

Greater Farallones Family Programs

Dive deeper into ocean science as a family at our Sanctuary Visitor Center Family Workshops. Led by our team of marine science educators, these weekend workshops are perfect for 4-10 year old budding marine biologists and their families. These exciting hands-on workshops explore a diversity of subjects including Crabs, Plankton, Sharks, Squid, Salmon, Remotely Operated Vehicles, and even BioBlitzes. Fees apply. Scholarships are available. See below for program descriptions and upcoming dates! To sign up for the family workshop email list, contact Courtney Buel at courtney.buel@noaa.gov.

Plankton Discovery Workshop

Join us for an exciting exploration of the weird and wonderful world of plankton in the waters just off Crissy Field. Be dazzled by diatoms, dinoflagellates and copepods. Discover bizarre larvae from barnacles, crabs and mussels. Participants get to collect their own samples and use their own microscopes. We will also have a projecting microscope to view wriggling and flitting microscopic monsters on the big screen.

Squid for Squirts Workshop

Intrigued by ink? Tickled by tentacles? Delve into the watery world of cephalopods. Watch a mysterious squid film, learn about amazing squid adaptations and make your own squid print souvenirs. This workshop takes hands-on to a whole new level as participants dissect their own market squids using blunt-nose scissors.

Crab Fishing Workshop

Attention all curious crustaceans! Prepare your claws and carapaces for a family event devoted entirely to crabs. Learn about crab anatomy with our crab dress-up costume and naturalist-led dissection of invasive green crabs. Look and touch real live shore crabs and sand crabs. As a grand finale, we will be using crab traps to fish for rock and Dungeness crabs off of our classroom pier.

Build-a-Shark Workshop

Come on down to the Greater Farallones Visitor Center for a naturalist-led shark workshop! Participants will interact with real shark specimens, teeth and skin as well

as watch footage of white sharks at the Farallon Islands. The program features our hands-on “Build-a-Shark” activity, where participants will assemble a life-size white shark model, piece by piece.

Salmon Dissection Workshop

Join us for a hands-on exploration of one of California’s most famous fish! Learn about the unique life cycle of salmonids and create your own fish prints using a real Chinook salmon. Participants will get to know salmon both inside and out during our naturalist-led dissection. As an added bonus, kick off your shoes and play our giant hand-painted salmon life cycle game.

Build a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Workshop

Engineers wanted! Join us for our brand-new Build a ROV (remotely operated vehicle) program. Participants will learn about the important parts of a ROV and how they help scientists discover the mysteries of the deep ocean. They will watch real footage from deep-sea submersible explorations taken in the marine sanctuaries along our California coast. Participants will design and build their own ROV's and test drive them in the water off of our pier classroom!

BioBlitz Workshop

Embrace your inner naturalist and join our marine science educators for a family BIOBLITZ. The idea is simple: Hunt for as many animals as possible using nets, traps, hooks, and hands. There are crabs, fish, marine snails, birds, worms, and so much more waiting to be discovered! We will be combing the beach, scanning the skies, and searching the waters around our pier classroom.