Florida Aquarium Essay, Research Paper

Florida Aquarium

On February 2, 2001, I had the unique opportunity the to visit the Florida Aquarium in Tampa. I was so impressed with the extensive collection and information that I plan to visit the aquarium again very soon.

Upon first entrance to the aquarium, I was overwhelmed by the size and vast choices of paths to take to explore the grounds. The institution was laid out into different sections covering various marine environments. Upstairs to the left, one would venture on to see fish inhabiting shoreline and beach environments. To the right, fresh water animals found their home. I found the aquarium to be separated enough to provide specific learning situations, but also well connected enough to keep everything flowing nicely. I also found that going from display to display was very easy and organized.

Each exhibit did a great job of going into detail about the bionetwork in which it was describing. I also like how the focus was not toward any one specific area. The tour took you from fresh water wetlands to coral reefs. The aquarium had an assortment of animal species ranging from fresh water alligators to sea dragons 2000 feet below the oceans surface. I also enjoyed the hands on demonstrations. I had the opportunity to handle starfish and different species of coral.

The thing that interested me the most was probably the Bays and Beaches section. I had always been curious as to what lurked underneath the waters that I braved into every summer. I was able to see, up close and personal, stingrays swimming in their environment, along with all of the fish that I like to fish for. I wasn’t aware of the vast

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majority of species that existed and swam in the same waters that I did (I have also figured out a few new fishing holes!!!).

Another thing that I realized at the aquarium was the different size perceptions when looking at fish at eye level from under the water, and from above the fish, out of the water. The fish that I used to look down at from above that looked so small now are realized to be a lot bigger than they appeared.

I would have to say that my visit to the Florida Aquarium was an overall success, and that I greatly look forward to visiting again in the near future. Not only was it extremely educational, but I no longer take for granted the phenomenal water resources that the Tampa area has to offer.