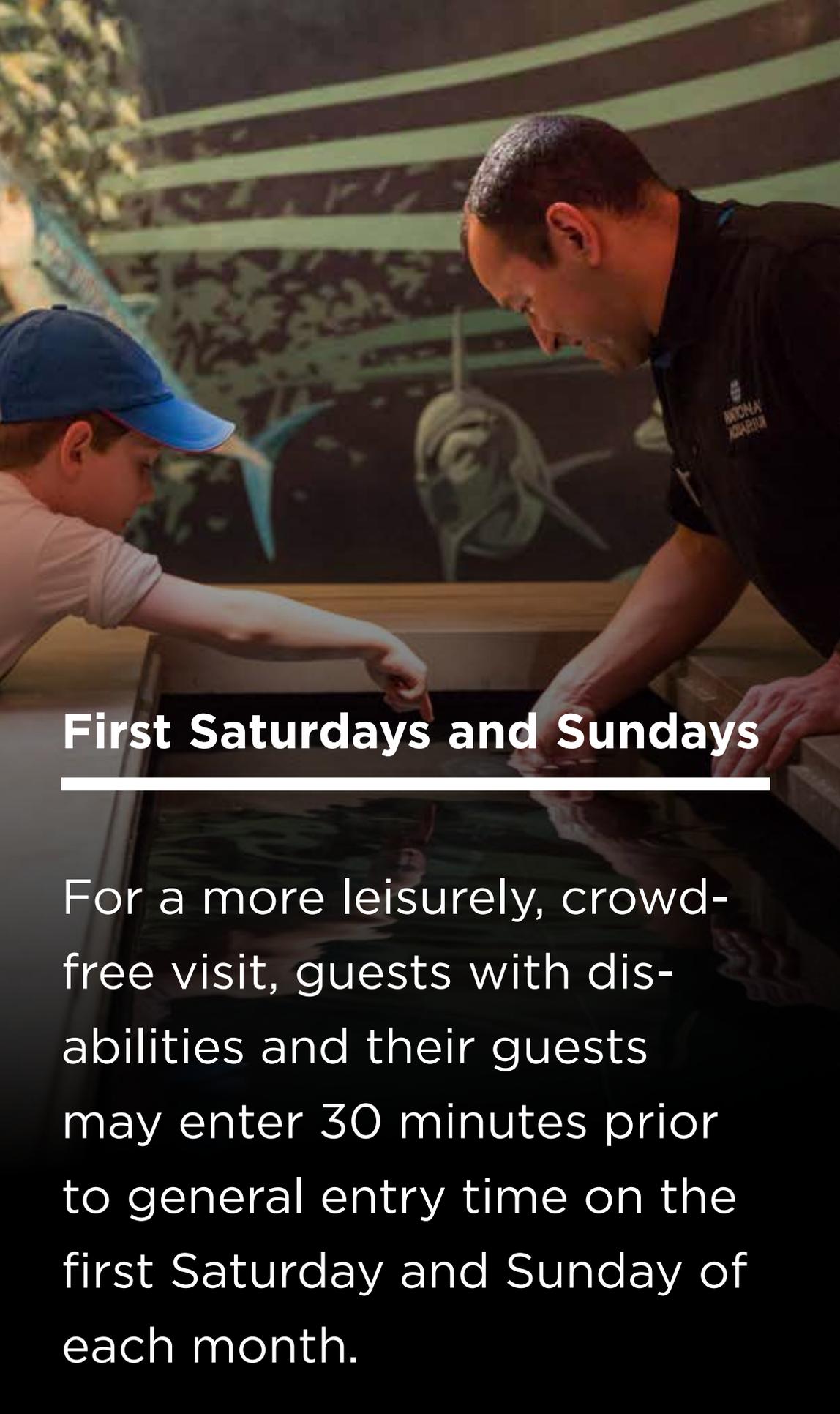




NATIONAL  
AQUARIUM

# ACCESSIBILITY GUIDE

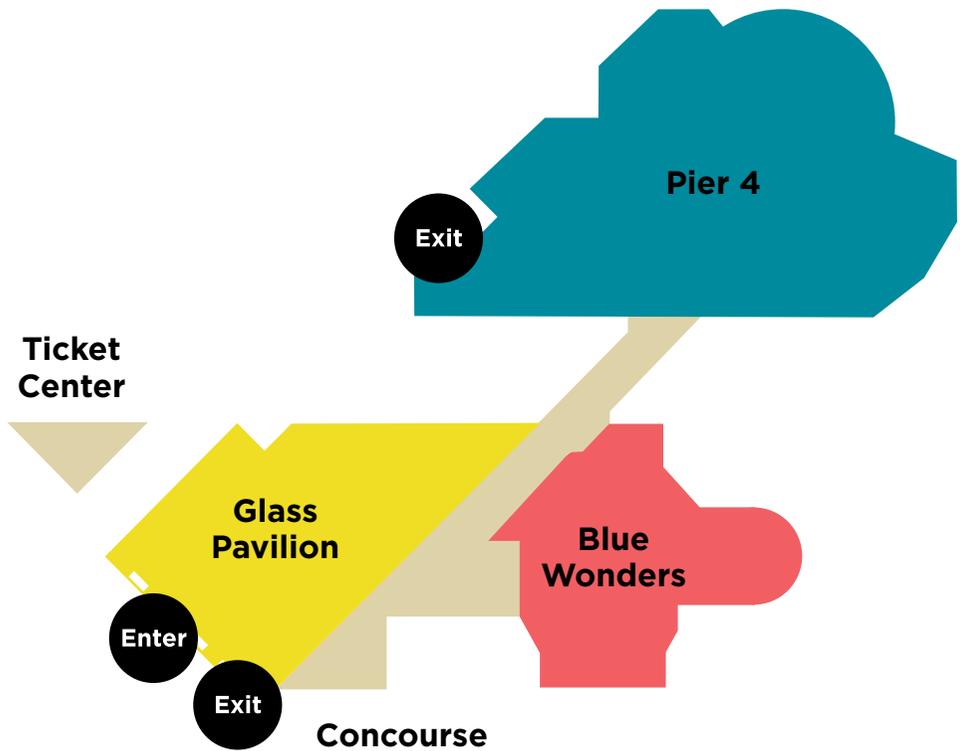




## **First Saturdays and Sundays**

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For a more leisurely, crowd-free visit, guests with disabilities and their guests may enter 30 minutes prior to general entry time on the first Saturday and Sunday of each month.



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# Welcome!

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You are about to begin a journey that spans the world of aquatic life. During your visit, you will explore the natural habitats of thousands of creatures.



Our **accessible entrance** is located at the member entrance in the Glass Pavilion.



**Elevators** displaying these signs have been designated for your use while touring the Aquarium.



Hand stamps for same-day re-entry into the Aquarium are available at each **exit**. Speak with staff at the exit to confirm the day's last entry time.

# Glass Pavilion

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## Houses *Australia: Wild Extremes*, the Aquarium Gift Shop and Harbor Market Kitchen.

-  **Entrance:** The main entrance to the Aquarium is on the ground floor of the Glass Pavilion. Wheelchairs are available for loan at the stroller check in exchange for a license or other form of photo identification.
-  **Elevator:** The elevator is located across from the main ground-floor entrance. It provides access to all three levels of this building, up to *Australia: Wild Extremes*. Guests can reach all accessible elevators from Level 1.
-  **Exit:** Take the elevator to the ground floor. Exit through the far doors near the guest services area.

# Blue Wonders: Reefs to Rainforests

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## Houses seven major exhibit areas on five levels; connected to Pier 4 by an indoor bridge on Level 1.

-  **Entrance:** Blue Wonders is accessible from Level 1 of the Glass Pavilion.
-  **Elevators:** Two elevators, marked A and B, are available. Note that only Elevator A goes to Level 5, the *Upland Tropical Rain Forest* and *Hidden Life* exhibits. Elevator B goes no higher than Level 4.
-  **Exit:** On Level 1, go toward the Aquarium Gift Shop in the Glass Pavilion. Take the elevator to the ground floor. Exit through the far doors near the guest services area.

# Pier 4

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**Houses *Dolphin Discovery*; *Jellies Invasion*; *Oceans Out of Balance*; the Atrium Shop; the Dolphin Shop; and the Harbor Market Cafe.**



