SPRING BREAK FUN!

PLUS: Conservation News, Spring Birding Tips & Party for the Planet 2011
Have you ever wondered what it takes to care for the Aquarium’s richly diverse collection of plants and animals? On your next visit, stop and consider the aquatic and terrestrial habitats from around the world represented in River Journey and Ocean Journey. Then remember that we care for additional creatures behind the scenes, at the Animal Care Facility and at the Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute. Now you’re starting to get the picture that being a keeper at the Tennessee Aquarium is a big job.
Our husbandry staff of nearly 40 consists of animal curators, aquarists, aviculturists, herpetologists, horticulturists, water quality technicians, an animal registrar and animal encounters specialists. They cover shifts seven days a week and are on call 24 hours a day in case of emergencies.

We’re kindred spirits, and those of us who are aquarists are highly trained biologists with a passion for caring for animals. While much of our day consists of routines such as preparing diets, feeding animals and cleaning up after them, we also share the joy of helping these creatures raise babies and the challenges of caring for sick or injured animals. We also help design and maintain the exhibits. But some of our best moments are spent delivering programs to our guests and answering visitor questions. We really enjoy sharing critter facts with everyone.

We also enlist the help of more than 50 husbandry and horticulture volunteers. And helping us with in-tank chores are more than 170 volunteer divers.

So, how does one get started in this type of career? The process begins by acquiring a biology degree, getting certified in SCUBA and volunteering one’s time in this profession, sometimes for years, just to get noticed when a job does become available. It may be different for aviculturists and herpetologists, but I believe good aquarists have what is known as a “wet thumb,” the ability to have aquatic animals thrive in their care. These keepers have taken their hobby and passion of fish keeping to the next level. On the outside, it may seem glamorous to swim with the fishes; in reality, it takes a lot of backbreaking physical work, superb observational skills and sheer dedication to create the world-class exhibits that are found at the Tennessee Aquarium.

Each day begins with a walk through the exhibits to look for anything out of place. Sometimes it’s a spot of algae, a lack of surface movement or a particular sound or smell that isn’t quite right. Most days we know what’s on the agenda — vacuuming gravel, changing water, bleach-ing tanks and filters, scrubbing windows and rockwork or moving animals. Occasionally something goes awry and we have to adjust to the chaos quickly. Sometimes there are pleasant surprises, such as finding a batch of 700 baby longnose seahorses or discovering newly born freshwater stingray pups. But occasionally a tripped breaker or failed

Aquarist Jake Steventon target feeds a beluga sturgeon in the Volga River Exhibit to ensure it gets a well-balanced meal.
check valve can create a small flood. We might also be called in to help corral a duck that has jumped the fence in the Delta Swamp exhibit or help net a butterfly that hitchhiked out of the Butterfly Garden. Whatever the case, we must adjust to the situation, handle it quickly, efficiently and in the best interest of the animals. As they say in Hollywood, the show must go on!

An exhibit is considered successful if the animals are eating, exhibiting natural behaviors and, especially, if there is breeding that leads to babies! All of these things mean that the animals are happy, making for a great educational experience for the guests. ♦

KEEPER KIDS • MARCH 12 - APRIL 17

Spring break turns into a wild adventure at the Tennessee Aquarium when kids get a chance to get closer to some of the Aquarium’s most amazing animals and discover what it’s like to care for them. Explore behind the scenes, meet penguin experts, feed feisty otters, make enrichment toys for playful parrots or learn what it takes to properly wrangle reptiles. Kids may choose two of the 19 different activities offered throughout the day. Each program lasts approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Keeper Kids activities are free with Aquarium admission and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

KEEPER KIDS SCHEDULE

10:30 AM  Butterflies, Birds and Blooms
10:45 AM  Serve the Ray Buffet
10:45 AM  Otter Edibles and Trout Chow
11:00 AM  Behind the Scenes Penguin Peek
11:00 AM  Wild and Weird Encounters
11:15 AM  Behind the scenes with SCUBA Divers
12:30 PM  Really Awesome Reptiles
1:15 PM  Behind the Scenes Penguin Peek
1:30 PM  The “Tooth” about Sharks
1:30 PM  Sea Turtle Adventure
1:30 PM  Meet the Aquarium’s Dr. Dolittle (M, W, Fr only)
1:45 PM  Behind the Scenes with SCUBA Divers
2:30 PM  Parrot Playtime: Macaw Enrichment
2:45 PM  Really Awesome Reptiles
3:00 PM  Secret Reef Feeding Frenzy
3:30 PM  Saving Endangered Fish
3:30 PM  Splashy Fun: Otter Enrichment
4:00 PM  “Bake” a batch of fish food
4:00 PM  Butterflies, Birds and Blooms

Go green and get Riverwatch online! Visit www.tnaqua.org/Membership/Riverwatch.aspx
From lightning whelks to lightning strikes, the Tennessee Aquarium’s education staff is reaching more students in new ways thanks to funding from NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Along the way, Aquarium educators are making science fun and exciting.

If you were to follow Bethany Lloyd into a school, you might be amazed at what happens when she’s in front of the class. The room becomes quiet as wide-eyed students focus on Lloyd’s “ocean in a box.” She has a rolling cooler that’s filled with slimy, creepy and absolutely awesome marine creatures. “I haven’t had a ho-hum reaction yet,” said Lloyd, the Aquarium’s newest outreach educator. “The kids love everything from the smallest snails to the larger, alien-looking horseshoe crabs. For the most part, I’m introducing them to these sea creatures for the first time.”

Lloyd has developed six new outreach programs that focus on ocean literacy themes. And she has been busy delivering them to schools within 125 miles of the Aquarium. “All of the programs are written to meet Pre-K to 8th grade science standards,” said Lloyd. “The schools that are booking these lessons are looking for opportunities to raise the bar on life sciences by giving their students a chance to meet marine creatures and learn about their adaptations, habitats and ecosystems.”

