



MEDIA RELEASE

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Sea Jellies Illuminated coming to Sea World

Sea World has partnered with Griffith University to bring the beauty and wonder of sea jellies to life with the announcement of the *Sea Jellies Illuminated* exhibit opening in April 2018.

Sea Jellies Illuminated will feature an array of sea jelly displays and educational elements to take Sea World guests on an illuminating journey as they delve into the fascinating underwater world of these aquatic animals.

This unique and exciting exhibit will also incorporate a working research laboratory that will be on display allowing guests to view Griffith University students undertaking research into the fascinating world of sea jellies.

Sea World Director of Marine Sciences, Trevor Long said this fascinating exhibit will provide greater public awareness and education about a varying species of jellies.

“Sea Jellies rank among the most fascinating creatures of the sea and this exhibit will provide guests with an opportunity to get an up-close look at the incredibly interesting species,” he said.

“The exhibit will house a variety of local Australian species such as the Blue Blubber (*Catostylus* sp.), the Moon jelly (*Aurelia aurita*), Upside Down jellies (*Cassiopea* sp.) and Irukanji, of which polyps are currently being cultured in Griffith School of Environment labs.

“Coinciding with the exhibit, Griffith University will also establish a working research centre which will allow scientists to learn more about the species.

“We have also partnered with Surf Life Saving Queensland on this exhibit which will enable us to educate guests about symptoms of stings and what to do if stung while using the marine environment.”

Griffith University Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor Ned Pankhurst said not only would the partnership encourage students into marine science and biology degrees, it would enhance the calibre of Griffith’s research facilities.

“This exciting partnership provides substantial expansion of our research infrastructure and capabilities and a demonstrable commercial impact of our work that will ultimately lead to increased public education and awareness of the important work undertaken by both organisations,” he said.

Lead researcher Associate Professor Kylie Pitt said the new lab would not just be limited to jellyfish research currently undertaken by her team.

“Researchers will have access to the Sea World boats and the infrastructure at Sea World, and in return we’ll be able to collaborate and work alongside their team to develop innovative solutions to maximise Sea World’s conservation efforts,” she said.

“This is about engaging the public with science – that’s the really novel part – they’ll be educated as they pass through the exhibit, not just about jellies but about marine environment issues.”

Surf Life Saving Queensland Chief Operating Officer, George Hill ESM said the exhibit is an unprecedented opportunity to educate the public on safe co-existence with marine jellies in their environment.

“There are a lot of myths and misconceptions surrounding sea jellies and treatment, and an opportunity to educate the public on sting prevention, the right treatment and more importantly identifying dangerous species like Irukandji, is vital to our vision at SLSQ,” he said.

For more information and to stay up-to-date with the exhibit please visit seaworld.com.au or call 13 33 86.

Links to images - <https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/dEkOird07m>

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