



News Release

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Andrea Smalec
Shedd Aquarium
312-692-3258

asmalec@sheddaquarium.org

Laurel White
Public Communications Inc.
312-558-1770, ext. 144
lwhite@pcipr.com

**SHEDD BRINGS TOGETHER WORLD'S TOP MINDS TO DISCUSS
SEAHORSE CONSERVATION AT ZOO AND AQUARIUM SYMPOSIUM**

*Leaders in Science and Conservation from Eight Countries Attend International Conference at Shedd Nov. 1-4
to Focus on Advances in Saving Seahorse Species*

CHICAGO – Thirteen years since its inaugural meeting, [Shedd Aquarium](#) will again welcome global leaders in science, conservation and research to the [Seahorse Symposium](#) on Nov. 1-4 to discuss the latest news and advances in the survival of seahorses. Each year, more than 20 million seahorses are taken from the wild for medicinal and commercial use, while external factors, such overfishing and habitat degradation, also impact seahorse populations.

Officially titled “The Husbandry, Management and Conservation of Syngnathids,” the conference will address a variety of topics within the field, including seahorse husbandry, research and ongoing field conservation initiatives, such as Project Seahorse.

During this gathering of scientists, researchers and experts, the Seahorse Symposium will also work to update the seahorse husbandry manual, which was created at the inaugural syngnathid meeting hosted by Shedd in 1998. The international conference will feature a variety of presentations from field leaders, including experts from Shedd, the Zoological Society of London, Monterey Bay Aquarium, and [Project Seahorse](#) – a collective conservation initiative founded in 1996 in response to the declining population of seahorses in the wild. Afternoon workshops will highlight specialty subjects ranging from sustainable acquisition of syngnathids, which are seahorses, pipefishes and their relatives, to setting regional goals for marine fish conservation.

“From the time our fascination with these charismatic species began in 1998 through our award-winning *Seahorse Symphony* exhibit, Shedd Aquarium has carried on its commitment to the survival of seahorses in the wild,” said Chuck Knapp, director of conservation and research at Shedd. “We’re proud to welcome back the world’s best and brightest thinkers in marine conservation to address the new husbandry innovations, ongoing conservation work and past challenges that affect this fragile species.”

In 1998, Shedd Aquarium and Project Seahorse established a partnership for the conservation of seahorses and their habitats as part of their shared commitment to the marine environment, which produced a long history of achievements. During the first year of the partnership, Shedd Aquarium and Project Seahorse developed the first-of-its-kind seahorse husbandry manual, which remains the reference for other public aquariums around the world.

In 2002, the Shedd Aquarium/Project Seahorse partnership helped secure protection for all 32 species of seahorses under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), an international agreement that identifies species whose trade must be managed to ensure their survival. Of all wildlife trade issues under international conservation management, seahorses represent the greatest volume: more than 24 million are traded each year among at least 77 nations.

The partnership has also benefited community-based conservation programs run by Project Seahorse in the Philippines' Danajon Bank coral reef. More than 30 marine protected areas (MPAs) have been established, monitored and managed as sanctuaries where fish and ecosystems can recover. The programs support research biologists, community organizers and high school students, strengthening both the communities and the marine habitat that surrounds them.

At Shedd Aquarium, the *Seahorse Symphony* exhibit highlighted the work of Project Seahorse, and its popularity led to a permanent seahorse exhibit, *Seahorses and Seadragons*, in 2005.

The first syngnathid meeting in 1998 was attended by 35 participants from nine countries. This meeting is expected to draw over 80 participants. The symposium is the result of collaboration between the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Project Seahorse and the Zoological Society of London.

To learn more about the symposium, please visit the Shedd [website](#). For more information about Shedd Aquarium, please call 312-939-2438 or visit www.sheddaquarium.org.

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*Shedd Aquarium is supported by the people of Chicago and the State of Illinois.
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