There’s a ‘Wow Factor’ when kids get to watch jellies pulsing up close or touch a crab. And when their eyes light up, Lloyd knows she’s made an important connection. “The surprise favorite of the tide pooling program is the lightning whelk,” said Lloyd. “When brave students gently touch the whelk’s slimy mantle, it quickly retreats into its shell. As it does this, water squirts out. That’s hilarious to them. When that happens, they’re having fun and really hungry for information.” During these magic moments, kids really grasp information about how inland residents are connected to these unusual animals. “These animals were selected because they all come from the northern Gulf of Mexico,” said Lloyd. “It’s my job to help these students understand how these animals can be impacted by what we do upstream. And based on teacher feedback and letters I
get from students, it’s working.”

In addition to visiting classrooms, these new sea creatures are being introduced to Aquarium visitors on a regular basis during Animal Encounter programs. “I know we’re having a lasting impact when the expression on someone’s face tells me they’ve just met a really cool living thing that they’ve never seen before,” said Lloyd.

In addition to awesome creatures from around the world, students are now able to meet atmospheric animals like tornadoes and hurricanes at the Aquarium and gain a better understanding of how the world’s oceans govern weather and climate.

“The Wild Side of Weather” is a new Lunch and Learn program being offered to school groups. Electronic whiteboard technology allows students visiting the Aquarium to interact with National Weather Service meteorologists via the Internet. Recently, students from Calvin Donaldson Environmental Science Academy were engaged and eager to discover the answers to their ‘Weather Whys’ from the meteorologist who was being “beamed into” Chattanooga from Morristown, Tennessee. “We find that many students are initially excited by the technology,” said Tim Baker, the Aquarium’s education director. “Our distance learning programs that focus on animals and habitats are very well-received across the country. The best part is educators tell us that their students absorb and retain information when it’s brought to them over the Internet.”

Bill Proenza, director of the National Weather Service’s Southern Region, was at the Aquarium for the program launch, the first education outreach effort of its kind for the agency. “While our primary goal is to protect lives, we are also dedicated to preserving our planet’s precious environment,” said Proenza. “We simply cannot afford to take the Earth’s land masses, oceans, rivers and the air we breathe for granted. It’s my hope that these programs will help young people understand the challenges of predicting weather while inspiring them to preserve the health of our planet.”

“Students travel from the mountains to the sea while touring the Aquarium buildings, discovering our connections to animals and habitats,” said Baker. “This new partnership with the National Weather Service helps bring those connections full circle.”

These elementary school students smile with delight as Aquarium outreach educator Bethany Lloyd discusses a horseshoe crab’s adaptations.
Spring: A Great Time to Think Green

By Dr. Anna George, TNACI director

While the Tennessee Aquarium has always been a non-profit organization with a conservation mission, you may have heard that we recently changed our mission statement to reflect even more of our work. We strive to inspire wonder, appreciation and protection of water and all life that it sustains.

Fulfilling this mission often involves an exciting new exhibit. Sometimes it’s our work outside the walls, like with our animal reintroduction programs. Often, it’s doing our job in an environmentally responsible way and reusing and recycling as many goods as we can. One thing is clear in our history, though. Our commitment to conservation means that we constantly work to incorporate new, more sustainable practices. Because being “green” is always a journey; it’s never a finished goal.

One of our conservation programs recently demonstrated that we can always find a new way to reuse old material. For two years, we’ve been partnering with the Conasauga River Alliance and Georgia Department of Natural Resources to restore habitat in Colvard Spring. This north Georgia spring is one of the headwaters to the Conasauga River, a globally important river that’s home for many endangered animals. It’s also one of only a dozen springs that support a population of rare coldwater darters.

During Fall 2009, we began a habitat restoration project to improve the amount of vegetation and exposed gravel in the spring. Years of erosion and run-off into Colvard Spring resulted in a spring bottom that was choked with sediment. We held all the animals in our off-site conservation facility and pumped silt out of the spring, trapping it in a cattle field using straw barriers. Because this project was the first of its kind in the Southeast, we learned a lot but still had work waiting for us the next year.

A new form of help arrived last fall; a company called GeoHay offered us a donation of silt traps constructed of recycled carpet. We were thrilled to accept their help. The carpet barriers repurpose waste material, work more effectively than the straw, and can be reused at other sites. Over a month-long period, we removed almost 25 cubic yards of silt from the spring, which was far more than we were able to accomplish in our first attempt. For the first time, patches of gravel were visible on the bottom of the spring.

Pictured above: Geo-Hay’s filtration products, such as those used at Colvard Spring, are made with 100% recycled carpet and can be reused.
The River Gorge Explorer has earned the Passenger Vessel Association’s Green Waters Certification. This voluntary, self-audited program establishes standards to extend environmentally friendly practices onto our nation’s waterways. The Explorer is compliant in every sustainability category that is applicable, and served as a test platform for Caterpillar Inc.’s C-18 diesel engines, which were designed to meet EPA Tier-II standards for emissions.

Going green isn’t complete when certifications are attained. Indeed, each evaluation pointed out areas for improvement. But just as a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, so too must a quest to be the best environmental stewards possible.

We invite you to join us on our sustainability journey. Whether you’re replacing the carpet in your house or composting flowers from Valentine’s Day, look for ways to be a little more sustainable each day. When you have a great idea, leave us a tip on our Facebook page about your green resolutions so we can share them with all of our members!

we returned the darters to their cleaner home.

We’re constantly looking for other ways to reuse and recycle material around the Aquarium. Our aquarists use repurposed yogurt cups to hold fish food as they move from tank to tank. Faded Aquarium uniforms are cut up into rags for cleaning, and our warehouse can reuse packing materials from items that get shipped to us. Even our animals benefit from reused items. On your next trip to the Aquarium, you might notice the hyacinth macaws in Ocean Journey are shredding up paper products that have been saved for part of their enrichment.

Hundreds of small efforts such as these add up to a big commitment to being green throughout our organization. Each person at the Aquarium has been “deputized” as a member of our Green Team, helping to inspire each other to reduce our carbon footprint at work and in our homes.

Our collective strides toward being as green as possible have led to green certifications for the Aquarium and the River Gorge Explorer.