**Entrance:** Pier 4 is accessible from Level 1 of Blue Wonders. An indoor bridge connects Blue Wonders to Pier 4.



**Elevator:** The elevator is located on the left, after crossing the bridge. It provides access to the ground floor, Level 1 and the upper level of the amphitheater, where there is accessible seating for *Dolphin Discovery*.



**Exit:** Exit through the ground-floor doors near the dolphin underwater viewing area to reach the outdoor ramp. Return to Blue Wonders via the bridge to complete your tour or return borrowed wheelchairs in the Glass Pavilion.

## Wheelchair and Stroller Route

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The Aquarium has designed a special, accessible route to assist you. Using the enclosed maps, you will avoid escalators and moving ramps that cannot accommodate wheelchairs or strollers.

Complimentary wheelchairs may be obtained with photo identification at the stroller check on the ground floor of the Glass Pavilion. Wheelchairs are available in limited numbers on a first-come, first-served basis for use inside the Aquarium.

Strollers for children and parents with disabilities are the only strollers permitted in the buildings. An Aquarium tag needs to be displayed while touring and can be obtained at the stroller check area.

## Service Animals

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Service animals are allowed in all public areas of the Aquarium.

## Guests with Vision Loss

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■ Receivers and earpieces that enable guests to hear the audio described tour—which highlights the Aquarium’s exhibits and provides basic directional information—may be borrowed from the stroller check on the ground floor of the Glass Pavilion. An exchange of a photo identification is required.



- A Braille script of the Blue Wonders tour is available at the information desk on Level 1.
- A “touch bag” of tactile items is available at the stroller check on the Glass Pavilion’s ground floor.

# Guests with Hearing Loss

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- Scripts for public presentations are available at the information desk on Level 1.



- If you have T-switch capabilities, an assistive listening system is available in specially marked seating in *Dolphin Discovery*. Hearing aids not equipped with a T-switch may obtain a receiver from staff inside the exhibit.



- The 4-D Immersion Theater is equipped with closed-captioning and assistive-listening systems. CC units and ALS headsets are available from theater attendants before entering the theater.



- An interpreter accompanying a guest who is deaf or hard of hearing is admitted to the Aquarium for free.



- Captioning is available on all narrated videos.



- Sign language interpreters are scheduled on two weekend days a year to interpret public presentations. For further details:
  - Contact the special guest liaison at 410-659-4291.
  - Leave a message on our TTY 410-727-3022.
  - Visit [aqua.org/specialneeds](https://aqua.org/specialneeds).

## Guests on the Autism Spectrum

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- The Guest Relations Room next to the information desk on Level 1 of Blue Wonders is a calm, quiet space available for any guest that needs a private moment away from the crowds.
- Hand stamps are available at exit doors if you need to leave the building for a break and re-enter later in the day.



