

OCEAN CURIOSITIES AT THE AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC

Campers went “under the sea” on our field trip to the Aquarium of the Pacific! The aquarium boasted a rainbow collage of fish, sea otters, starfish, and more. Campers were immediately interested in the many brightly colored exhibits the aquarium had to offer, quickly splitting into their color groups to explore.

One exhibit, titled “Jellyfish Dreamscapes”, displayed a broad diversity of jellyfish species. The jellyfish size range was drastic, some were the size of a pencil eraser, while others were as large as a grapefruit. The exhibit was beautiful and watching the jellyfish move was mesmerizing. Another exhibit of interest was the reptiles and amphibians area. The campers were very excited to find out that there was an axolotl in this area, several groups huddling around the small pink creature in its tank while a guide explained the scientific intricacies of its life.

The interactive exhibits, in which guests were allowed to touch the sea creatures, provided a new angle of learning for the campers. Touching a sea urchin and noticing the way that its spikes open and close or feeling the texture of the hood of a jellyfish are experiences that they might not get the chance to have again. These experiences



are crucial to learning because they demonstrate the reality of what is being learned and encourage further inquisitiveness.

The aquarium was a magical display of the vast variety of creatures that inhabit our oceans. It was amazing to witness the campers so entranced by the beauty and intrigued by the mystery of the ocean. That intrigue is soon followed by the urge to ask more questions. Asking questions is a skill that the campers absolutely utilized, keeping the aquarium guides occupied and keeping the campers' minds active and curious.