The Aquarium is one of the first institutions to earn the Tennessee Green Hospitality Certification for Attractions. This independently audited program began within the hotel industry, quickly growing to become the state standard for sustainable practices and a model that’s being used on a national level.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AN AQUARIUM GREEN PRACTICES, VISIT WWW.TNAQUA.ORG/CONSERVATION/GREENPRACTICES.ASPX

Items typically considered trash are repurposed in many ways at the Aquarium. Examples shown are macaw enrichment items made from newspaper (above) and yogurt containers used to serve up tiny shrimp to seahorses and other Aquarium animals.
### MARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>TIME</th>
<th>AGES</th>
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<td>Adults</td>
<td>Members’ Camp Registration</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
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<td>9-10 a.m.</td>
<td>A &amp; 3-4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>A &amp; 6+</td>
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<td>A &amp; 6+</td>
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<td>Touring Kayak Clinic</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Thurs.</td>
<td>6:30-8 p.m.</td>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>Farm to Table Dinner at 212 Market</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Sat.</td>
<td>8-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>A &amp; 6+</td>
<td>Message in a Milk Jug</td>
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<td>Tues.</td>
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<td>A &amp; 2-3</td>
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# Tennessee Aquarium Summer Camp 2011

## Aquatots
**Ages 4-5**
**Pre-K**

| Limited to 17 children per session (Children must be potty trained) |
| 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1-8 |
| (2 camps are available during sessions 5 & 8) |
| $85/Member; $110/Non-Member |

**Camp Description:**
Our world is full of wonderful living things. Join us for an adventure as we explore the amazing lives of plants and animals with critter encounters, crafts, stories and fun hands-on activities. We will use the Aquarium galleries and animals to help us to discover the unique creatures that share our planet.

**Time/Session/Prices:**
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1-8
$85/Member; $110/Non-Member

## Tadpoles
**Ages 5-6**

| Limited to 20 children per session (Children must have attended Kindergarten) |
| 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1-4, 6-8 |
| $160/Member; $215/Non-member |

**Camp Description:**
Are you ready for adventure? Join other Tadpoles as we explore oceans, wetlands, rainforests, deserts, temperate forests and the Antarctic, along with field trips to the Chattanooga Nature Center and Chattanooga Zoo. Each day we will meet live animals up-close, create fun crafts and participate in many fun-filled activities. No camp afternoon could be complete without playing in the Aquarium stream. Come join the fun!

**Time/Session/Prices:**
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1-4, 6-8
$160/Member; $215/Non-member

## Treefrogs
**Ages 7-8**

| Limited to 20 children per session |
| 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1, 2 & 5 |
| $160/Member; $215/Non-member |

**Camp Description:**
Remember when summer meant a breeze in your face and your toes in the grass? Now your child can experience that when campers get up and get outdoors to find adventure with nature. We combine the best of both worlds when the Chattanooga Nature Center and Tennessee Aquarium join forces to bring campers nose to nose with animals indoors and out. Campers learn to be safe and comfortable as they canoe, hike and get down and dirty on Mud Day. Campers are dropped off and picked up at the Nature Center.

**Time/Session/Prices:**
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1, 2 & 5
$160/Member; $215/Non-member

## Polliwogs
**At the Aquarium**
**Ages 7-8**

| Limited to 20 children per session |
| 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1-7 |
| $160/Member; $215/Non-member |

**Camp Description:**
The Secret Reef is more than an exhibit found in Ocean Journey. Discover amazing facts about the real Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary as we dive into “Life on the Reef.” Using great activities, crafts and games, Polliwogs learn about fascinating creatures and see how we are connected to this very special place, even in Chattanooga. The week begins by exploring Aquarium galleries and is rounded out with off-campus adventures including fun at Coolidge Park and even rock climbing.

**Time/Session/Prices:**
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday Sessions 1-7
$160/Member; $215/Non-member

## Bullfrogs
**Ages 9-10**

| Limited to 20 children per session |
| 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday with Thursday overnight Sessions 1 & 3-8 |
| $215/Member; $270/Non-member |

**Camp Description:**
Leap into a week-long adventure with up-close animal encounters, hiking, water fun, projects and games. Journey through Aquarium exhibits to discover amazing and fun facts about our critters. Bullfrogs learn how we care for our animals as we go behind the scenes and meet the keepers. The week is complete as we crawl, climb and slide through a local cave and investigate nightlife during our sleepover.

**Time/Session/Prices:**
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday with Thursday overnight Sessions 1 & 3-8
$215/Member; $270/Non-member

## EcoExplorers
**Ages 11-12**

| Limited to 16 children per session |
| 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday with Friday overnight Sessions 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8 |
| $215/Member; $270/Non-member |

**Camp Description:**
This year the Eco-Explorers enjoy a week of competitive games, visiting behind the scenes areas of the Tennessee Aquarium and exploring local parks during outdoor adventures. We also spend Thursday night camping in the Undersea Cavern of Ocean Journey and watching one of our spectacular IMAX®3D films that evening. The week concludes with a visit to the Chickamauga Gorge in Soddy Daisy.

**Time/Session/Prices:**
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Monday - Friday with Friday overnight Sessions 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8
$215/Member; $270/Non-member
**FUN FOR KIDS**

**Bug Club — Creepy Crawly Fun!**

Bug Club meets from 4 to 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month and includes a monthly newsletter and T-shirt. Games, snacks and experiments round out the fun.

March: Insects in History • April: Aquatic Insects • May: Black Lighting

*Please advise us of any food allergies!*

**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!)*

**Be A Penguin Keeper**

*Saturday, March 12 • 8 - 10 a.m.*

Try your skill at being a penguin keeper as you experience what it takes to keep these birds healthy and happy. Help the keepers in the penguin back up area by preparing food, cleaning and participating in penguin enrichment time. Take home a very special one-of-a-kind penguin souvenir.

*Please advise us of any food allergies!*

**Ages 8-12 • Limited to 8 • $15/Member; $20/Non-Member**

Meet at the main entrance of Ocean Journey

**Focusing “Small Fry”**

*Saturday, March 19 • 9 - 10 a.m.*

Ever feel like it’s all a blur as your youngest sets the family’s pace through the Aquarium? All they might need is a special focus. Create an interactive Aquarium Discovery Kit with your tyke and use it as you tour exhibits with an Aquarium educator to see how it can enhance your child’s next visit.