- Temperature, lighting and noise levels fluctuate from gallery to gallery—specifically in *Upland Tropical Rain Forest*, *Australia: Wild Extremes* and the 4-D Experience. Staff can answer specific questions about stimulating elements in these environments.

## Tour Guides, Interpreters and Readers

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These are available on a limited basis through prior arrangement of at least two weeks. Call 410-659-4291.

## Guest Relations Room

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- A private space is available for all guests who need a quiet moment away from the crowds. The Guest Relations Room is located on Level 1 of Blue Wonders.

## Emergency Assistance

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Aquarium security staff are trained to assist you in the event of an emergency. In case of fire or other emergency, move toward the lit exit signs, where security staff will help you to safety.

## Special Guest Liaison

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The Aquarium employs a special guest liaison to answer any questions you may have about accessibility at the Aquarium or to schedule individual tours. The special guest liaison may be contacted at 410-659-4291 or by TTY at 410-727-3022.

For more information, visit [aqua.org/specialneeds](https://aqua.org/specialneeds).

## Groups

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Groups may obtain a reduced admission rate by contacting the Central Reservations department at 410-576-3833 at least three weeks in advance of the proposed visit to book the group. Groups should request special arrangements at the time of booking.

# Key

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**Wheelchair**



**Entrance**



**Exit**



**Restrooms**



**Water Fountain**



**Elevator**



**Elevator A**



**Elevator B**



**Accessible Seating**



**AED (Automatic External Defibrillator)**



**Closed Captioning**



**Assistive Listening System**



**Guest Services**

Coat and Stroller Check, Family Restroom, Lockers and Photo Pickup



**Guest Relations Room**



**First Aid**



**Suggested Route**



**Gift Shop**



**Food**



**Public Areas**



**Information**



**Digital Monitor with Schedule**

## Glass Pavilion Ground Floor

**Houses:** Main entrance and exit

**Amenities:** Complimentary wheelchairs, Harbor Market Kitchen, guest services, restrooms and family restroom, water fountains, lockers, coat and stroller check, photo pickup, digital monitor with schedule



### To reach the next level:

Take the elevator to Level 1 to reach the Aquarium Gift Shop, 4-D Immersion Theater and Harbor Overlook leading to Blue Wonders and Pier 4.

### Elevator location:

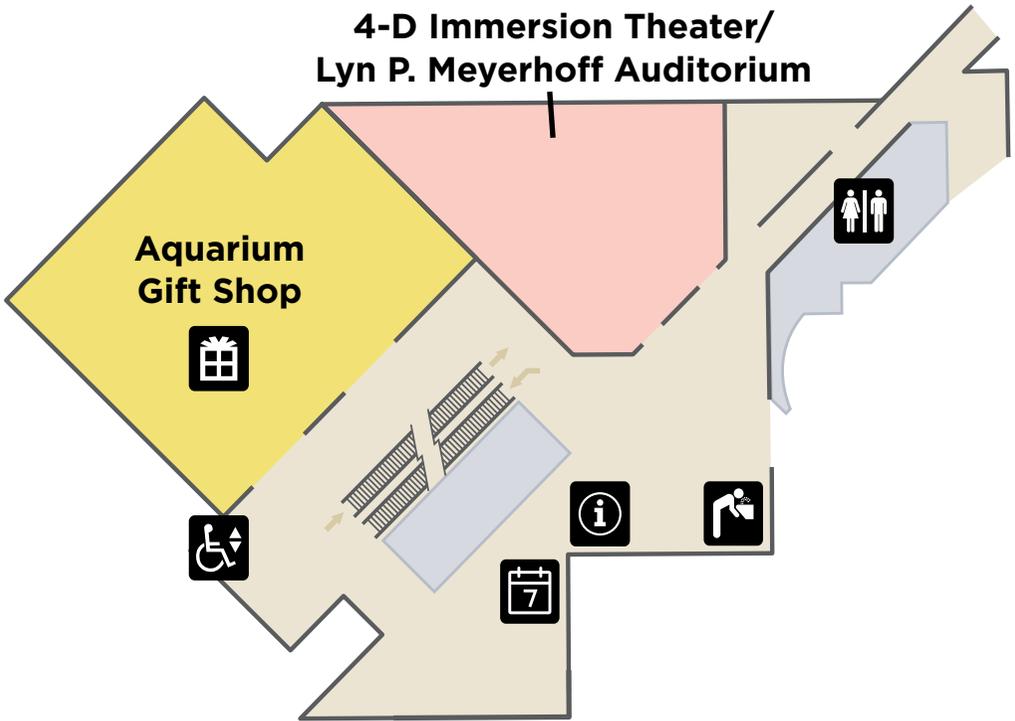
Next to the Harbor Market Kitchen.

# Glass Pavilion Level 1

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**Houses:** Concourse to Blue Wonders and Pier 4, Harbor Overlook, 4-D Immersion Theater

**Amenities:** Aquarium Gift Shop, information desk



## 4-D Film:



The Immersion Theater is equipped with a closed-captioning system and an assistive-listening system.



CC units and ALS headsets are available from theater attendants before entering the theater. Accessible seating is available in the theater. Speak to the attendants for express entry.

