



## GEORGIA AQUARIUM OVERVIEW

**Location:** 225 Baker St. NW Atlanta, GA 30313

**Hours:** Georgia Aquarium is open 365 days a year. Hours of operation vary by season. Visit [www.georgiaaquarium.org](http://www.georgiaaquarium.org) or call (404) 581-4000 for daily schedules.

### Overview

Georgia Aquarium is one of the world's most magical aquariums, featuring one of the largest single aquarium habitats in the world and more aquatic life than any other aquarium in North America. A not-for-profit organization, Georgia Aquarium is dedicated to global leadership in research and conservation programs mirroring the unique and amazing animals within the facility. Since its founding, Georgia



Aquarium has been committed to educating and inspiring current and future generations through respectful display and conservation of marine mammals and many other aquatic species. Aquarium staff, volunteers and partners are positively impacting the future of our aquatic world by ensuring that guests learn and care about extraordinary animal ambassadors, while hopefully becoming advocates on their behalf. The six distinct galleries and more than 60 exhibits within Georgia Aquarium depict different aquatic habitats, ranging from arctic to tropical waters, and feature an expansive collection of aquatic animals.

### IMPACT

#### Visitors:

- When it opened in 2005, 1 million Guests visited Georgia Aquarium within the first 100 days.
- 3.6 million Guests visited the Aquarium in the first year.
- Guests from six continents, all 50 states and 143 countries have visited the Aquarium.
- To date, more than 20 million Guests have visited Georgia Aquarium.

#### Employees and Volunteers:

- Georgia Aquarium employs about 600 staff members.
- There are approximately 1,800 active Volunteers at Georgia Aquarium, making it one of the largest volunteer bases at a zoo or aquarium worldwide.



GEORGIA AQUARIUM

- Volunteers serve 16,000 - 20,000 hours a month and have volunteered more than 1.2 million hours since the Aquarium opened.

### Education and Outreach

- Since 2009, Georgia Aquarium has met its goal of welcoming 100,000 students per year through its educational programming. To-date, more than 700,000 students have come to learn about amazing aquatic habitats through interactive lessons, hands-on activities and exhibit tours.
- In addition to exploring the atrium and all of its galleries, students are able to view the Aquarium from a different perspective on the Learning Loop. While there, students participate in animal encounters, interactive activities and research applicable to real-world situations.
- Georgia Aquarium also offers professional development, lectures, classroom visits and various other resources for educators.



### Ocean Mysteries with Jeff Corwin from Georgia Aquarium

- *Ocean Mysteries with Jeff Corwin from Georgia Aquarium* is a 30-minute wildlife documentary series airing Saturday mornings on ABC affiliates nationally in most markets.
- Now in its third season, *Ocean Mysteries* first launched in 2011 and, since then, the show has educated an average of more than 1.5 million viewers per week.
- The program features world-renowned conservationist and Emmy award-winning television personality Jeff Corwin, along with a team of ocean scientists and explorers from Georgia Aquarium and its partner institutions. Corwin joins Georgia Aquarium and its partners as they travel to remote, exotic and sometimes dangerous parts of the globe to educate viewers on aquatic animals inhabiting our planet with the hope of inspiring them to care about conservation.
- For more information on *Ocean Mysteries*, visit [www.georgiaaquarium.org/ocean-mysteries](http://www.georgiaaquarium.org/ocean-mysteries)





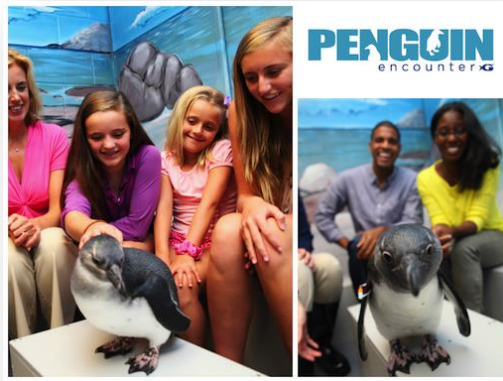
GEORGIA AQUARIUM

## VISITOR EXPERIENCE

### Programs

In addition to general admission, Georgia Aquarium offers several magical programs to allow Guests to get even closer to their favorite aquatic animals. From beluga whales to whale sharks, all interactive programs educate Guests on Georgia Aquarium animals while inspiring them to participate in conservation efforts.