*Please advise us of any food allergies!*

**Ages 3-4, accompanied by an adult • Limited to 10, minimum of 3 • $8/Member; $13/Non-Member**

River Journey: Delta Swamp Classroom

**Aquarium Birding Safari – It’s an Adventure!**

*Saturday, April 9 • 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.*

From the Tropics to the Antarctic, it’s all about our fine-feathered friends! Experience a special live animal encounter in the Auditorium with the green aracari toucan and African grey parrot. Go on a guided wildlife safari through the Aquarium to spot our birds including hyacinth macaws and even penguins behind the scenes. Make a treat for your backyard birds and take home toy binoculars to see them up-close!

*Please alert us for any allergies (Note: craft includes peanuts, pinecones and seeds)*

**Ages 5-7 • Limited to 15, minimum of 5 • $8/Member; $13/Non-Member**

River Journey: Tennessee River Auditorium

**Super Snakes**

*Tuesday, April 26 • 9 - 10 a.m.*

Scary, dangerous – these words often describe snakes, but words can be misleading. Explore the amazing lives of our legless friends to learn what they eat, how they move and begin life. Touch their skin during a live animal encounter and admire the interesting colors and patterns on their bodies. Make your own snake craft to take home.

*Please alert us to any food allergies.*

**Ages 2-3 • Limited to 15, minimum of 5 • $8/Member; $13/Non-Member**

Delta Swamp Classroom

**WORKSHOPS**

**Rain Barrel Workshop — Go Green**

*Saturday, March 12 • 10 a.m. - Noon*

A rain barrel collects water from gutters and stores it for future uses, especially during periods of drought. Convert a pre-drilled 55-gallon Coca-Cola syrup drum into a working rain barrel by attaching hose adapters, spigot and basket for trapping debris with the help of experts from Ace Hardware. Learn how to install your rain barrel onto your downspout at home and bring a vehicle to accommodate a 55-gallon rain barrel.

**Adults • Limited to 20**

$25/Member; $30/Non-Member

Location: IMAX Center Classrooms

*Presented by COCA-COLA RIVERWATCH*

**Wildflower Macro-Photography**

*With Tom and Pat Cory*  
*Tuesday, March 29 • 6 – 9 p.m.*

Learn how to capture the beauty of nature up close using your camera’s macro feature with professional nature photographers Tom and Pat Cory, just in time for spring wildflower photography. Practice focusing on colorful flowers with hands-on help.

**Adults • Limited to 15; 10 minimum • $30/Member; $45/Non-Member**

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

Renew your Membership — anytime! Visit www.tnaqua.org/Membership.aspx

RIVERWATCH 11
**WORKSHOPS**

**Backyard Organic Gardening**  
**At Crabtree Farm**  
*Saturday, April 2 • 10 a.m. – Noon*

Crabtree Farm is a non-profit project for sustainable agriculture. Join their experts for a workshop on backyard organic gardening methods. Learn about good soil cultivation, wise planting choices, pruning, pest control and natural fertilizers. Transplant an heirloom tomato to grow at home.

*Adults - Limited to 30 • $25/Member; $30/Non-Member*

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**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**Time Traveler Cruise on the Tennessee River**  
*With Dr. Nick Honnerkamp*  
*Saturday, April 9 • 10 a.m. – Noon*

Archaeologist Dr. Nick Honerkamp will take you back in time aboard the River Gorge Explorer for a journey through 10,000 years of Chattanooga’s human and industrial history. Travel upriver past the Bluff Furnace to Maclellan Island and Critico Creek, and downriver to Moccasin Bend and Williams Island.

*All Ages • Limited to 68 • $24/Member Adult; $18/Member Child (0-12) $29/Non-Member Adult; $21.50/Non-Member Child (3-12); $18/Child under 3*

**Birds & Battles on Stringer’s Ridge**  
*with Jim Ogden and Kevin Calhoon*  
*Saturday, April 30 • 9 a.m. – Noon*

Migration corridors for birds may seem disconnected to Civil War history, but these same passageways play a significant role in why some of the most important actions of the Civil War happened here. Join Tennessee Aquarium Assistant Curator of Forests Kevin Calhoon and Civil War Historian Jim Ogden for a unique hike that combines natural history with Civil War history. Ridges like this are important pathways for migrating songbirds and birds of prey that follow ridge thermal lifts created by ridges. This same high ground allows a view of Chattanooga at the orientation of the first “battles at Chattanooga” in the Civil War. Hear the stories from the perspective of these accomplished experts.

*All - Limited to 20 • $8/Member; $13/Non-Member*

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**Picture the Aquarium Photography Workshop**  
*With Tom and Pat Cory*  
*Thursday, April 28 • 6 – 9 p.m.*

Capture stunning marine life, penguins and tropical butterflies on film. Begin with a short clinic before photographing in both Aquarium buildings with hands-on advice by professional nature photographers Tom and Pat Cory.

*Adults - Limited to 20 • $30/Member; $45/Non-Member*

**Hanging Basket Gardens**  
*Thursday, May 12 • 6 – 8 p.m.*

Join Aquarium lead horticulturist Christine Bock and designers from The Barn Nursery to pot a beautiful hanging basket for sun or shade. Plant a cocolined basket with lantana and petunias for sun baskets, fuchsia and impatians for shade, plus a 6-pack of additional plants. Take home fertilizer and tips to keep it looking great.

