

## Animal Wellness and Preventative Healthcare at Georgia Aquarium

The health of all animals at Georgia Aquarium is our highest priority.

All animals receive preventative medical assessments, including daily observations and data recording, routine weight monitoring, and full physical examinations along with diet supplementation and vaccinations. Preventative healthcare is highly important and these assessments facilitate the early detection and treatment of illnesses and zoonotic diseases by well-trained animal experts and veterinarians.



### Correll Center for Aquatic Animal Health

Georgia Aquarium's Correll Center for Aquatic Animal Health is a state-of-the-art animal health and research facility operated in partnership with the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine. The space was designed by world-class veterinary professionals and conservation organizations to provide the highest level of care possible, all centrally located within the Aquarium. The Correll Center's roughly 9,000-square-foot space includes:

- Surgery suite with gas and water-borne anesthesia systems
- Pathology room
- Medical records room
- Water quality lab
- Diagnostic lab with digital radiography, ultrasound and endoscopy/laparoscopy capabilities
- Treatment space
- Veterinary pharmacy
- Ultra low-temperature freezer room
- Avian intensive care room
- Small mammal intensive care room
- Necropsy room



### **Georgia Aquarium's Animal Health Residency Program**

Georgia Aquarium is proud to host its Animal Health Residency Program in the specialty fields of wildlife medicine and veterinary pathology. This partnership with the University of Georgia integrates an aquarium and veterinary teaching hospital and allows us to provide a complete aquatic animal pathology and clinical medicine program while training veterinary residents, interns and externs.



### **Animal Training and Enrichment**

Training and enrichment are an important part of providing the highest quality of care, this allows trainers to care for animals in a way that is safe, effective and stimulating.

Many animals at Georgia Aquarium participate in daily training sessions, which use positive reinforcement to encourage desirable behaviors. Training builds relationships with the animal care staff, and teaches behaviors that not only challenge and stimulate the animals, but most importantly, help us take care of them. The animals learn to remain calm for veterinary examinations and present different parts of their bodies for examination, allowing the animal care staff to obtain measurements and diagnostic samples. Whether animals are presenting tail flukes for a blood draw, holding still for an ultrasound or opening their mouths for dental care, these trained behaviors ensure they are receiving the best care possible every day.

Another important way our staff care for the animals at Georgia Aquarium is through environmental enrichment, a process of introducing activities and objects to an animal's environment to stimulate the animal and encourage certain behaviors. Environmental enrichment may be used as reinforcement during training sessions, or it may simply stimulate and engage an animal. Enrichment comes in many forms. Staff may manipulate an animal's habitat, vary feeding schedules, or even introduce enrichment items into habitats to encourage an animal to explore, interact, and exhibit natural behaviors.





### **Animal Diets and Nutrition**

Nutrition plays a key role in preventative medicine and overall wellness at Georgia Aquarium. The nutrition operations are based in the Aquarium's commissary and are carried out by a full time, on-staff nutritionist along with nutrition technicians, biologists and volunteers. These operations ensure the best quality diets for the animals in our care while maintaining the highest standard of food safety. The Aquarium's comprehensive nutrition also includes nutrition education as well as applied and basic nutrition research.

Every year, the Georgia Aquarium commissary handles enormous amounts of seafood and fish-based seafood items including:

- 44,000 lbs. (19,958kg) of suberba and pacifica krill
- 188,000 lbs. (85,275kg) of capelin
- 13,000 lbs. (5,897kg) of pellets, flakes, gels/gruels

Each year at Georgia Aquarium:

- Whale sharks are offered 47,500 lbs. (21,546kg) of diet items
- Penguins are offered 18,000 lbs. (8,164kg) of diet items

### **Life Support Systems**

With more than 10 million gallons of water in more than 100 habitats, Georgia Aquarium has one of the largest and most technologically advanced pump and filtration systems in an aquarium. Each habitat operates as a closed loop filtration system, meaning none of the habitats are connected to each other or to any natural source of sea water. 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. Georgia Aquarium's Life Support Systems filters more than 170,000 gallons of water each minute.

Life Support Systems staff are on the premises at Georgia Aquarium 24-hours a day to guarantee systems are always running at peak performance. The Aquarium's water quality lab tests the water quality twice daily to ensure it remains at the safest standards possible for all the animals.