

River Otters
Front-End Evaluation
2005

Monterey Bay Aquarium

River Otters
Front-End Evaluation

Table of Contents

Executive Summary..... 3

Profile of Visitors in Samples..... 6

Short Interviews..... 8

 How interested are visitors in River Otters compared to other topics?..... 9

 Would visitors make a special trip to see these exhibition topics?..... 10

 Does it make sense for the aquarium to do an exhibition about river otters?..... 11

Long Interviews..... 13

 What does the word “otter” bring to mind?..... 14

 What do visitors know about river otters?..... 15

 Would visitors expect to view sea otters in the new exhibition?..... 16

 Which types of activities would visitors most like to see included?..... 18

 Why did visitors pick specific activities?..... 20

 Besides otters, what kinds of animals do visitors want to see?..... 23

 How interesting do visitors find freshwater tank?..... 26

Appendix A: Short Interview Form..... 28

Appendix B: Descriptions of Exhibition..... 29

Appendix C: Long Interview Form..... 30

Appendix D: Photos for Q3 – Sea Otters and River Otters..... 33

Appendix E: Photos for Q4 – Other Animals in Exhibition..... 35

Appendix F: List of Activities for Q6..... 37

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Executive Summary, *River Otters Front-End Evaluation*

Overview: The Exhibits Department conducted a front-end evaluation of a proposed river otter special exhibition to be opened in 2007. By conducting this study, we’ve gained a better understanding of visitors’ interest in the exhibition topic, knowledge of river otters, their expectations of an otters exhibition and their preferences for certain types of experiences in an otters exhibition. All of this information will help the exhibits team as they move forward on the proposed special exhibition topic.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the evaluation is to get feedback from visitors about the proposed river otters special exhibition, opening in 2007.

There were six main questions the study desired to answer:

1. How does river otters rate among the special exhibition topics considered for the exhibition? How interested are visitors in the topic?
2. What expectations would an “otter exhibit” produce among visitors? Would visitors be disappointed if the exhibit were river otters and not sea otters?
3. What do visitors know, if anything, about river otters? Do visitors know the difference between river otters and sea otters?
4. What role could other animals play in the exhibits? Would visitors be interested in seeing other animals such as insects, fish, frogs, birds?
5. How interesting or appealing would freshwater tanks be to visitors?
6. What kinds of activities would families be most interested in doing in an otter exhibition?

Methods:

To examine visitor reaction to the proposed exhibition and related topics, it was determined that two different interview forms would be necessary. The Short Interview would be used to answer Research Question #1, and would warrant a larger sample size since it was mainly a quantitative question. The remaining five research questions required open-ended questions and follow-up, so these questions were addressed in the Long Interview. To get a proper range of responses and to do some quantitative coding of visitor preferences, a moderate sample size was used for the Long Interview.

Method	Sample Size	Description
Short Interview	302 visitors	Structured interviews, to measure interest in a river otter exhibition compared to other exhibition topics.
Long Interview	193 visitors	Structured interviews, more open-ended to get visitor reaction to and feedback about proposed exhibition

Main Findings:

1. How does river otters rate among the special exhibition topics considered for the exhibition? How interested are visitors in the topic?

Of the four topics tested, River Otters ranked second among visitors. This was behind Fantastic Creatures, but ahead of Seahorses and Kin and Wonders of Wings (see page Appendix B for descriptions provided to visitors). Fantastic Creatures may have been the most popular in part because it was described as “A collection of visitors’ favorite animals....”

Since temporary exhibitions are produced in part to help drive aquarium attendance, visitors were asked which of the exhibitions they would make a special trip to the aquarium to see. Fantastic Creatures was again the most popular, but Seahorses and Kin and River Otters were equally as likely to drive visitation. Wonders of Wings was the least likely to drive attendance.

2. What expectations would an “otter exhibit” produce among visitors? Would visitors be disappointed if the exhibit were river otters and not sea otters?