*Adults - Limited to 15 • $25/Member; $35/Non-Member*

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**Wildflower Walks**

**Bluebell Hill**  
*Saturday, April 2 • 1:30 – 4 p.m.*

Explore woodland trails on Big Ridge in Chattanooga to view a sea of Virginia bluebells, accented with bloodroot, wild geranium, trillium and other beautiful spring beauties. (Moderate hike)

**Cumberland Trail Wildflower Walk**  
*Sunday, April 3 • 1:30 – 4 p.m.*

The Rock Creek wilderness of the Cumberland Trail in Sale Creek features wild blue phlox, wild geranium, many species of trillium, hundreds of trout lilies and more. (Easy walk on woodland trail with a few gradual inclines)

**Rhodie Ramble at Lula Lake**  
*Sunday, May 22 • 1:30 – 4 p.m.*

During late May, robust rhododendrons, mountain laurel and mountain camellias put out showy blooms in the woodlands of Lookout Mountain. Masses of blossoms from white to pinks blanket the hillsides along the creek — the beauty of late spring in the Southeast! (Easy to moderate walk)

**Farm to Table Dinner at 212**  
*Thursday, April 21 • 6:30 – 8 p.m.*

Join us in honor of Earth Day for a delicious dinner with Trish King from Slow Food and owners from local farms that follow sustainable practices. Begin with grape leaves filled with local herbed goat cheese and grilled trout. A spring arugula salad is followed by Moussaka, a savory dish layered with local Williams Island lamb, nightshade vegetables and a light béchamel sauce. End with a strawberry rhubarb blintz a la mode. Includes cooking demonstration, dinner, a glass of house wine, tax and gratuity.

*Adults - Limited to 35 • $35/Member; $45/Non-Member*

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

Go green and get Riverwatch online! Visit www.tnaqua.org/Membership/Riverwatch.aspx
Travel Adventures

Wild Wonderful Florida

June 1 – 4
As we kayak the crystal clear Ocklawaha River near Silver Springs, look for wildlife and, believe it or not, Rhesus monkeys, said to be descendants of escapees from Tarzan films that roam freely in this wildlife refuge! Snorkel, tube or paddle down the beautiful Ichetucknee River and more. Shared lodging in new modern cabins in the state park. Limited to 10 people, adults with children ages 8+.

Chicago — Gardens, Art & Architecture

June 8 – June 12
Explore Chicago’s beautiful gardens, famous architecture and world-renowned art museum. The Chicago Botanic Garden’s stunning landscapes include a native prairie while the Lincoln Park Zoo is a verdant oasis in the shadow of skyscrapers. The world famous Art Institute feature an impressive impressionist collection. Stroll through Millennium Park to experience “The Bean” and Lurie Garden, a unique combination of spatial structure, plantings and lighting design. Marvel at Chicago’s soaring towers on a narrated river cruise with the Chicago Architecture Foundation, visit the Shedd Aquarium and much more!

Patagonia, Chile

November 26 – December 4
Experience the stunning landscapes of southern Chile in Torres Del Paine National Park with escorted nature excursions by vehicle, walking and boat. See magnificent condors, foxes, puma, guanacos and glaciers — plus the Orway Magallenic penguin colony in Punta Arenas.

San Diego Photo Safari

Sunday, Oct. 23 – Saturday, Oct. 29
Join professional nature photographers Tom and Pat Cory to capture rich images, from rugged seacoasts, tide pools and lighthouses to Spanish missions, naval vessels and unusual flora and fauna. Point Loma features the Old Point Loma Lighthouse, sandstone cliffs and tide pools and a cemetery with hundreds of white headstones overlooking the ocean. Stop at a beautiful vineyard for a wine tasting after an African-style photo safari at the famous San Diego Zoo’s Wild Animal Park with the chance to feed giraffes and rhinos! Casual photographers would enjoy this trip too!

Antarctica Cruise with Explorer & Researcher, Dr. James McClintock

December 7-20

Book by March 31, 2011 for a 15% Discount!

Explore the spectacular Antarctic continent with Dr. James McClintock on the MV LeBoreal including an exclusive visit with him to Palmer Station to learn about his research first-hand. See gentoo and macaroni penguins and much more! Meet Dr. McClintock and hear about the trip during a special presentation at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 27 in the Tennessee Aquarium auditorium. Call 423-267-3474 to let us know you’re attending.

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

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

**Family Canoe Trips**

*Presented by* [Dasani]

**Saturday, March 26 • 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.**

Paddle the pastoral waters of the North Chickamauga Creek in canoes and spot wildlife with your family. All equipment and transport are provided. Please bring your own drink and lunch if desired. Meet at Greenway Farm.

**Saturday, May 21 • 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

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 • Adult: $15/Member; $20/Non-Member

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**Nickajack Lock Paddle**

**Saturday, May 28 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

Kayakers — paddle en masse through the lock of the Nickajack Dam between Nickajack and Guntersville lakes. The adrenalin builds as the huge doors close of the lock close and the rising water lifts kayakers 41 feet to the adjoining reservoir to look for wildlife. Includes all equipment and transportation. BYO lunch and water bottle.

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

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**Downtown Sunset Paddle**

*Thursday, April 14 • 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.*

Launching kayaks at Coolidge Park, paddle past downtown landmarks and around Maclellan Island, a beautiful bird sanctuary where large blue herons roost at sunset.

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

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**Women on the Water (WOW)**

*Thursday, April 28 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.*

Ladies! Paddle with us on a laid-back adventure as we explore the creek at Greenway Farm. Kayaks and all equipment are provided, including an expert female guide. *Meet at Greenway Farm.* Includes all equipment and transportation. BYO drink if desired.

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

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**Touring Kayak Clinics**

*Saturday, March 19 & April 16 • 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.*

May 8 • 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Learn kayaking basics with Outdoor Chattanooga. Proper paddling techniques, how to enter and exit a boat, safety guidelines and what to do if you turn over will all be covered. Dress in clothing that may get wet and bring dry ones. *Meet at Greenway Farm.*

Adults and ages 14 and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 12, minimum 8 • $20/Member; $25/Non-Member

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**Fourth Chattanooga BioBlitz**

*Conservation in Action!*  
*Friday, April 29 • 3:30 - 11 p.m.* &  
*Saturday, April 30 • 7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.*

The Tennessee Aquarium is teaming up with the Chattanooga Nature Center, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and Reflection Riding Arboretum & Botanical Garden for an experience that is part contest, festival, educational event and scientific endeavor. Observe and interact with scientists and experts who will see how many biological species can be counted during a 24-hour survey. Participate in interactive activities, games, crafts and live animal encounters to learn about the biodiversity of our region. For a full schedule, visit www.chattanooganaturecenter.org. No reservations necessary.  
*All Ages • Free*

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**Butterflies of the Tennessee River Gorge**

*Saturday, April 16 • 2 - 4 p.m.*


Adults and ages 8 and older accompanied by an adult • Limited to 25 • $5/Member ($10 with field guide); $10/Non-Member ($15 with field guide)

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**Message in a Milk Jug**

*Saturday, April 23 • 8 – 10:30 a.m.*

It only takes a tiny bit of pollutants to contaminate 1,000 gallons of water. So how much IS a thousand gallons anyway? Find out by helping Aquarium educators create a cool demonstration to show why we should keep our waters clean. Set up 1,000 empty gallon milk jugs for an Aquarium photo shoot, then stomp jugs flat for recycling. A water conservation game rounds out the fun.

