

10th Annual Whalefest Monterey Announces Symposium Presenters

Free 2-Day Symposium to be held at the Monterey Conference Center featuring Monterey Bay Aquarium Founder, Julie Packard, and many other marine experts

December 19, 2019. Monterey, CA. On January 25 & 26, 2020, Whalefest Monterey will host a two day Symposium at the Monterey Conference Center with lectures by top marine research scientists from academia, U.S. government and NGO's, and documentaries related to ocean and marine life conservation. The aim of the Symposium is to bring marine science research findings from local institutions to the general public, as well as showcase sustainability and ocean conservation projects. Presenters will share their most recent research illustrated with enlightening photos, audio and video clips.

Among the highlights are presentations by Julie Packard, founder and Executive Director of the acclaimed Monterey Bay Aquarium, and Wallace J. Nichols, Ph.D., author of the New York Times bestseller "Blue Mind."

Other speakers will educate and enlighten the audience with information about rear octopuses in deep ocean waters, how marine mammals use sound, and what is done to prevent whale entanglements. Issues relating to ocean security will be addressed, as will ways to explore how ships can go to zero pollution in a commercial environment. Other topics cover transdisciplinary, collaborative work in coral reef restoration and underwater footage in 3D using virtual reality.

For anyone interested in a career in whale research, a group of graduate students from Hopkins Marine Station at Stanford University will discuss what it's like to become marine mammal researcher.

In addition to the Symposium presentations, there will be over 30 educational interactive displays inside the Monterey Conference Center and along the causeway by Old Fisherman's Wharf and Custom House Plaza by organizations whose programs involve the ocean and MBNMS. Next to the symposium in the Conference Center are a 43 ft. inflatable model of a humpback whale people can enter and examine its organs, and a 30 ft. skeleton of a grey whale. A detailed list of exhibitors can be found at www.montereywharf.com

More about the Symposium presentations:

Wallace J. Nichols, Ph.D., will talk about whales and medicine. He will describe how ocean, water and wildlife's cognitive, emotional, psychological, social, physical and spiritual benefits can build a bigger, wider and more diverse blue mind movement.

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is represented by Paul Michel, Superintendent, and researcher Chad King. The latter will recount how at a remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) dive in 2018,

more than two miles deep near an extinct volcano in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, scientists stumbled upon more than 1,000 female octopuses that were actively taking care of their eggs, as well as a fresh “whale fall”.

Bioacoustician Brandon Southall, Ph.D., will explain how marine mammals use sound, how they can be harmed by human noise, and what we can do to reduce noise impacts. Peggy Stap from Marine Life Studies will describe how the Whale Entanglement Team (WET)® helps disentangle whales and how WET’s new project helps mitigate and prevent future entanglements.

Steve Mandel of Oceans 360 will talk about using virtual reality for underwater conservation education. He will bring the virtual reality underwater camera system he designed that shoots 3D underwater images down to 200’ so participants can see what the hardware actually looks like and provide VR headsets that participants can use to view videos taken all over the globe in high resolution 3D.

On a different note, Rear Admiral (ret.) Jon White, Consortium for Ocean Leadership, will address how a healthy ocean is critical to safeguarding our national, homeland, energy, food, water, and economic securities, as well as our public health and safety—a concept he refers to as ocean security. Tom Escher of San Francisco’s Red and White Fleet, will explain how he has committed to exclusively operating zero pollution vessels (hydrogen fuel cells or electric) by 2025.

Colleen Flanigan from Living Sea Sculpture and UCSC will discuss her transdisciplinary, collaborative work in coral reef restoration uniting art, science, education, and technology in Cozumel, Mexico, and her investigation at UCSC to determine how we can provide an aesthetic and functional habitat to help revive dying coral reef ecosystems.

William Oestreich, Shirel Rachel Kahane-Rapport, James Andrew Fahlbusch, and Will Taylor Gough-
_Students from Hopkins Marine Station at Stanford University on their way to careers in marine mammal research -- will share how people become whale researchers, what they study, and the technologies involved. Each has taken a different path to find their way into the exciting field of whale research. In this presentation you’ll hear each of their stories and have opportunities to ask them questions.

For more information about the presentations and additional information about Whalefest Monterey 2020 and a full list of activities can be found at www.montereywharf.com