Despite the fact that the majority of river otter exhibitions are at zoos and not aquariums, almost three-quarters of visitors said that it made sense for an aquarium to have a river otter exhibition. They said it made sense because you could compare river otters to the sea otters, river otters live in water so an aquarium would be a logical place to have them, they are interesting, complement the work with sea otters and are fun and entertaining to watch. Those who said it didn’t make sense for the aquarium to do a river otters exhibition said MBA’s focus is on the ocean and we already have otters.

3. What do visitors know, if anything, about river otters? Do visitors know the difference between river otters and sea otters?

When the word “otter” is mentioned, visitors were most likely to think of adjectives like playful and cute, and behaviors like otters eating and floating on their backs. While more than three-quarters of visitors said they had heard about river otters, only one out of four visitors could mention something specific about them. Even the specific comments were somewhat general, including things like they live in rivers, are smaller than sea otters and are playful. However, a smaller segment has had experience seeing them in the wild and a few visitors were aware of their historically dwindling numbers.

4. What role could other animals play in the exhibits? Would visitors be interested in seeing other animals such as insects, fish, frogs, birds?

Visitors were most interested in seeing frogs, followed by birds and snakes. People were least interested in seeing insects. Visitors said frogs were interesting because they are water-based, because of the variety, they simply like frogs and they are interesting. Birds were chosen because people liked birds, they’re colorful and they fit in with the otter theme. Snakes were seen as an option because they are interesting, people simply like snakes and because there are aquatic

snakes. When visitors chose insects they did so because insects are interesting, people didn't know much about them, kids like insects and they are seen as unusual.

5. How interesting or appealing would freshwater tanks be to visitors?

Three-quarters of visitors said freshwater tanks would be just as interesting as saltwater tanks. One-fifth said they would find freshwater tanks less interesting than saltwater tanks, and 6 percent said freshwater would be more interesting. The reasons visitors would find them equally appealing are because both are appealing, you can compare the two and people simply didn't know why freshwater tanks wouldn't be as interesting. Those who said they would be less interesting mentioned that the aquarium is about the ocean (and not freshwater), there is more variety in saltwater, saltwater tanks would be more interesting and they would be prettier.

6. What kinds of activities would families be most interested in doing in an otter exhibition?

Adults visiting with children under 18 were most likely to pick the hands-on exhibit as their favorite, similar to adults in adult-only groups. The walk-through aviary was both groups' second choice as well. However, the third choice for adults with children was the play area for kids, followed by videos of animals and an activity the whole family could do together.

There were two statistically significant differences in comparing adults visiting with children and adults in adult-only groups. Those with children were significantly more likely to pick an activity the whole family can do together, while adults in adult-only groups were significantly more likely to choose the videos.

Profile of Visitors in Samples

Visitor demographics of the two interview samples were compared to each other to see if similar audiences were interviewed. Additionally, to determine whether those included in the interview samples represented general visitors to the aquarium, demographic data from both the short and long interviews were compared to monthly exit survey data. Since the short interviews were done in May and the long interviews were done in April and May, a comparison was made to exit survey data from April and May.

In comparing the demographic variables, there were two statistically significant differences. The otters interview samples had a slightly lower proportion of first-time visitors. Additionally, the long interviews included visitors who were somewhat older than the other two samples. These differences warrant attention only for those items where repeat visitation or age affected the responses, which include the following:

- First time visitors (23%) were less likely to say they would be disappointed than repeat visitors (43%) if the temporary exhibition included only river otters.
- In general, older visitors were more interested in an activity that involved videos of animals interacting in their habitats.
- Younger visitors, especially those under 25 years of age, were more interested in a hands-on activity about otters and how they eat.

	May 2005 <i>Otters Front End</i> <u>Short Interview</u>	April, May 2005 <i>Otters Front End</i> <u>Long Interview</u>	April, May 2005 <u>Exit Survey</u>	Statistically Significant <u>Difference?</u>
First-Time Visitors:	44%	36%	53%	Yes
Members:	11%	17%	11%	No
Males/Females:	44% / 56%	50% / 50%	44% / 56%	No
Visit With Children:	36%	40%	31%	No
Where visitors live:				No
California	56%	63%	53%	
Other U.S. State	34%	28%	34%	
International	9%	9%	13%	