Families with children 6 and older • Limited to 30 • Free to members and the public (Optional Aquarium Admission is additional for non-members)  
Meet under the white pavilion outside of River Journey Member’s Entrance

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

Walk the Talk! And Party for the Planet

Saturday, April 30 • 10 a.m. - Noon

Join us for our annual spring clean up during the Aquarium’s “Party for the Planet” to celebrate Earth Day! Learn how easy it is to be green with fun activities that teach why every day is Earth Day. “Walk the Talk” by cleaning up trash around the Aquarium and stay for more fun on the plaza and inside the Aquarium during “Party for the Planet,” an Earth Day celebration. Please bring gloves, water and optional snack.

Families with young children • Free to members and the public (Optional Aquarium Admission is additional for non-members) • Meet under the white pavilion outside of River Journey Member’s Entrance

Spring Sleep in the Deep

Are You My Mother?
Friday, May 6 • 5:30 p.m. - Saturday, May 7 • 8:30 a.m.

Discover some of our new babies and celebrate their mothers! Explore behind the scenes and get up-close encounters with our critters. At lights out, bed down next to the Gulf of Mexico tank in River Journey, while sharks and colorful fish keep you company. 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; add a souvenir patch for $3.50 • Minimum of 30; maximum of 40

17th Annual Tennessee Aquarium Kid’s Fish ‘n’ Fun Derby

In collaboration with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Saturday, May 14 • 8:30 a.m. – Noon, EST

Get hooked on family fishing! Pros with the Outdoor Adventures Network (www.MyOAN.net.) will help children learn about fish habitat, behavior and equipment. Then kids can fish with Chattanooga BASS Club volunteers using catch and release techniques. Young anglers may compete in a Casting Kids event. Win great prizes and earn a certificate of accomplishment. NOTE: Anyone over age 12 must have a fishing license.

Ages 6-14 (Accompanied by an adult)
Free/Camp Jordan Park & Pond adjacent to the Arena

Williams Island Adventure Cruise for the Whole Family

Saturday, April 2 • 12:30 – 2 p.m.

Zoom downriver on the River Gorge Explorer on a new 90-minute adventure for the entire family! Learn about the life of native animals and Native Americans that once lived on the island with fun activities and an on-board scavenger hunt. Keep your eyes peeled for possible sightings and signs of wildlife as we leisurely circle historic Williams Island with a naturalist guide. Experience a live animal encounter and take home a nature coloring book for more fun.

All Ages • Limited to 68 • $20/Per Person (Ages 3 and older) $18/Per Person under the age of 3

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

Renew your Membership — anytime! Visit www.tnaqua.org/Membership.aspx
PROGRAM REGISTRATION — REGISTER NOW!  www.tnaqua.org/Events.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 Date/Time Age Fee
*Indicates second choice of date/time if program is offered more than once.
**Guests who are not members must pay non-member fees.

MAIL TO:
Member Programs
Tennessee Aquarium
P.O. Box 11048
Chattanooga, TN 37401-2048

Card Number
VISA
Exp. Date
Cardholder's Signature

Check Enclosed (payable to Tennessee Aquarium)

Visa

Mastercard

Discover

Amex.

Check Enclosed

Card Number

Exp. Date

Cardholder's Signature

YOU CAN ALSO READ ABOUT MEMBER PROGRAMS ONLINE AT: www.tnaqua.org

RENEW ONLINE — ANYTIME! Visit www.tnaqua.org

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, please send your current email address to join-us@tnaqua.org.

Go Green!
Riverwatch is also an electronic magazine with the same great articles, vivid photos, and listings of fun-filled events as the print version. You can now receive your 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.

Official sponsor of the Tennessee Aquarium Membership Program.
An estuary is formed when FRESH WATER from the RIVER mixes with SALT WATER of the sea. This BRACKISH water habitat is home to many species and plays an important role in the ecosystem.

- An estuary is like a NURSERY. Many creatures begin their life in an estuary. Juvenile fish, shellfish, migratory birds, turtles and land animals benefit from the safety and food that the estuary provides.
- Estuaries work like filters. The abundant plant life filters and traps some POLLUTANTS that come down the river before they reach the sea.
- Estuaries act like sponges. Land is protected by the physical properties of estuaries. They soak up and hold excess water from floods and prevent EROSION from strong storms and waves.

Unscramble each word found in the paragraph below.

1. **FHERS TERWA**
2. **KISHCRAB**
3. **SIERONO**
4. **YESRUNR**
5. **LOTNUTSAPL**
6. **RIERV**
7. **LAST TEARW**

Copy the letter in each numbered box above to the box below with the same number and reveal the secret message.

ANSWER: WE ALL LIVE DOWNSTREAM
How do alligators see under the water?

An alligator closes its eyes as a reflex when it goes underwater but is still able to see. Alligators have an additional inner eyelid, called a nictitating membrane, which covers and protects the eye as the animal moves through the water. This extra eyelid is transparent like a contact lens, and it helps the alligator see clearly underwater. Many other reptiles, birds and sharks have this same feature to protect their eyes while underwater.

