breaks open and the spider simply crawls out of its “skin.” For several days afterwards the spider is sensitive and must be very careful to avoid injuring its soft outer covering.

Snakes also molt, although most people say they shed. You may have been lucky enough to see a snake shed in the wild — a treat indeed! Unlike spider crabs and tarantulas that crawl out of their skin with the molt still intact, snakes wiggle out of their skin turning it inside-out in the process. Before a snake sheds, it will appear dull in color, and the scale covering their eye becomes cloudy. This can slightly impair their vision, so it’s best to leave a snake alone when they are about to shed. During the actual shedding process, they slither along the ground over tree roots, rocks and rough terrain to help pull the outer layer of skin off.

All snakes are different, but most species shed several times each year.

While spider crabs, tarantulas, and snakes shed/molts sporadically throughout the year, another animal here at the Tennessee Aquarium molts on a regular schedule once
a year, between August and October…the penguin. Both macaroni and gentoo penguins begin their molting process immediately after breeding season is over and the chicks have moved out of the nest. This happens right before winter hits the Southern hemisphere, and that is perfect timing for the birds because after a rough summer of guarding nests and chicks, their feathers are worn, broken, and damaged.

The big difference between a penguin’s molt and other birds’ molts is how drastic it is. Most birds lose a feather here and there, constantly replacing them as needed. Penguins, however, go through a catastrophic molt, meaning that every feather on their body (from the tops of their heads to their ankles) is replaced in a two to three week period. The new feathers grow in and force the old ones out, and the result is birds with patches of new sleek feathers, and patches of fluffy old ones.

The birds use their beaks to preen and that helps get some of the feathers loose, but they get stuck to their beak as well. Sometimes they leave a trail, as feathers just drop off as they waddle along. And waddle they do, because they are fatter than normal during this process. It makes sense for them to fatten because they are slower in the water; the fluffy feathers create drag, which limits their ability to catch food and escape predators. Also, penguins have less ability to control their body temperatures in the chilly water while they are molting.

During the weeks before molting begins, their appetite almost doubles. Here at the Aquarium the penguins go from eating two pounds a day to almost four pounds a day PER BIRD! They fatten up, and then while they molt they hardly eat at all. In the wild a bird would fast for the entire time, but here at the Aquarium they may eat a few fish each day. They are also very inactive and ever so grouchy. They don’t want to have to move at all. Once the molt is over and new feathers have grown in, the birds are back to their normal size, weight, energy level and appetite. The long gentoo tail feathers and the thin macaroni crest feathers take slightly longer to grow in, so they look a little odd for a while, but they are gorgeous after the molt is complete!

No matter the time of year, all animals that molt do so for a clean start: a new set of feathers, skin, scales or exoskeleton helps them survive in the environments they call home. Next time you stop by the Tennessee Aquarium, check out our exhibits and keep your eyes peeled for clues on animals that may be ready to molt. And keep an eye out in your backyard, too. Look for cicada shells, shake sheds and bird feathers. Just remember to leave those things where you found them, because other animals use those items to build nests and homes for themselves!

Did you know? It is often said that the number of rattles on the tail of a rattlesnake can determine the snake’s age. In truth, they actually gain a rattle every time they shed. But, since a snake will most likely shed more than once a year, this is faulty logic. Also, rattles can get broken off during normal conditions, so the number of rattles present can vary throughout the snake’s lifetime.
Skelettons, Screams & Fangs

By Thom Benson, communications manager
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TODD STAILEY

Some thrilling new birds are taking flight in Ranger Rick’s Backyard Safari, adding flashes of pink to the new gallery.

“We have two male galahs, or rose-breasted cockatoos, that are very colorful and chatty birds,” said senior aviculturist Amy Graves. “These guys have a lot of personality and will be very entertaining for our visitors.” Galahs are a pink-crested species of cockatoo that are native to Australia. According to Graves, the Aquarium’s galahs are high-energy birds with a bit of an attitude. “When they get excited their crest will come up, followed by head bobs and some very sharp and very shrill squeaks and screeches,” she said.

If it sounds like the galahs are screaming, it may be because other spooky creatures will be brought out to meet visitors throughout October. As part of “Thrills, Gills and Chills,” the Aquarium’s month-long look at spooky, mysterious and misunderstood creatures, creepily cool animals will be making more frequent appearances in Ranger Rick’s Backyard Safari. A New Caledonian gecko will peer at guests through oversized eyes as another educator introduces guests to a poisonous cane toad or scheltopusik. “At first glance they’re in the creepy family because most people think they are

Galahs are playful and intelligent. Visitors will enjoy seeing these colorful birds in new programs at the Aquarium.
snakes,” said Graves. “But once they find out a scheltopusik is a lizard, we get a different reaction. Creepy suddenly turns into cool and then curiosity. That’s when guests of all ages come a little closer and want to learn more.”

Educators will kick it up a notch with bio props such as animal skeletons, costumes and — EEEKS! — a tarantula molt. “You can turn it over and see where the fangs were,” said Graves. “The molt looks so much like the live animal that it makes a great program prop to describe the fascinating way these creatures molt.”

Visitors might not want to cuddle up to a Sinaloan milk snake, but they will enjoy the specially-themed dive shows and keeper talks in both Aquarium buildings. For those who seek additional adventure, add a Backstage Pass to your Aquarium visit. Each thrilling trip behind the scenes gives everyone a chance to learn more about caring for toothy sharks, huge snapping turtles, eels and jellies.

Save the date for a night of spooktacular fun during the Aqua-Scarium Halloween Party on Friday, October 28th from 6:30-9:30 pm. See page 10 for details.

New Caledonian geckos are named for their homeland, New Caledonia, an island located off the eastern coast of Australia.