	May 2005 <i>Otters Front End</i> <u>Short Interview</u>	April, May 2005 <i>Otters Front End</i> <u>Long Interview</u>	April, May 2005 <u>Exit Survey</u>	Statistically Significant <u>Difference?</u>
Age:				Yes
Under 21	1%	2%	2%	
21 to 24	9%	6%	8%	
25 to 34	29%	14%	29%	
35 to 44	22%	23%	23%	
45 to 54	17%	27%	18%	
55 to 64	17%	17%	13%	
65 or older	4%	11%	7%	

Short Interviews

Method:

In May 2005, 302 randomly selected adult visitors were interviewed about their interest in a proposed river otter exhibition. Visitors were intercepted during their visit, in the area by the top of the escalator on the second floor of the Outer Bay Wing. This area was chosen because of heavy traffic flow but lower noise levels and the availability of benches if visitors preferred to sit down. Two-fifths of the interviews were conducted on weekend days and three-fifths were done during the week.

Visitors were first given a list and descriptions of four topics and asked to rate their interest in each, followed by whether they would visit the aquarium to see each exhibition. Visitors were asked whether it made sense for an aquarium to do a river otters exhibition, then asked why or why not. Lastly, demographics were collected to make sure those included in the sample were representative of aquarium visitors.

How interested are visitors in River Otters compared to other topics?

The exhibition topic that had the highest level of interest was Fantastic Creatures, followed by River Otters and Seahorses and Kin. Wonders of Wings generated considerably lower interest. Fantastic Creatures may have generated more interest by being described as “A collection of visitors’ favorite animals...” The interest levels were similar to a previous front-end evaluation using the same type of item, but different choices for the proposed exhibitions.¹

Level of Interest, Various Exhibition Topics

	Fantastic Creatures	River Otters	Seahorses and Kin	Wonders of Wings
Very High	48.0	38.7	30.1	19.2
High	40.4	29.5	42.7	29.8
Medium	10.9	25.8	24.2	38.1
Low	0.7	6.0	3.0	12.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Descriptions provided to visitors:

Seahorses and Kin - This exhibit features charismatic seahorses as well as pipefishes, puffers and trumpetfishes all camouflaged amidst beautiful plant-filled exhibits.

Fantastic Creatures - A collection of visitors’ favorite animals from octopus, crabs, seahorses, pipefish and puffers, fantastic creatures offers a wide variety of visual experiences to trigger your senses and your sense of wonder.

River Otters - Take a trip through the world of freshwater otters. Discover the world of the Asian small-clawed, North American river and the spot-neck otters as they cavort in an exhibit that provides them with both water and land diversions.

Wonders of Wings - This exhibit focuses on the unique adaptation of wings. It features fish, birds, mammals and insects including flying fish, freshwater stingrays, flying fox bats, hummingbirds, dragonflies and other animals never previously exhibited at the aquarium.

¹ In a front-end study of seamounts there was a similar pattern of ratings for very high interest: Coral reefs (46%), Undersea mountains (34%), Tropical mangroves (21%), Coastal marshes (19%). Yalowitz, S. S. (2001). Ocean Realm front-end study. Monterey, CA; Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Would visitors make a special trip to see these exhibition topics?

When asked whether visitors would make a special trip to the aquarium to see these exhibitions, almost two-thirds of visitors said they would come to see Fantastic Creatures. Half of visitors said they would come to see Seahorses and Kin and River Otters. Just over one-third said they would make a special trip to see Wonders of Wings.

Special Visit to MBA for the exhibitions?

	Fantastic Creatures	Seahorses and Kin	River Otters	Wonders of Wings
Yes, would make a special trip	65.2	51.3	49.5	35.2
No, wouldn't make a special trip	34.8	48.7	50.5	64.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Does it make sense for the aquarium to do an exhibition about river otters?

Close to three-quarters of visitors said it made sense for the aquarium to have an exhibition about river otters. For the most part, visitors thought it made sense because it provided a comparison to the sea otters already on exhibit, river otters live in an aquatic environment, it’s something people would want to see, and river otters would be entertaining and fun to watch. A little over one-quarter said it didn’t make sense for the aquarium to have a river otter exhibition, mainly because the aquarium focuses on the ocean and river otters would be out of place or because the aquarium already has otters so it would be redundant.