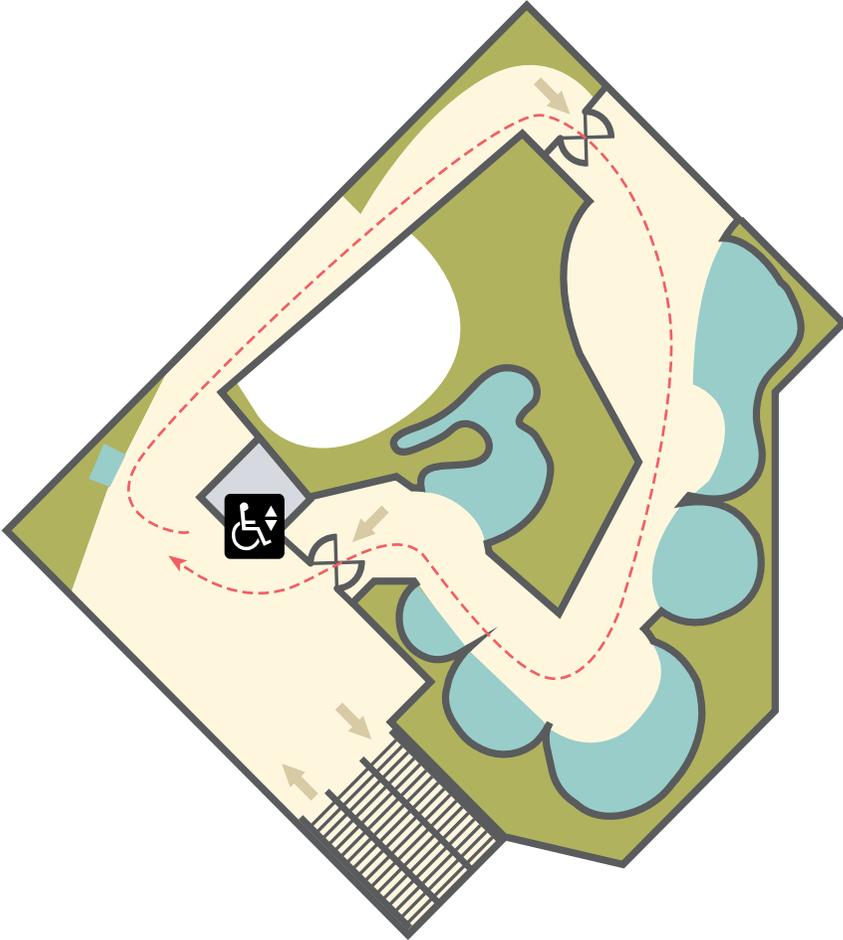
## Elevator location:

Next to the Aquarium Gift Shop.

## Glass Pavilion Level 2

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Houses: *Australia: Wild Extremes*



### **Elevator location:**

Outside the entrance to *Australia: Wild Extremes*, across from the escalators.

### **To exit the Aquarium:**

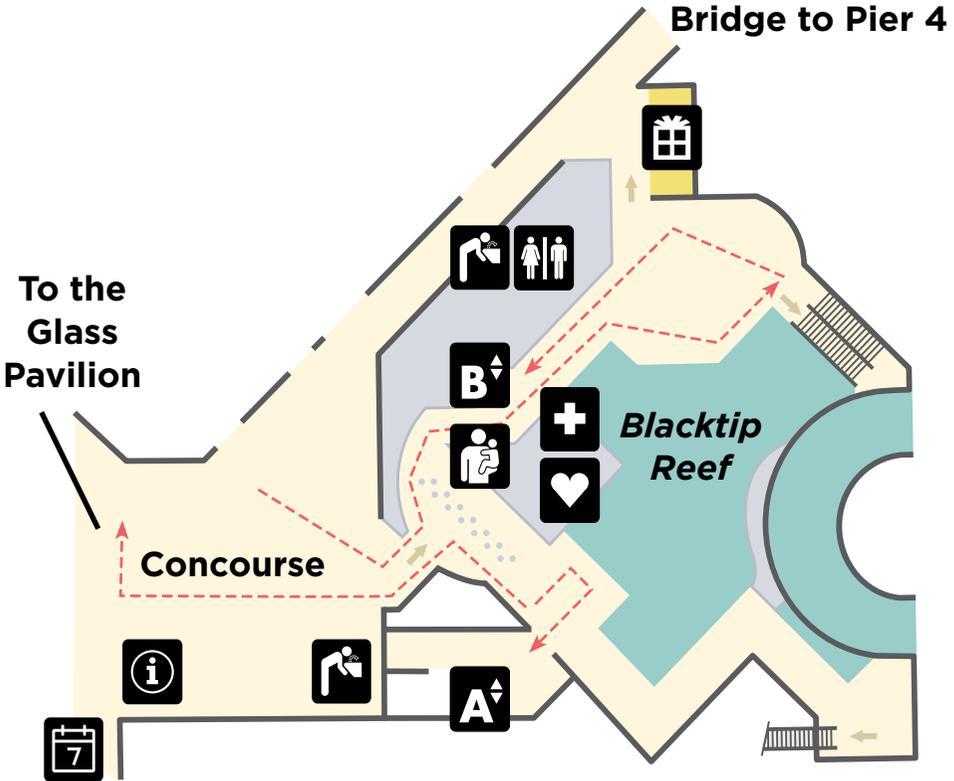
Take the elevator down to the ground floor, and exit through the far doors near the guest services area.

# Blue Wonders Level 1

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**Houses:** *Blacktip Reef*, Harbor Overlook, bridge to Pier 4

**Amenities:** Information desk, Shark Shop, Guest Relations Room, restrooms, water fountains



## Elevator location:

- A** **Elevator A:** As you enter *Blacktip Reef*, turn right into the hallway.
- B** **Elevator B:** Near the bubble tubes.

