

## Grades 1 – 3: Habitats

**A HABITAT** is an animal or plant's home. It contains everything that it needs for survival – food, air, water and space to live. There are many different types of habitats around the world and animals can be found in every one of them.

### Zone A – Shipwrecked and Ocean Realm

**Migration March** – Spiny lobsters and slipper lobsters can be found in both coral reef and underwater rocky habitats. They prefer hiding in rocky crevices during the day, and venture out at night to find food. Spiny lobsters often migrate in large groups, and use their long antennae to feel the lobster in front of them.

- How are the lobsters in this exhibit different from the ones you've seen at the supermarket?
- Why do you think they are different?
- Why do you think the lobsters need to hide in the rocks?

**Ocean Realm** – The Ocean Realm exhibit represents an ocean habitat similar to what one might find off the coast of New Jersey. The temperature is relatively cold (72 - 74 degrees) and there is almost no shelter and no plant life. There are many species of fish in this habitat, and they occupy different areas of the exhibit.

- Why do the fish swim in different levels in the water?
- What is an animal in the exhibit that breathes air using lungs?



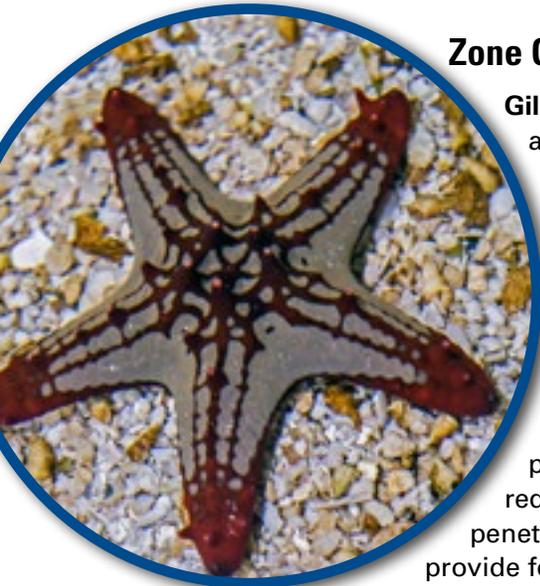
### Zone B – Penguin Island

**African Penguins** – Adventure Aquarium's penguins are African Penguins, and live where it is warm. Their exhibit is similar to the rocky shores where they live in the wild. They use rocks and sticks to make nests for their eggs. Penguins are flightless, with solid bones and waterproof feathers.

- Why isn't there snow in our penguin exhibit?
- Why do penguins need water in order to survive?



For the full "Habitats" Exhibit Companion, visit Educator Inlet at [AdventureAquarium.com](http://AdventureAquarium.com)



### Zone C – KidZone

**Gill's Grotto** – Many of these invertebrates are examples of animals that live in a tide pool habitat. They must cope with daily fluctuations of salinity, water and temperature as the tides ebb and flow. Many of these inhabitants have developed ways to survive periods of dryness as the waters recede.

- Sea stars do not have fins for swimming. What helps them to not get washed away when waves crash on the rocks?
- Look at the horseshoe crab. What do you think it eats?

**Coral Reefs** – There are several coral reef habitats in this area. Coral reefs have been called “the rainforests of the sea.” The shelter of the coral provides food as well as shelter for the fish that live there. To grow, coral requires relatively warm temperatures and clear water so sunlight can penetrate. The sunlight enables the tiny algae living within the coral to provide food for the coral polyps.

- Within the coral reef, you will find many smaller habitats. Observe which fish prefer certain spots. Why do you think they chose those spots?
- Coral reef animals tend to be brightly colored. Why do you think they have such a variety of colors?

### Zone D – West African River Experience/ Hippo Haven and Jules Verne Gallery

**West African River Experience/ Hippo Haven** – This exhibit is home to our Nile Hippopotamuses, Button and Genny, as well as a large number of fish, called Cichlids. In this habitat, the animals interact in several ways. A hippo's paddle-shaped tail is specially designed for spreading fertilizer (hippo poo!), which gives nutrients to plants and other animals.

- Why don't the hippos eat the fish in their exhibit?
- Why are the hippos' ears, nostrils and eyes located on the top of their heads?

**Octopus** – The Giant Pacific Octopus is one of the largest species of octopus. It is found in cave habitats, is solitary, and can live between 3-5 years in the wild. It eats a variety of crustaceans including shrimp, crabs, and lobster. They prefer living in caves, and can squeeze into a hole about the size of their eye (about the size of a golf ball).

- What special feature does an octopus have that helps it cling to the rocks, its food, and even the glass in its enclosure?
- Sometimes you'll see toys in the octopus exhibit. Why do you think that they are there?