Makes sense for an aquarium to have river otters?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	218	72.4
No	81	26.9
Maybe (write-in vote)	2	.7
Total	301	100.0

Why it makes sense to have river otters

	Frequency	Percent
Compare them to sea otters	31	14.4
Live in water, aquatic ecosystem	22	10.2
Interesting, people would want to see	21	9.7
Related to, complements work with sea otters	21	9.7
Fun and entertaining to watch	18	8.3
Rivers feed into oceans, habitats related	15	6.9
Educational, to learn about them	14	6.5
Kids would enjoy them	12	5.6
To see them in person, up close	12	5.6
Miscellaneous	11	5.1
Include more freshwater exhibits	8	3.7
Are unusual, unique	7	3.2
Are cute	6	2.8
Freshwater animals are around here	6	2.8

To talk about conservation of river otters	6	2.8
I like otters	3	1.4
Something new to see at MBA	3	1.4
Total	216	100.0

Why it doesn't it make sense to have river otters

	Frequency	Percent
MBA focus is on ocean, would be out of place	28	34.6
You already have otters	15	18.5
I'm not that interested in them	7	8.6
They don't live in Monterey area, or close by	7	8.6
Can see them in other aquariums, zoos	5	6.2
Won't be enough of a draw	4	4.9
They're not that unique	4	4.9
Miscellaneous	4	4.9
See them all the time at home	3	3.7
River otters belong in zoos	2	2.5
People will expect sea otters, not river otters	2	2.5
Total	81	100.0

Long Interviews

Method:

In April and May 2005, 193 randomly selected adult visitors were interviewed about the proposed river otters exhibition. One-quarter of the interviews were conducted on a weekend day and three-quarters were done during weekdays. Visitors were intercepted during their visit, in the area by the top of the escalator on the second floor of the Outer Bay Wing. This area was chosen because of heavy traffic flow but lower noise levels and the availability of benches if visitors preferred to sit down. Two-fifths of the interviews were conducted on weekend days and three-fifths were done during the week.

In addition to quantitative information these interviews contained more open-ended questions and follow-ups to gain qualitative feedback about the topics covered in the interview. The main topics included were previous knowledge of river otters, expectations for an otters exhibition, and interest in specific exhibition characteristics such as the presence of other types of animals, freshwater tanks and related activities. To aid in the interview, photos and a list of possible activities were used (see Appendices D and E for these interview aids).

What does the word “otter” bring to mind?

For more than half of visitors, when they thought of otters they mentioned how playful or cute they were, with quite a few visitors mentioning both these words. Visitors mentioned aspects of their behavior next, talking about how they crack shellfish on their stomach or float on their back; this was followed by how fuzzy and soft they seem. After these descriptions, visitors talked about the ocean and more specifically the Monterey area, then issues related to the conservation of otters.

When mention otters, what comes to mind?

	Frequency	Percent
Playful, fun	59	30.6
Cute	44	22.8
Eating, cracking food on stomach	15	7.8
Floating on back, swimming	10	5.2
Fuzzy, furry, soft	9	4.7
Ocean, shoreline habitat	7	3.6
Monterey area	6	3.1
Conservation of otters	6	3.1
Watching them	4	2.1
MBA	4	2.1
River otters	3	1.6
Mammals	3	1.6
Otters in other areas	3	1.6
Kelp	2	1.0
Miscellaneous	18	9.3
Total	193	100.0

What do visitors know about river otters?

More than three-quarters of visitors said they had heard of river otters, while a little more than one in five said they were unaware of river otters. Of those who said they had heard of river otters, 26 percent said they couldn't remember anything specific about them and another three percent mistakenly mentioned or described beavers. When those who were aware of river otters were asked what they knew about river otters, another 30 percent just mentioned where they had seen them (e.g., on t.v., in zoos, in the wild, in pictures, etc.). Only one out of four visitors (26%) could mention something specific that they knew about river otters. The most common responses in this category were that they live in rivers, are smaller than sea otters, are playful and there aren't as many of them as there used to be.