NECKTIE EEL CRAFT

MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED:
- An old necktie
- Polyester fiberfill
- Thread
- Fabric glue
- A needle
- Two large googley eyes
- A wire hanger
- A strong stick (like a yard stick)

DIRECTIONS:
1. Untwist the hanger and straighten it out as much as you can.
2. Push one end of the hanger into the opening on the back-side of the tie, entering at the wide end and pushing it through all the way to the narrow end. If there is extra wire, bend it back into the tie.
3. Use the stick to push one handful of the fiberfill into the narrow end until the tie is filled.
4. Have an adult sew the end of the tie shut by folding the point back and sewing it in place.
5. Glue one eye to each side near the wide end.
6. Bend your eel into whatever shape you choose.
Lessons from an Environmental Concussion

By Thom Benson, communications manager

On April 20, 2010, the Deepwater Horizon explosion sent a towering ball of fire into the sky over the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 workers. For more than five months, global attention was focused on the non-stop coverage of the underwater gusher. The images of oil-soaked wildlife, wetlands and closed beaches were heart-wrenching. As a result, many people will look upon Earth Day much differently this year.

Dr. Larry McKinney, the executive director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, is among them. “One year later, we are still in a diagnostic phase that may take several years to complete,” said McKinney. “We believe it may take another one to two years for beaches and some fisheries to recover. Wetlands may take up to five more years to recover along with some bird species. We’re using submersibles to take a look at the deeper aquatic communities, but some impacts may not be uncovered for a couple of years.”

The Harte Research Institute is a marine research organization that’s focused on the Gulf’s overall environmental health. But the organization also strives to develop public policy, encourage international responsibility and help people understand the scope of the Gulf’s importance through educational outreach. Dr. McKinney says last year’s disaster was a sharp blow that needs to be put in perspective. “Like a concussion, this was a hit to the head. But as you recover from the initial blow, you might discover other hidden health issues,” McKinney said. “In context, the oil spill was one event. However, there are ongoing threats to the Gulf that we need to address while there is heightened public awareness of the Gulf’s importance.”

The Gulf of Mexico is the world’s ninth largest body of water, but it is a relatively shallow, sub-tropical sea. McKinney says that makes the Gulf more susceptible to sea level rise and other climate change issues like ocean acidification. Nearly half of the continental U.S. drains into the Gulf, and water quality problems come with that inland flow. The number of coastal residents is also expected to double in the next 20 years, meaning wetlands will be lost to development at an alarming rate. “The good news is the Gulf is a tremendously resilient body of water,” McKinney said. “Because of its location, there’s an amazing amount of biodiversity, and the keystone species have the ability to rebound from short-term events. But there are limits, so we need to act while we have the public’s attention.”

McKinney will be at the Tennessee Aquarium on Thursday, April 21st as part of a NOAA supported ocean-themed lecture series created to help inland residents understand their connection to the world ocean. The Tennessee Aquarium’s mountains to the sea theme and focus on the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary fit perfectly with the connections McKinney is trying to make across the country.

“There’s a real opportunity for people to gain a broader and deeper appreciation for the ocean,” McKinney said. “If we can apply sound science to create good public policy, then we can make a difference in the future health of the Gulf of Mexico. Everyone has a stake in an ecologically and economically healthy Gulf.”

Discover ways to support Tennessee Valley conservation at www.tnaqua.org
Begin Spring Birding at the Aquarium

By Loribeth Aldrich, aviculturist

The next time you visit the Cove Forest exhibit atop the River Journey building, try strolling through at a slower pace. While your eyes are easily drawn toward the playful otters, snakes and large trout, you may be missing a large number of residents investigating the waterfalls and jumping from limb to limb throughout the treetops. From the canopy overlook, you see the exhibit from a bird’s eye view. Spend a little time here and you’ll notice a lot of birds eyeing you. “We have nearly 50 birds, representing 20 native species, free-flying throughout the cove,” said Kevin Calhoon, the Aquarium’s assistant curator of forests. “The Tennessee Aquarium is one of very few facilities in the nation exhibiting a large variety of native songbirds.”

If you are patient, you may glimpse a scarlet tanager flitting from branch to branch, or a hermit thrush waiting patiently by the feeding station for waxworms to arrive. The birds of the Cove Forest are the very same birds you can see in your backyard, either as year-long residents or as migrants traveling through in the spring. One species that can be found throughout most of the country all year is the white-breasted nuthatch. “They creep along trunks of trees and search for insects with a long bill that is slightly upturned,” said Calhoon. “This bird is often spotted hanging upside down from a branch or a tree in the Cove Forest.”

Eastern bluebirds are another common resident year-round in the Southeast, and there is a proven breeding pair on exhibit in the Cove Forest. They are often spotted flying high within the exhibit and are easily distinguished by their blue coloration. These songbirds are a special addition to our collection. Although they have been deemed “non-releasable” by bird rehabilitators due to injury, these bluebirds fly, eat and thrive in their new home.

Calhoon says there are several things you can do to improve the volume and variety of songbirds visiting your backyard trees and feeders. “One common mistake people make is keeping their yard cut short and bare, leaving no shrub or bush buffer on their property,” said Calhoon. “Provid-
There are approximately 330 different species of birds to be seen in Southeast Tennessee, nearly 100 of which are permanent residents. Do you know how to identify different bird species? The Aquarium gift shops have several great books for birdwatchers. Kevin Calhoon recommends *The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America.* The images in this book are superior, using paintings rather than pictures, to show off the different plumage you might see during the year. Check out *The Sibley Field Guide* and our other great nature books in the gift shops or visit the Aquarium’s online gift shop at: http://store.shopaquarium.org/

For the fruit- and insect-eating birds such as the Eastern bluebirds and the cedar waxwings, make sure you leave berry-producing trees and bushes (such as blackberry and pokeweed bushes, and dogwood, chokecherry and mulberry trees) on your property. These simple modifications will provide the Carolina chickadees, American goldfinches and white-breasted nuthatches with a more inviting feeding and socializing area, not to mention a great viewing area for you. No matter what kind of bird, be it northern cardinal or tufted titmouse, this spring is a great time to create a desirable backyard habitat for our native songbirds.

ing bushes for cover will make a more comfortable environment for songbirds and will increase the likelihood of them visiting your yard.” Calhoon also advises leaving dead trees on your property if they are not a potential hazard. “Woodpeckers, among other birds, search for insects and make their homes in rotting trees and logs,” said Calhoon. “Other birds are attracted to the sound of water, so by having a water source with a drip feeding into it such as a birdbath, small pond or shallow pan of water, you can encourage birds to visit the area.” But you should be cautious, watching water levels to ensure a birdbath is not too deep. “Pools more than one-inch deep cause trouble for smaller birds such as finches, which can’t stand in the deep water,” said Calhoon.

