



Contours Express
The Better Idea in Women's Gyms!

VISIT US TODAY!
2864 WILLAMETTE ST.
338-3151
1510 COBURG RD.
432-8389

• Subscriber Services

- Entertainment
- Advertising
- Classified
- Homes
- Jobs
- Cars

[Register /](#)
[Log in](#)

Search:

STORY TOOLS

- e-mail story
- PRINTABLE VERSION
- © info

SPONSORED BY:



Click to expand:



The notorious piranha is just one of the Amazon River inhabitants featured in the OMSI exhibit.

OMSI

AMAZON VOYAGE: VICIOUS FISHES & OTHER RICHES

No matter how you look at it, Amazon amazes

By Mark Baker
The Register-Guard

Published: Sunday, January 28, 2007

When's the last time you stuck your hand into a watery tank and touched a "muck fish," or reached inside the belly of a piraiba fish?

Or saw a piranha - live?

"It's a pretty rare opportunity to get to see them close up," says Lee Dawson, a spokesman for the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry in Portland, where the new exhibit, "Amazon Voyage: Vicious Fishes & Other Riches," opens Saturday.

The exhibit, which is presented in both English and Spanish, was developed at the Miami Museum of Science and Planetarium by a group of researchers, artists and adventurers who took a riverboat trip together on the

Advertisement



The Register-Guard
TopJobs

Equipment Systems Specialist
Western Oregon University

Quality Manager
Cascade Composites

Member Service Rep
Pentagon Federal Credit Union

Outside Sales
Larsco, Inc.

Early Childhood Assistant
U of O - EC Cares

[View All](#)

Advertisement

Advertisement



Amazon River in South America.

"We realized we looked at the river, and everything there, from very different perspectives," says Paulo Petry, an ichthyologist at Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology and the exhibit's science adviser. "And we thought, 'Why don't we put this together to show people you can see it from multiple viewpoints and still get a great kick out of it?' "

The family-friendly exhibit takes visitors to seven ports of call along the world's most biologically diverse river.

advertisement



Turn your extra stuff
into extra cash.

Click here to place your Register-Guard Classified ad.

The Register-Guard | Classified

Hands-on interactive displays prompt visitors to try to do what scientists do in the field, such as sorting through leaves in the water to find the "muck fish," a bizarre leaf litter fish that swims in packs of rotting leaves.

Petry, a native of Brazil, discovered the species whose skin type, coloration and bone structure, he says, are examples of the fish's adaptation to the pulse of the dry and rainy seasons.

There's a video of Petry sorting through leaves looking for the fish, and you can do the same by reaching into that tank of wet leaf litter. After all, what could be more fun than feeling the yuck of muck?

You also can create your own electric current to simulate the shock of an electric eel, which can discharge 600 volts of electricity to stun their prey and protect themselves from predators.

Or, you can reach inside the stomach of that piraiba, a fish that can weigh as much as 650 pounds and grow as long as 10 feet.

You'll learn about the "Seven Perils of the Amazon," which include the piranhas, the piraibas, electric eels, stingrays, candiru fish, anaconda snakes and caimans - reptiles closely related to crocodiles.

And what about the sounds of fish? Learn more about knifefish and how they communicate through electricity. Each species has its own distinct discharge pattern, just as birds have calls.

You can even see the piranhas eat bloodworms. But you can't feed them yourself. "That would not be a good thing," Dawson says.

The exhibit also includes the "Seven *Real* Perils to the Amazon" - damming, bio-piracy (the theft of plants and animals native to the Amazon and the selling of them abroad as pets, food and medicine), mining, logging, ranching, poaching and commercial fishing.

The exhibit aims to educate about the threat to the Amazon's ecosystem, Dawson says. "You get a good sense of how it all interconnects," he says. "But it also offers some solutions."

The display features original works of art by Ketchikan, Alaska, artist Ray Troll, the exhibit's artistic director, that contain both humorous and environmental messages and offer insights on what can be done to help preserve the great river.

The exhibit also features two tanks of live fish and a replica of the boat the group used on its adventure.

AMAZON VOYAGE: VICIOUS FISHES & OTHER RICHES

What: National exhibit on the great South American river

Where: OMSI, 1945 S.E. Water Ave., Portland

When: Saturday through May 6

Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday

Information: www.oms.edu or (503) 797-4486

**Subscribe
to The
Register-
Guard >>**

**1
of
1**

Your browser does not support inline frames or is currently configured not to display inline frames. Content may be viewed at <http://simg.zedo.com/intercept/tag/int401.html>