Know there are river otters?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	151	78.2	78.2	78.2
No	42	21.8	21.8	100.0
Total	193	100.0	100.0	

What know about river otters

	Frequency	Percent
Don't know too much, can't remember	39	25.7
Seen them where I live, in the wild	36	23.7
Seen them on t.v.	12	7.9
Live in rivers, fresh water	12	7.9
Smaller than sea otters	9	5.9
Seen them in a zoo, aquarium	8	5.3
Miscellaneous	8	5.3
Playful	6	3.9
Not as many as there used to be	5	3.3
Describe, mention beavers	4	2.6
Used to be hunted for fur	3	2.0
Slide on riverbanks	3	2.0
Build dams	3	2.0
Seen pictures of them	2	1.3
Smooth-coated	2	1.3
Total	152	100.0

Would visitors expect to view sea otters in the new exhibition?

The proposed temporary exhibition would not include any sea otters, partly because we already have a sea otter exhibit and partly because there would not be enough vertical height in the space to have adequate tanks for sea otters. A series of questions examined visitor expectations about whether they would assume sea otters would be a part of the new temporary exhibition.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium’s permanent exhibitions deal exclusively with the Monterey Bay Area, therefore most people associate the aquarium with marine life. As a result, the majority of visitors thought the new temporary exhibition about otters would include sea otters. Two-thirds thought it would include both river and sea otters, while the remaining third was split roughly between those who thought it would be sea otters only and river otters only.

It was assumed that those who expected to see only river otters would at least have their expectations met, but those who expected to view sea otters were asked if the lack of sea otters would be a disappointment. Of this group, a little more than one-third said they would be disappointed, mostly because they said the aquarium should be about the ocean or local area, or because they wanted to view sea otters and river otters together to compare the two types. Others in this group said they wanted to see all types of otters and that they just liked sea otters a lot. Of all visitors, just under 30 percent said they would be disappointed if the new otters exhibition did not include sea otters.

Those who said they would not be disappointed mentioned the fact that you could compare the two types of otters, the aquarium already has sea otters and that it would be a chance to see something different. Others said the river otters would be just as interesting, it’s a chance to learn about different otters or that they just trust the aquarium to do good exhibitions and they would be happy with whatever we did.

Besides sea otters, there are also many species of river otters living all over the world, including North America. Do you think this new otters exhibit would include both river and sea otters, sea otters only, or river otters only?

	Frequency	Percent
River and sea otters	129	67.2
Sea otters only	35	18.2
River otters only	28	14.6
Total	192	100.0

[To assist in answering this question visitors were handed a photoboard, see Appendix D, with pictures of sea otters and river otters.]

You probably know that we already have sea otters in the main part of the aquarium. If we only had river otters in this new exhibit would you be disappointed?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	57	35.0
No	106	65.0
Total	163	100.0

If yes, would be disappointed with only river otters, why?

	Frequency	Percent
You should be about the local area, the ocean	15	26.8
Want to see both together	14	25.0
Miscellaneous	10	17.9
I want to see them all	7	12.5
Like/love sea otters	6	10.7
Sea otters are cuter	2	3.6
River otters aren't native	1	1.8
River otters are more common	1	1.8
Total	56	100.0

If no, would not be disappointed with only river otters, why not?

	Frequency	Percent
Can see both and compare them	19	18.4
Already have sea otters	18	17.5
Is something different to see	12	11.7
Would be just as interesting	9	8.7
Learn about different otters	8	7.8
Happy with whatever you do	7	6.8
Miscellaneous	7	6.8
They're fun to watch	6	5.8
As long as sea otters are still here	6	5.8
The more animals to see the better	4	3.9
Live in different habitats	3	2.9
Makes sense to separate them	3	2.9
See what's out there	1	1.0
Total	103	100.0

Which types of activities would visitors most like to see included?

Visitors were given a list of six different activities to choose from and asked which two they would most like to see included in an otter exhibition. The hands-on exhibit was chosen by almost two-thirds of visitors. The next most popular were the walk-through aviary and videos of animals interacting in their natural habitat. Of the options related to children, the most popular was the play area, followed by an activity the whole family can do together, then an art and craft room.