When it comes to feeders, use a realtor’s advice: “Location, location, location.” Make sure feeders are in areas with lots of perching nearby, as there will most likely be several birds near the feeder at once. Keep feeders, as well as water sources, out of easy reach for cats, raccoons and dogs. “Put only black oil sunflower seed in the feeder itself, as this attracts the largest variety of seed-eaters,” said Calhoon. “Some birds, such as the dark-eyed junco, eastern towhee and the white-throated sparrow, will eat a variety of seeds, so scattering a small amount of mixed seed on the ground near the feeders will encourage them to come.”

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SAVE THE DATE: Party for the Planet on April 30th

Did you know researchers recently discovered a chemical compound in seaweed found in the Florida Keys that may fight colon cancer? It seems as if scientific discoveries are uncovered daily, many involving marine life. Our planet holds many natural treasures, so it’s appropriate to celebrate Earth Day each year by spending time with cool creatures and people with good ideas about protecting our resources. At the Aquarium’s Party for the Planet Earth Day celebration, you can do both.

Join us on Saturday, April 30th from noon until 4 pm for family fun, entertainment, special programs and conservation booths run by members of the Chattanooga Environmental Education Alliance. Visitors will meet Aquarium costumed characters, play games with Aquarium educators and learn more about the fascinating creatures that depend upon our help to enjoy healthy habitats.

Get Your Backstage Pass Today!

Go behind the scenes with the Tennessee Aquarium’s Backstage Pass. Get VIP access to get up-close, touch and feed some of our animals. Each of the 45-minute Backstage Pass options takes you on a guided experience to “Keeper-Only” areas of the Aquarium and includes a face-to-face Animal Encounter program.

Backstage Pass to Ocean Journey: Daily at 11 AM
Go behind the scenes to observe gentoo and macaroni penguins, then meet SCUBA divers as they prepare to swim with sharks. Visit the café to starfish, octopus and thousands of other sea creatures and deliver some tasty treats to stingrays. Finish with a up-close Animal Encounter.

Backstage Pass to River Journey: Daily at 1:30 PM
This tour begins with a timely job: food delivery to some of the hungry residents in the Gulf of Mexico exhibit. Meet SCUBA divers and one massive green sea turtle. See new or newborn animals in the Quarantine Room, and then discover what it takes to keep the Aquarium humming every day. Expect the unexpected when the experience concludes with an face-to-face Animal Encounter.
Easter Weekend Bunny Encounters

Hop on down to the Aquarium Easter weekend for a special opportunity to meet, and touch, an American sable rabbit. Our Animal Encounter specialists will introduce children to this adorable domestic rabbit species. They’ll discover that cute noses, beautiful eyes and soft ears are wonderful adaptations for sensing the natural world.

These sable rabbit animal encounter programs will be delivered Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 22nd – 24th in the River Journey lower lobby near the Seahorse Gallery. Two sable programs will be offered each day at 11 am and 3 pm.

Chestnut Tree Added to the Cove Forest

The American chestnut was once an important part of the forest in the Appalachian Mountains. These stately trees produced nuts reliably, whereas the “mighty oaks” may not have nuts every year. Chestnuts are very tasty to animals and people, especially when “roasting on an open fire.” And historically, many people depended on chestnut trunks for rot-resistant wood, used for railings and furniture, and its bark for tannins.

Beginning around 1910, American chestnut trees began dying from a blight which persisted through the 1950s. When people realized these cherished trees were doomed, many were logged to preserve their precious wood. In some areas where the trees were not logged, the downed trees still remain, resisting rot some 60 years later.

A new display in the Cove Forest exhibit will feature a dead chestnut snag and a young “restoration” seedling that is the result of 26 years of back-crossing efforts by the American Chestnut Foundation. Visitors will find information on restoration efforts to ensure this important tree has a future in our forests.

Look for this new display at the top of the stairs overlooking the otter pool.

Discover ways to support Tennessee Valley conservation at www.tnaqua.org

Gifts and Contributions

The Tennessee Aquarium gratefully acknowledges the following gifts received in 2010.

IN HONOR OF: Mrs. Alice P. Lupton
GIVEN BY: Jerry & Penny Bower

IN HONOR OF: Charles L. Arant
GIVEN BY: Arthur & Cynthia MacFadden

IN MEMORY OF: Bettye Jo Lambdin Linton
GIVEN BY: Dorothy L. Potter
Joan Potter

IN MEMORY OF: John T. Lupton
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Lester & Sharon Simerville
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Summit Asset Management, LLC.
Wealth Management Group of Northern Trust
Janis & Dennis Wells

If you would like to honor special people in your life, please send your request to Tennessee Aquarium Development Department, 201 Broad St., Suite 200, Chattanooga, TN 37402 or visit the Aquarium’s website at www.tnaqua.org and click “Donate.” Please include the name and address of the person you would like to be notified of your gift. If you would like to discuss your gift and how the contribution will be used, please contact the Development Department at (423) 785-3016 or contributions@tnaqua.org.
Zip downstream aboard the River Gorge Explorer on a new excursion that will add some excitement to your family’s spring break. The Williams Island Family Adventure Cruise takes passengers to “the Gateway to the Gorge.” During each 90-minute adventure, the young and young at heart will discover Native American and Civil War history and gain insights into the wildlife that call this wooded island home. Time will be spent on each trip observing an osprey nest and heron rookery. Your naturalist guide helps locate other animals and leads an on-board scavenger hunt. These cruises will depart daily March 12th to April 17th from the Chattanooga Pier. Special Spring Break pricing will be offered for these cruises: $20/per person (age 3 and up), $18/per person under age 3.