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California State University, Monterey Bay official student-run newspaper

# Monterey Whalefest 2015 is Just Around the Corner

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## Enjoy a Weekend of Free Events and Gain Some Knowledge on Monterey Bay's Whales

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Looking for something to do to unwind during the first weekend back from Winter Break? The 5th Annual Monterey Bay Whalefest is a free event that takes place on and around Fisherman's Wharf, providing a weekend of fun and education for the public.

This year events will be held on Jan. 24 and 25 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and benefit many of the local non-profit organizations dedicated to marine mammal research. Monterey Bay has been referred to as the "whale watching capital of the world" and is home to 15 different species of whales throughout the year. Recently, the Otter Realm spoke with the president of the Monterey Wharf Association, Mary Alice Cerrito Fettis, to learn more about the events. Fettis says each booth set up at the event offers a different interactive activity and she hopes people will learn

something they had not thought of before. She believes attending an event like this can make people better protectors of the ocean whether you are 6 years old or 90 years old.

Professor Gerick Bergsma, an ecology professor at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) says he would encourage students to attend the events. “I think it would be a fun event for students looking to learn a little bit more about marine life and conservation of the Monterey Bay. The festival is hosted on the wharf, and a number of marine conservation, education, and research organizations participate in

the lectures, films, and other activities during the festival.” During the festival there will be a series of lectures and documentaries presented at the Museum of Monterey, which will promote marine mammal conservation. Various non-profit groups from around the area will be in attendance during the festival including Marine Life Studies, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Moss Landing Marine Laboratory, Save Our Shores and many more. Whalefest will include a 60 foot gray whale model which attendees can climb inside to explore just how large these animals are. Whale watching trips will run from the wharf throughout the day, weather permitting. There will also be

a benefit cruise for the American Cetacean Society at 8 a.m. on Saturday. The price for the cruise runs at \$40 and will take off from local bands will be performing live music throughout the day including rock, jazz, and reggae. There will also be a shark and a Humboldt squid dissection presentation which will show an up close and personal view of the animals’ anatomies. The Marine Life Studies organization will be showing a demonstration on how their Whale Entanglement Team tackles the tough job of disentangling whales who are in distress with a mock disentanglement. Attending the event can also provide a science course credit for certain classes, so check with your professors to see if this may apply to you.

If you will be in the area towards the end of winter break and enjoy wildlife photography, there will be a free event called “Fins, Funds, and Photos!” This event will be held at the Museum of Monterey on Friday, Jan. 16 from 5 – 8 p.m. The event will display numerous photographs of marine wildlife taken right here in the Monterey Bay. Admission is free although donations are accepted and there will be live music along with a free appetizer. The donations collected from sold artwork will help benefit Whalefest 2015 along with the Monterey Art and History Association. For more information on these and more exciting events taking place on the wharf visit <http://www.montereywharf.com>.

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