There were some statistically significant differences in choices between adult-only groups and family groups. The activity for the whole family was more likely to be chosen by adults visiting with children (26%) compared to adults in adult-only groups (12%). Meanwhile, the videos were more popular for adults in adult-only groups (51%) than for adults visiting with children (26%). Although not statistically significant, there was a trend for the play area for kids to be more popular with adults visiting with children (35%) compared to adults in adult-only groups (24%).

NOTE: Visitors could pick two of the activities, so column percentages will add to more than 100%.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Adult Only</u>	<u>All Visitors</u>
Hands-on exhibits about otters and how they eat	64.1%	64.3%	64.2%
A walk-through aviary where you are surrounded by different kinds of birds	47.4%	45.2%	46.1%
A play area for kids that relates to otters	34.6%	23.5%	28.0%
Videos of animals interacting in their natural habitat *	25.6%	51.3%	40.9%
An activity the whole family can do together *	25.6%	12.2%	17.6%
An art and craft room with river otter activities	5.1%	3.5%	4.1%

* Statistically significant difference between families and adult-only groups.

Activity - Hands-on exhibits about otters and how they eat

	Frequency	Percent
Picked hands-on exhibits	124	64.2
Didn't pick hands-on exhibits	69	35.8
Total	193	100.0

Activity - A walk-through aviary where you are surrounded by different kinds of birds

	Frequency	Percent
Picked aviary	89	46.1
Didn't pick aviary	104	53.9
Total	193	100.0

Activity - Videos of animals interacting in their natural habitat

	Frequency	Percent
Picked videos	79	40.9
Didn't pick videos	114	59.1
Total	193	100.0

Activity - A play area for kids that relates to otters

	Frequency	Percent
Picked play area	54	28.0
Didn't pick play area	139	72.0
Total	193	100.0

Activity - An activity the whole family can do together

	Frequency	Percent
Picked family activity	34	17.6
Didn't pick family activity	159	82.4
Total	193	100.0

Activity - An art and craft room with river otter activities

	Frequency	Percent
Picked art and craft room	8	4.1
Didn't pick art and craft room	185	95.9
Total	193	100.0

Why did visitors pick specific activities?

The hands-on exhibits were seen not only as good for kids but as a way to learn about otters, while the aviary resonated with visitors because people like birds and this was an authentic experience where you could feel like you’re in there with them and see them up close. Videos held the promise of delivering natural behaviors you might not see in the exhibit, while the last three were good because kids would like them. The family activity was chosen because it was something everyone could do together.

Hands-on exhibits (64%): Good for kids, educational, like hands-on, see how otters eat, could touch something

Aviary (46%): Like birds, could walk through it, see birds in their habitat, see birds up close, interesting

Video (41%): See video of otters in their natural habitat, videos are more comprehensive, see behaviors won’t see in a tank

Play area (28%): Kids would like this, we have kids, hands-on is good for kids, kids can learn here, keeps kids busy

Family activity (18%): Everyone can do it, parents and kids can learn together, have a family

Arts and crafts (4%): Kids would enjoy it, interesting or memorable

Why picked hands-on exhibits

	Frequency	Percent
Good for kids	25	20.8
Is educational, can learn	17	14.2
Like hands-on	14	11.7
To see how otters eat	13	10.8
Could touch something	13	10.8
Is fun	9	7.5
More involving, close up	7	5.8
Would be interesting	7	5.8
[Thought it was touching, feeding otters]	5	4.2
It's about otters	4	3.3
Miscellaneous	4	3.3
Learn about otter habitats	2	1.7
Total	120	100.0

Why picked aviary

	Frequency	Percent
I like birds	15	17.6
Walk through	11	12.9
In their habitat, more natural	10	11.8
See birds close up, interact with them	10	11.8
Interesting, cool experience	8	9.4
Been to other aviaries	7	8.2
Could have more birds	6	7.1
To be surrounded by birds	5	5.9
I like aviaries	3	3.5
Educational, informative	3	3.5
Something different	3	3.5
Kids would like	2	2.4
Miscellaneous	2	2.4
Total	85	100.0

