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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Special Sealife Experiences Await Groups at the Texas State Aquarium

Group-Friendly Corpus Christi is home to the Official Aquarium of the Lone Star State

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX - Corpus Christi is home to the official aquarium of the Lone Star State that represents over 250 species. This spacious living attraction invites groups to travel an aquatic journey from the shore to the depths of the Gulf of Mexico. In fact, the Texas State Aquarium is the only aquarium in the country that is dedicated to showcasing and educating the preservation of the Gulf of Mexico.

Not only does the Texas State Aquarium allow guests to experience dozens of entertaining and educational exhibits, it also mesmerizes guests by the aerial antics of various birds through a free-flight performance featuring hawks, owls, falcons, parrots and other exotic small mammals when groups see "Wild Flight" in the outdoor Hawn Wild Flight Theater overlooking Corpus Christi Bay. Most of the birds in the show are non-releasable and were cared for by the Texas State Aquarium in their special bird rehabilitation facility on-site.

The aquarium's newest exhibit, Tortuga Cay features a variety of species and is a sanctuary for rehabilitated endangered, non-releasable sea turtles that allow guests to experience these native reptiles from above and below the water. Groups can get their hands wet in the Living Shores exhibit as they touch several species including hermit crabs, urchins and seahorses.

Encounter colorful exotic birds, poison-dart frogs, fresh-water stingrays and boa constrictors in the popular Amazon exhibit. This amazing exhibit also educates guests about the growing concern of world-wide smuggling of exotic animals into the United States.

Be sure to make a splash at the Dolphin Bay for one of the crowd-pleasing shows, where groups will see the Atlantic bottlenose dolphins up-close as they show off their talents with spectacular stunts above or below the water.

Groups can enhance their experience at the Texas State Aquarium by reserving one of the many memorable programs. Participate in a behind-the-scenes tour, the Decksideside Dolphin Encounter or even become a Trainer for the Day. Shake fins with the dolphins or learn the methods used to train the dolphins and put your new skills into practice during a Dolphin Bay presentation. Discover life behind the scenes and join one of the members of the Education Staff for a tour of the facility or enjoy the opportunity to study flora and fauna by taking a canoe trip into the wetlands on the Wonderful Wetlands program.

For student and educational groups, reserve the Shoreline Encounter with an hour-long journey to the Aquarium's backyard shore and pier. Students will observe beach inhabitants and collect oceanographic data using scientific sampling gear. The Our Fair Feathered Friends experience also takes students behind the scenes for an up-close encounter with the aquarium's bird rehabilitation facility for examining and identifying various birds from the Gulf of Mexico. Then, student groups venture out to visit local wetlands to observe a variety of birds in their natural habitat.

The Texas State Aquarium also offers a variety of group SeaLab Programs and Camp-in Programs for all ages, including professional development opportunities and outreach programs for educators. After experiencing one of these exciting programs at the Texas State Aquarium, groups are sure to work up an appetite, so be sure to inquire about the Sensational Seafood Cooking Demonstrations that are held each month at the Aquarium. Masters of the

Culinary Arts from the Coastal Bend feature their favorite seafood dishes and provide insightful tips on preparation and choosing sustainable seafood.

This group-friendly, living attraction also provides affordable and flexible rental opportunities for off-site special events. Take advantage of their discounted rates on admission for groups by reserving your encounter at the Texas State Aquarium at least two weeks in advance by calling Patti Young, Tour & Travel Sales Manager for the Corpus Christi Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-800-678-6232 or email her at pyoung@cctexas.org.

The Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau's mission is "to drive overnight visitor\$ to the Corpus Christi Area". For more information about the Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau or to plan your next trip to Corpus Christi, visit www.corpuschristicvb.com or call 1-800-678-6232.

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