- [Swim or Dive with Whale Sharks](#)
- [Beluga & Friends Interactive Program](#)
- [Penguin Encounter](#)
- [Dolphin Encounter and Experience Program](#)
- [Sea Otter Encounter](#)
- [Behind the Scenes Tours](#)
- [Sleepovers](#)
- [Camps](#)



### Galleries

Georgia Aquarium contains six distinct galleries:

- [Ocean Voyager Built by The Home Depot](#) is the world's largest indoor aquatic exhibit at 6.3 million gallons of water. Ocean Voyager contains four whale sharks -- the largest fish in the world -- and four manta rays -- the only manta rays in a U.S. aquarium -- in addition to hundreds of other animals.
- [Georgia-Pacific Cold Water Quest](#) features animals from the icy waters of the polar regions to the temperate seas of California, South Africa and Southern Australia, including beluga whales, southern sea otters, African penguins and harbor seals. The gallery is also home to Georgia Aquarium's mascot, Deepo the Garibaldi damselfish.





- [SunTrust Georgia Explorer](#) is a highly interactive gallery with touch pools full of horseshoe crabs, sea stars, stingrays and shrimp. Several large habitats feature a loggerhead sea turtle and the fish of Gray's Reef — an underwater area off the Georgia coast designated a National Marine Sanctuary.
- [Tropical Diver Presented by Southwest Airlines](#) features a 164,000-gallon reef habitat, the second largest in the United States, and it contains more than 90 species of fish. Approximately 25 percent of the reef wall is live coral.
- [Southern Company River Scout](#) is Georgia Aquarium's only freshwater gallery. In this gallery, Guests will discover a wide diversity of animals found in the lakes and rivers of Africa, South America, Asia and right here in Georgia.
- [AT&T Dolphin Tales](#) is Georgia Aquarium's newest gallery addition and features a live dolphin show incorporating the beauty and agility of dolphins, live human actors, dramatic costuming and amazing effects.

#### **Oceans Ballroom**

- Breathtaking views from the 23,000 square-foot Oceans Ballroom into the Aquarium's marquee whale shark and beluga habitats allow Guests to find themselves face-to-face with exotic fish and animals from every corner of the globe.
- Georgia Aquarium's Oceans Ballroom is an ideal venue for receptions, banquets, conferences, weddings and more. This event space can comfortably seat 1,100 for dinner prepared by Wolfgang Puck Catering, the Aquarium's exclusive catering partner, or accommodate up to 1,500 for a reception.

#### **Marineland Dolphin Adventure**

- [Marineland Dolphin Adventure](#) was purchased by Georgia Aquarium in January 2011. Located in Marineland, Florida, 18 miles south of St. Augustine, Marineland offers Guests a variety of interactive and in-water programs that allow them to make physical and emotional connections with animals.
- In 2013, Marineland, also the world's first oceanarium, celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is home to Nellie, the world's oldest dolphin in human care.



#### **ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE**

##### **Life Support Systems**

- With more than 10 million gallons of water in more than 60 habitats, Georgia Aquarium possesses the largest and most technologically advanced pump and filtration system in an

aquarium.

- The Aquarium's life support equipment is highly automated and controlled by a state-of-the-art system that can make 150 million decisions per second through a network of 24 computers.
- There are more than 4,500 alarm points in the Aquarium's life support computer system that will automatically alert technicians to any abnormalities.
- Aquarium laboratory staff test the water quality twice daily to ensure it is safe for all the animals.

### **The Correll Center for Aquatic Animal Health**

- The Correll Center for Aquatic Animal Health is a state-of-the-art animal health facility with more than 10,500 square feet and was designed by world-class veterinary professionals. It is one of the largest and most modern aquarium veterinary hospitals in the world.
- The Aquarium provides the same diagnostic, medical treatment and surgical services that you would find at the best veterinary teaching hospitals.



### **RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION**

- A leading facility for aquatic animal conservation and research, Georgia Aquarium conducts research to improve husbandry methods, develop innovative and exciting new exhibits, contribute to the understanding of the underwater world and apply new discoveries to the conservation of aquatic life.
- In 2008, Georgia Aquarium founded the [Georgia Aquarium Conservation Field Station](#) (GACFS), a research, rescue and rehabilitation institution located in Marineland, Florida. GACFS is funded by donations and grants, with a mission to increase public awareness and contribute to scientific study through conservation.