Why picked videos

	Frequency	Percent
See them in natural habitat	23	28.8
Videos are more comprehensive	14	17.5
Videos are informative, good way to learn	11	13.8
See behaviors don't see in a tank	9	11.3
Is more visual, see what they do	7	8.8
I like videos	5	6.3
Miscellaneous	5	6.3
Other options focus on kids	3	3.8
Your videos are good	3	3.8
Total	80	100.0

Why picked play area

	Frequency	Percent
Kids like play, would like this	11	20.4
We/I have kids	10	18.5
Hands on is good for kids	9	16.7
Kids can learn here	8	14.8
Keeps kids busy	6	11.1
Miscellaneous	4	7.4
I like the other play areas in aquarium	2	3.7
Would be exciting	2	3.7
Is fun	2	3.7
Total	54	100.0

Why picked family activity

	Frequency	Percent
Everyone can do it	17	47.2
Parents and kids can interact, learn	7	19.4
Miscellaneous	6	16.7
We have a family, kids	4	11.1
I like these kinds of activities	2	5.6
Total	36	100.0

Why picked art and craft room

	Frequency	Percent
Kids would enjoy it	5	71.4
Interesting, memorable	2	28.6
Total	7	100.0

Besides otters, what kinds of animals do visitors want to see?

Visitors were given a list and pictures of four types of animals choose from: insects, snakes, frogs and birds. When asked which two they would most like to see included in an otter exhibition, frogs was the clear winner with over three-quarters (79%) of the vote. There was a virtual tie between birds (49%) and snakes (47%), followed by insects (23%).

<u>Animal</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Frogs	79.3%	Water-based, the variety, I like frogs, interesting
Birds	49.2%	I like birds, colorful, fit with otters
Snakes	46.6%	Interesting, like snakes, snakes are aquatic
Insects	23.3%	Interesting, don't know much, kids like them, unusual

NOTE: Visitors could pick two of the activities, so the percentages will add to more than 100%.

Why frogs

	Frequency	Percent
Are water-based	23	15.3
Variety	17	11.3
Like frogs, amphibians	15	10.0
Interesting, fascinating	14	9.3
Colorful	12	8.0
Don't like the others (insects, snakes, birds)	12	8.0
Similar habitat as otters, go together	11	7.3
Miscellaneous	11	7.3
Cool, look cool	9	6.0
Haven't seen them often	7	4.7
Don't know much about them	6	4.0
Unusual, exotic	6	4.0
Kids like frogs	5	3.3
They're pretty	2	1.3
Total	150	100.0

Why birds

	Frequency	Percent
I like birds	26	28.3
Colorful	9	9.8
Related to rivers, fits with otters	9	9.8
Miscellaneous	9	9.8
Better than other options	7	7.6
Variety	6	6.5
Active, interesting to watch	5	5.4
Makes it a better exhibit, something in air	5	5.4
Pretty, beautiful	4	4.3
Like the aviary exhibit	4	4.3
Interesting	3	3.3
Bird sounds are nice	3	3.3
Kids like birds	2	2.2
Total	92	100.0

Why snakes

	Frequency	Percent
Fascinating / Interesting	23	25.6
Like snakes, reptiles	15	16.7
Snakes are aquatic, sea snakes	12	13.3
Miscellaneous	10	11.1
Kids love snakes	8	8.9
Cool, fun	5	5.6
Variety of snakes	4	4.4
Snakes are creepy	3	3.3
I had, or keep snakes	2	2.2
Something different	2	2.2
Exciting, venomous	2	2.2
Want to see them in water	2	2.2
I'm familiar with them	2	2.2
Total	90	100.0

Why insects

	Frequency	Percent
Interesting	11	23.9
Miscellaneous	7	15.2
Don't know much about them	6	13.0
Kid would like them	5	10.9
They're unusual	5	10.9
They're cool	3	6.5
Like insects	3	6.5
Variety, diversity	2	4.3
Mentions preying mantis (pictured)	2	4.3
Don't like the others (snakes, frogs, birds)	2	4.3
Total	46	100.0

How interesting do visitors find freshwater tanks?