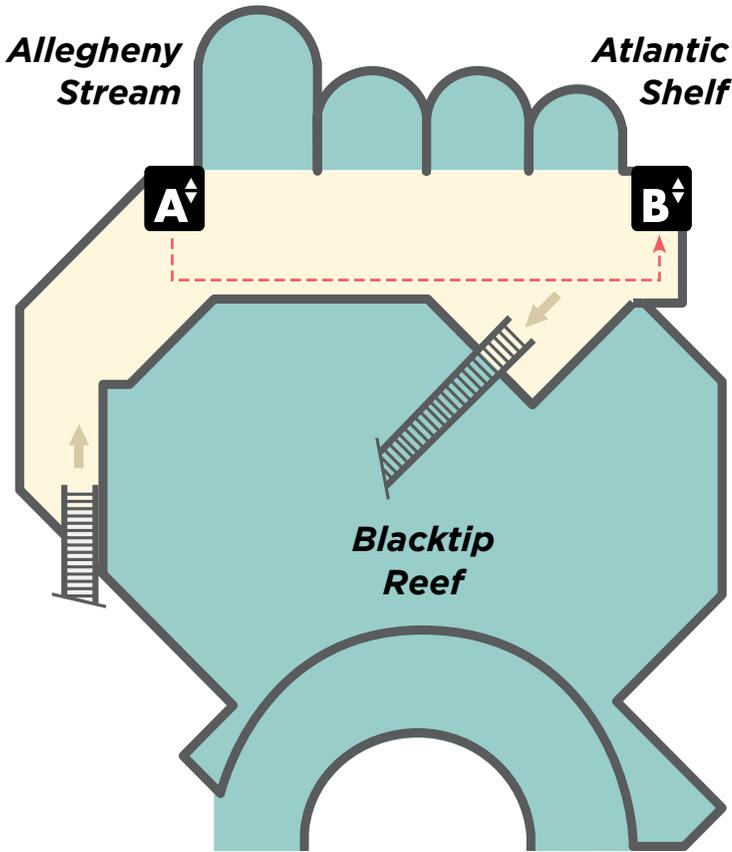
## To reach the next level:

You may take either elevator to Level 2.

## Blue Wonders Level 2

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Houses: *Maryland: Mountains to the Sea*



### Elevator locations:

- A** **Elevator A:** To the left of the *Allegheny Stream* exhibit.
- B** **Elevator B:** To the right of the *Atlantic Shelf* exhibit.

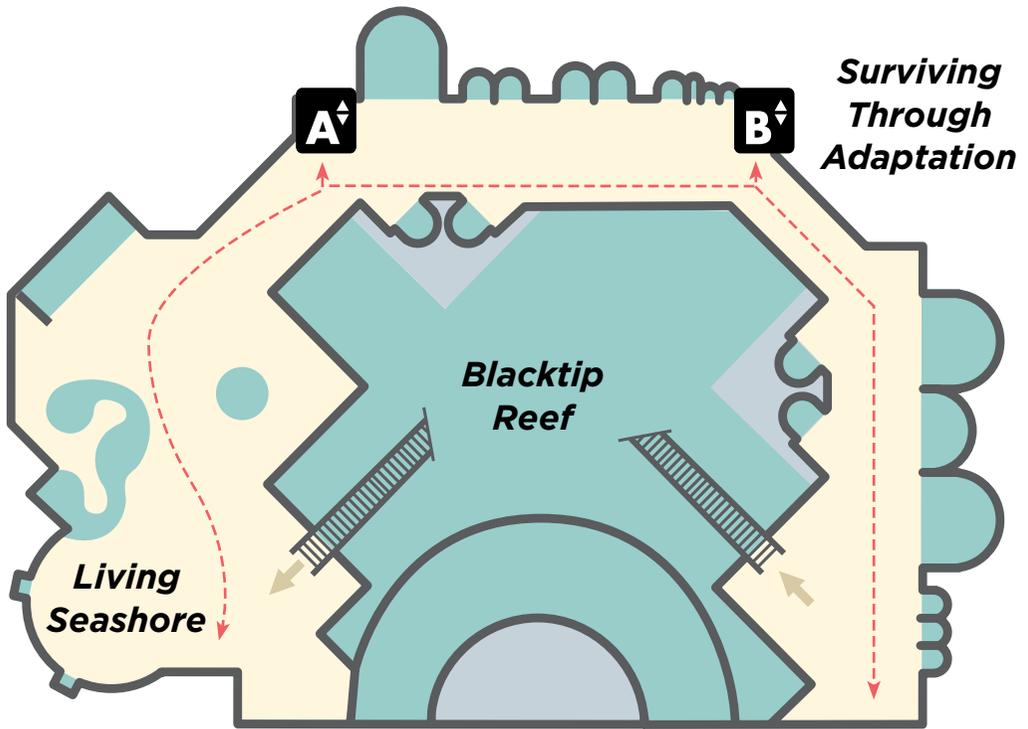
### To reach the next level:

Take either elevator to Level 3.

## Blue Wonders Level 3

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**Houses:** *Surviving Through Adaptation, Living Seashore*



### To continue your tour:



We recommend proceeding directly to Level 5. Take **Elevator A** to the *Upland Tropical Rain Forest* (Elevator B does not reach Level 5).