### **HISTORY AND BACKGROUND**

#### **The Gift**

- Georgia Aquarium is a \$250+ million gift to the Atlanta community and the people of the state of Georgia from Bernie Marcus, co-founder of The Home Depot, and his wife Billi, through the

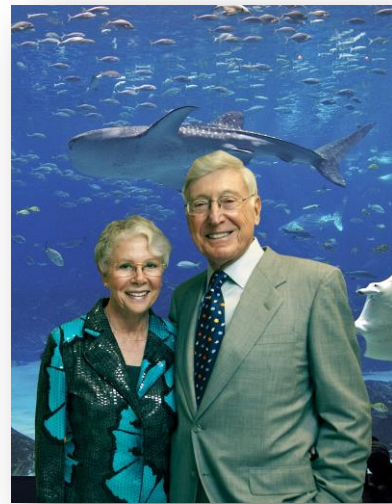


### Marcus Foundation.

- A \$433+ million facility including expansions and enhancements, Georgia Aquarium brings the dynamic and mysterious aquatic world to many who might not necessarily ever get to experience these animals in their natural habitats.
- Georgia Aquarium opened debt-free to the city of Atlanta on November 23, 2005.

### Historical Timeline

- **1979** — Bernie Marcus co-founded The Home Depot.
- **Late 1990's** — Bernie Marcus visited the Monterey Bay Aquarium to celebrate his birthday and was inspired by the kelp forest exhibit and its brightly colored orange Garibaldi damselfish.
- **2000** — Bernie Marcus dreamed of creating a special gift that he and wife, Billi, could give to the city of Atlanta and the world.
- **November 19, 2001** — Bernie Marcus announced his gift of \$250 million to build Georgia Aquarium. Jeff Swanagan became the institution's first employee and Executive Director that day, and served as President and Executive Director until May 2008.
- **December 2001 through June 2002** — Bernie Marcus and Jeff Swanagan traveled to 56 zoos and aquariums in 13 countries to expand their own extensive knowledge and experience.
- **June 2002 through April 2003** — Bernie Marcus and Jeff Swanagan began the process of bringing contractors, architects, scientists and biologists on board to facilitate the construction and development of Georgia Aquarium. Coca-Cola generously donated the nine acres on which the Aquarium sits.
- **May 2003** — Bernie Marcus presented Georgia Aquarium to the public at a groundbreaking ceremony at which the Aquarium mascot, Deepo, a Garibaldi damselfish, was unveiled.
- **June 2003** — Construction on the world's largest aquarium began.
- **January 2005** — Ocean Voyager Built by The Home Depot, the largest indoor aquatic habitat in the world, was filled with 6.3 million gallons of water.
- **February 2005** — 1.7 million pounds of salt (Instant Ocean) were added to create salt water in Ocean Voyager.
- **June 2005** — Two whale sharks, the largest fish in the world, were introduced into the 6.3 million gallon habitat.
- **June 2005 through October 2005** — Staff began the process of introducing animals from around the world to the aquarium habitats.





GEORGIA AQUARIUM

- **November 23, 2005** — Bernie Marcus's dream is fulfilled, and the world's largest aquarium opens to the public! The total cost was more than \$290 million.
- **November 23, 2005 through November 23, 2006** — 3.6 million Guests visited Georgia Aquarium.
- **Spring 2008** — Georgia Aquarium made a \$1.5 million contribution for the Georgia Aquarium Conservation Field Station, a new marine animal rescue, care and research facility in Marineland, Florida.
- **June 25, 2009** — The 10 millionth Guest visited Georgia Aquarium.
- **July 2009** — Construction on Georgia Aquarium's \$110 million dolphin expansion began.
- **May 2010** — The first dolphins arrived at Georgia Aquarium.
- **January 2011** — The Aquarium acquired the world's first dolphinarium, now known as Marineland Dolphin Adventure, near St. Augustine, Florida.
- **April 2, 2011** — AT&T Dolphin Tales opened to Guests.
- **September 24, 2011** — *Ocean Mysteries with Jeff Corwin from Georgia Aquarium* premiered.
- **September 27, 2013** — The Aquarium unveiled *Sea Monsters Revealed: Aquatic Bodies*, a touring exhibition of the world's largest plastinated sea creatures.



### Capital Costs and Revenue

- Co-founder of The Home Depot, Bernie Marcus and his wife, Billi, donated \$250 million to build Georgia Aquarium. The remainder of the initial \$290 million cost was donated by presenting sponsors.
- The AT&T Dolphin Tales expansion was \$110 million to complete.
- In 2008, Georgia Aquarium made a \$1.5 million contribution for a new marine animal rescue, care and research facility in Marineland, Florida, named the Georgia Aquarium Conservation Field Station.
- The Aquarium is a 501(c) 3 private not-for-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors. It is funded entirely by private donations from members, visitors, and the generosity of corporate and individual donors.
- All revenue that exceeds operating costs is reinvested into conservation, education, research, improvements and future expansions.