



Contact: Shelley Dawicki  
508-495-2378  
[Shelley.Dawicki@noaa.gov](mailto:Shelley.Dawicki@noaa.gov)

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### **Santa to Visit the Woods Hole Science Aquarium December 17**

Santa Claus will make his annual visit to the Woods Hole Science Aquarium on Saturday, December 17, from 1 to 3 p.m. The Aquarium, operated by NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center, is located at 166 Water Street in Woods Hole and is normally open on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Santa's helpers will provide an art activity for younger children, and everyone is welcome to have their picture taken with Santa. Light snacks will be served.

The Aquarium collection includes approximately 140 species of marine fish and invertebrates that are native to New England waters. Programs operated at the Aquarium in partnership with the Marine Biological Laboratory include those for marine animal health, and summer internships for high school students, and special exhibits. The facility is also home for two harbor seals, LuSeal and Bumper, who cannot be released to the wild. Seal feedings, held at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. most days, are always a popular and informative event.

Two new exhibits highlighting some of the Center's scientific research programs have been added in recent months to the Aquarium. The interactive "Sounds of the Sea" display features whale and other marine animal sounds. "*Albatross: A Legacy of Research*" focuses on the 46-year career of the 187-foot research vessel *Albatross IV*, which sailed from Woods Hole from 1963 until its retirement and decommissioning in 2008.

The Woods Hole Science Aquarium is open year-round Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is closed Sundays and Mondays, and all federal holidays. The Aquarium is a federal facility and will be closed December 25 and January 1, as well as December 26 and January 2. Admission is free; however, donations are accepted.

The public aquarium has been part of the federal fisheries laboratory in Woods Hole since 1885, when a permanent marine science laboratory complex was completed on Water Street after moving from original fisheries facilities established in 1871 on nearby Little Harbor. The Woods Hole Science Aquarium is the oldest continuously operating research aquarium in the United States.

Visit the Aquarium on the web at [aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov](http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov).

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