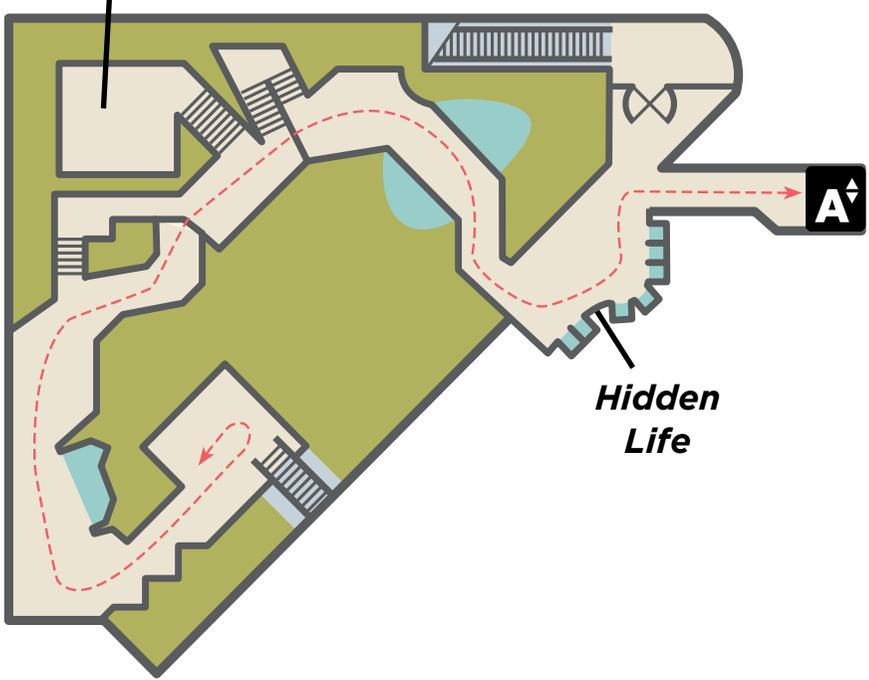
After touring Level 5, resume your journey by taking **Elevator A** to Level 4.

## Blue Wonders Level 5

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**Houses:** *Upland Tropical Rain Forest*, *Hidden Life*

### Upper Canopy Platform



Upon exiting Elevator A, you will be moving against the flow of traffic. The path is narrow, with some inclines; the atmosphere is warm and humid. You'll need to make a U-turn at the end of the path and retrace your route to exit.

The dotted-line area represents the upper canopy platform, which is accessible only by stairs.

### Elevator location:

 **Elevator A:** Down the hall (be alert—it's dark!) to the right after passing the *Hidden Life* exhibit.

### To reach the next level:

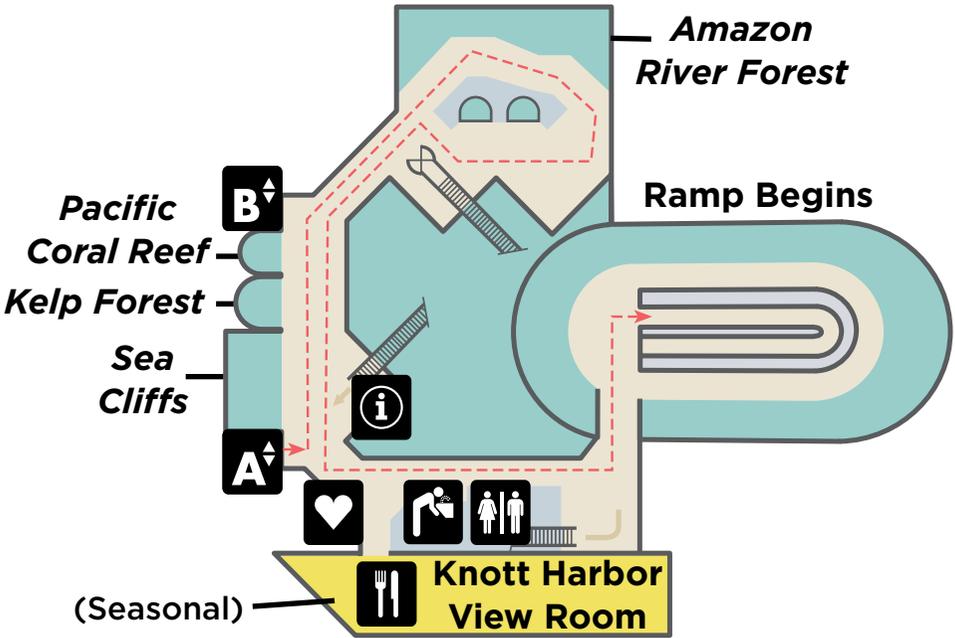
You must use **Elevator A** to reach the exhibits on Level 4 and the *Atlantic Coral Reef* and *Shark Alley* exhibits.

## Blue Wonders Level 4

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**Houses:** *Sea Cliffs, Kelp Forest, Pacific Coral Reef, Amazon River Forest*

**Amenities:** Restrooms, water fountains, Knott Harbor View Room, snack cart (seasonal)



While enjoying the spectacular beauty of the *Atlantic Coral Reef* and *Shark Alley* exhibits, be cautious on the sloping ramps. There is a level landing at the end of each ramp. These ramps take you to Level M.

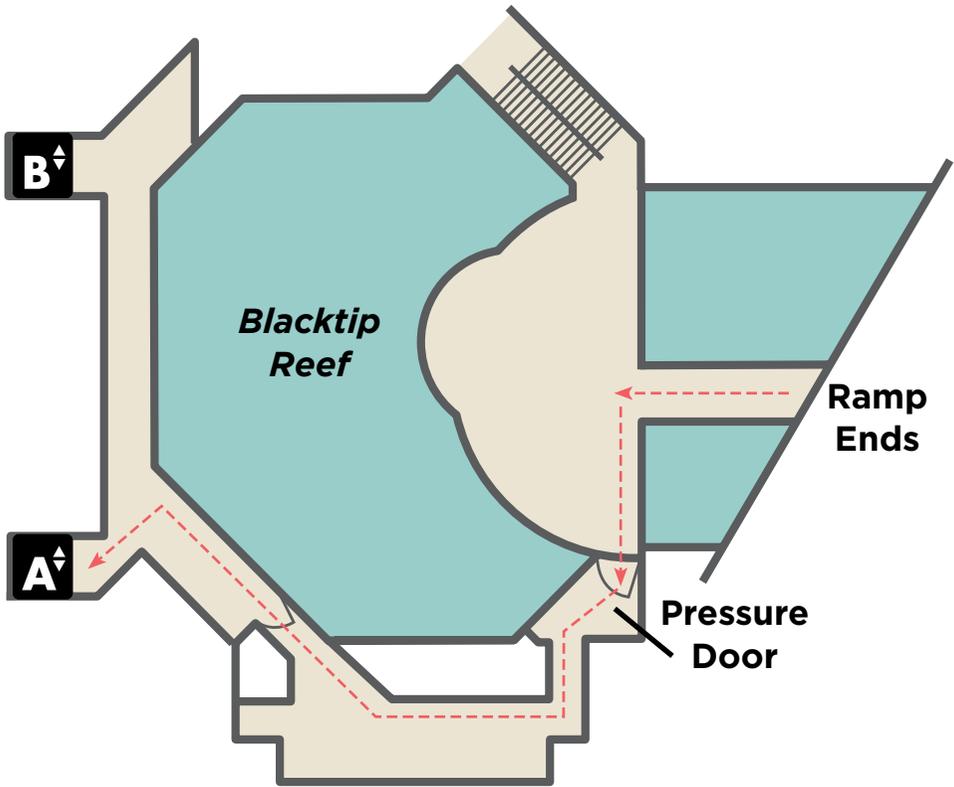
### Elevator locations:

- A** **Elevator A:** To the left of *Sea Cliffs* (i.e., our puffin exhibit). If you haven't toured the *Upland Tropical Rain Forest* exhibit, take this elevator to Level 5.
- B** **Elevator B (DOWN ONLY):** To the right of the *Pacific Coral Reef*.

## Level M

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**Houses:** *Atlantic Coral Reef, Shark Alley, Blacktip Reef*  
underwater viewing area



### Elevator location:

**A** The wheelchair-accessible door is to your left as you exit the ramps. A pressure plate will open the door. Follow the signs through an office area to Elevator A.

### To reach the next level:

Take **Elevator A** to Level 1 to get to Harbor Overlook or to reach the indoor bridge to Pier 4.

### To exit the Aquarium:

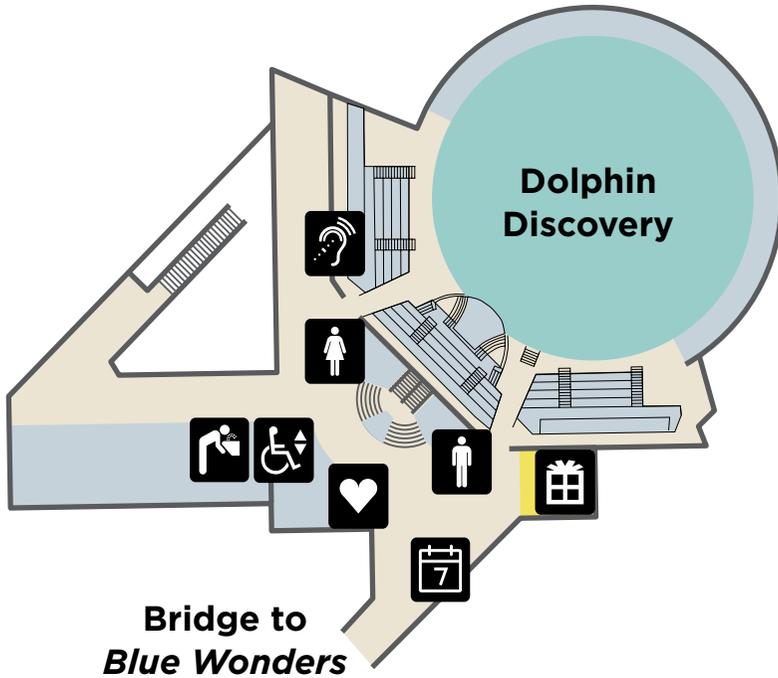
Take **Elevator A** to Level 1 and go through Harbor Overlook to the Glass Pavilion. Take the elevator to the ground floor. Exit through the far doors by guest services.

## Pier 4 Level 1

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**Houses:** *Dolphin Discovery*, bridge to Blue Wonders

**Amenities:** Dolphin Shop, restrooms, water fountains, digital monitor with daily schedule



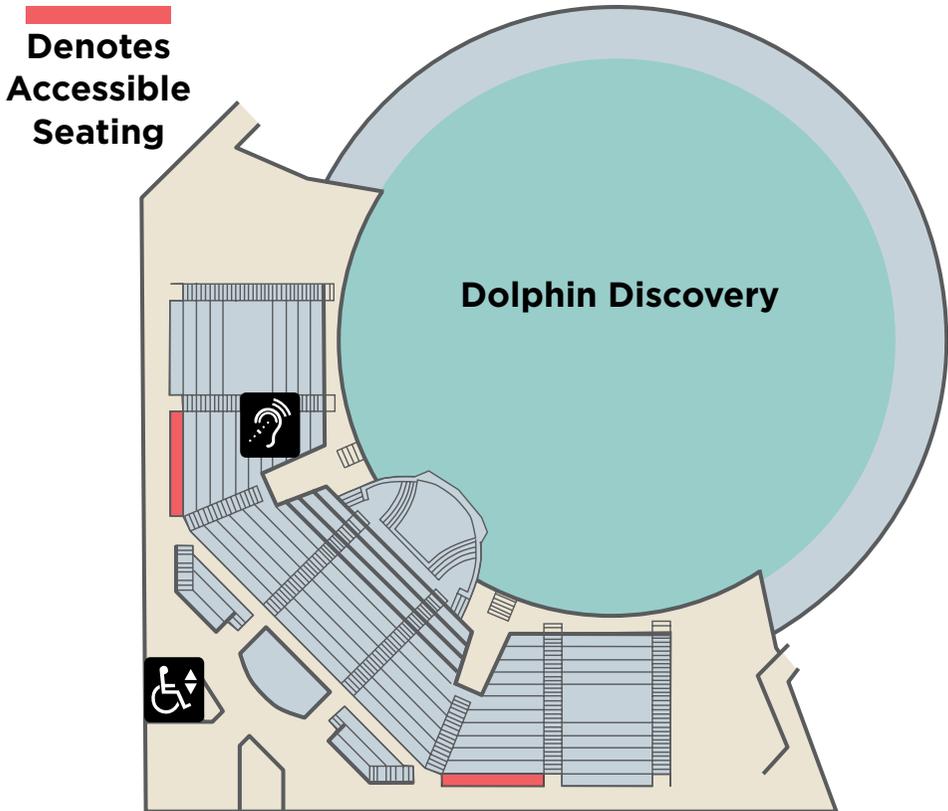
For the easiest wheelchair access and best view of *Dolphin Discovery*, take the elevator (on the left after you cross the indoor bridge) to Level 2 for direct entry to the amphitheater.

-  An assistive-listening system is available in the designated area on Level 2 of the amphitheater. If you need a receiver, request one from staff inside *Dolphin Discovery*.

## Pier 4 Level 2

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### Houses: *Dolphin Discovery* priority seating



#### Priority seating:

Accessible spaces are reserved along the top rows. Seating is available for family and friends.

#### To reach the next level:



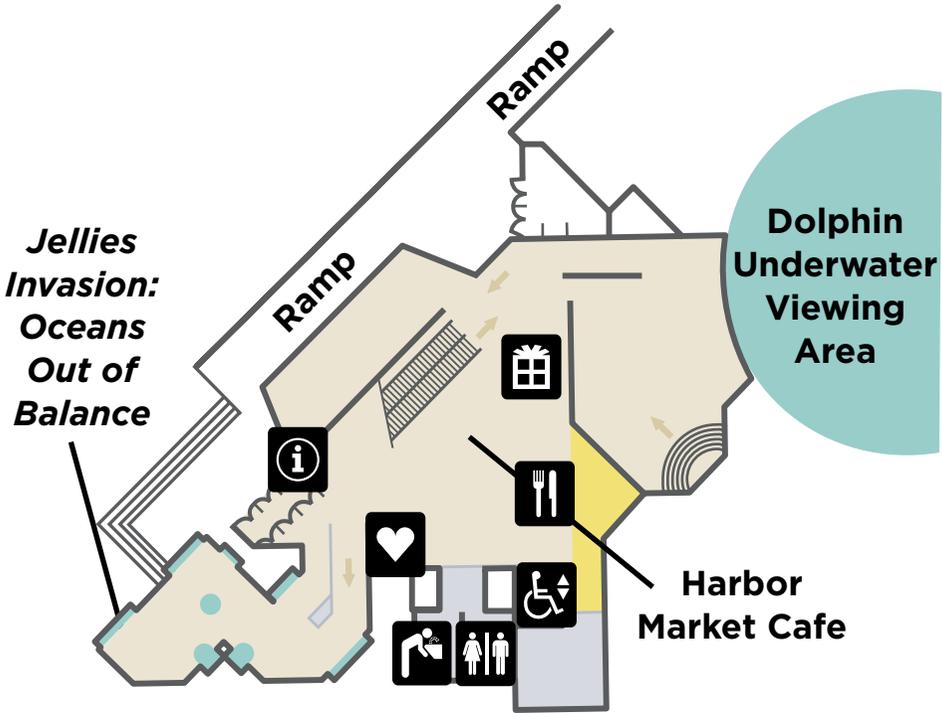
Take the elevator to the ground floor to reach the dolphin underwater viewing area, *Jellies Invasion: Oceans Out of Balance*, the Harbor Market Cafe, the Atrium Shop and the exit; or to Level 1 to proceed to Blue Wonders.

## Pier 4 Ground Level

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**Houses:** *Jellies Invasion: Oceans Out of Balance*, dolphin underwater viewing area, exit

**Amenities:** Harbor Market Cafe, Atrium Shop, restrooms, water fountains



### Elevator location:

Near the food-service area adjacent to the restrooms.

### To return to Blue Wonders:

Take the elevator to Level 1; cross the bridge. Refer to the maps on pages 12 and 15 to reach Blue Wonders. Wheel-chairs can be returned at the Glass Pavilion stroller check.

### To end your tour and exit the building:

To exit from Pier 4, exit through the red ground-floor doors marked “Emergency Exit Only” between the dolphin underwater viewing area and the Atrium Shop. Ask a staff member to alert security to disengage the alarm.



The National Aquarium is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire conservation of the world's aquatic treasures.

[aqua.org/specialneeds](https://aqua.org/specialneeds)

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