While one-fifth (19%) of visitors said they found freshwater tanks less interesting than saltwater tanks, three-quarters (75%) said they would find them just as interesting. The reason visitors would find it as appealing is because both are appealing, you can compare the two and people didn't know why freshwater tanks wouldn't be as interesting. Those who said they would be less interesting mentioned that the aquarium is about the ocean, there is more variety in saltwater, saltwater tanks would be more interesting and prettier.

How interesting freshwater tanks would be

	Frequency	Percent
More interesting than saltwater	11	5.8
Less interesting than saltwater	37	19.4
About as interesting as saltwater	143	74.9
Total	191	100.0

Why freshwater about as interesting

	Frequency	Percent
Both are appealing, interesting	27	19.6
Miscellaneous	16	11.6
Can compare them	14	10.1
Don't know why they would be different	12	8.7
Freshwater would be interesting	10	7.2
Can see what's different	9	6.5
Is different	8	5.8
I like all wildlife	7	5.1
No opinion, don't know	7	5.1
Seen freshwater, it's interesting	6	4.3
Type of water is not important	6	4.3
Could learn about freshwater	6	4.3
Don't know freshwater as much	4	2.9
Freshwater has a lot of diversity	3	2.2
Anything here is good	3	2.2
Total	138	100.0

Why freshwater less interesting

	Frequency	Percent
MBA is about the ocean	10	27.0
More variety in saltwater	6	16.2
Saltwater is more interesting, prefer it	6	16.2
Ocean prettier, more compelling	4	10.8
Saltwater more colorful	3	8.1
Monterey area about ocean	3	8.1
Miscellaneous	3	8.1
Freshwater more common	2	5.4
Total	37	100.0

Why freshwater more interesting

	Frequency	Percent
Unfamiliar	4	33.3
Miscellaneous	4	33.3
Familiar	2	16.7
Don't have freshwater here	2	16.7
Total	12	100.0

Appendix A
Short Interview Form

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Hello, we're talking with visitors today about a new exhibit idea. Do you have just three minutes to answer some questions?

-
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Give paper: How would you describe your level of interest in seeing the following exhibits? | Do you think you would make a special trip to the aquarium to see an exhibit about _____? |
| 1. Seahorses and Kin VH H M L → | Yes No |
| 2. Fantastic creatures VH H M L → | Yes No |
| 3. River Otters VH H M L → | Yes No |
| 4. Wonders of Wings VH H M L → | Yes No |

2. Do you think it makes sense for the aquarium to do an exhibit about river otters? Yes No

2a. Why do you think it **does** / **doesn't** make sense? _____

NOW JUST A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU....

3. Is this your first visit to the aquarium? Yes No

4. Are you a member of the aquarium? Yes No

5. What year were you born? _____

6 Are you visiting with anyone under 18 today? Yes No

7 What is your zip code (or country of origin)? _____

8. **[Interviewer Records]** Gender: Male Female

Thank you for your time!

Appendix B
Descriptions of Exhibitions

How would you describe your level of interest in seeing the following exhibit?

Very High, High, Medium, or Low?

1. Seahorses and Kin

This exhibit features charismatic seahorses as well as pipefishes, puffers and trumpetfishes all camouflaged amidst beautiful plant-filled exhibits.

2. Fantastic Creatures

A collection of visitors' favorite animals from octopus, crabs, seahorses, pipefish and puffers, fantastic creatures offers a wide variety of visual experiences to trigger your senses and your sense of wonder.

3. River Otters

Take a trip through the world of fresh water otters. Discover the world of the Asian small-clawed, North American river and the spot-neck otters as they cavort in an exhibit that provides them with both water and land diversions.

4. Wonders of Wings

This exhibit focuses on the unique adaptation of wings. It features fish, birds, mammals and insects including flying fish, freshwater stingrays, flying fox bats, hummingbirds, dragonflies and other animals never previously exhibited at the aquarium.

Appendix C
Long Interview Form

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Hello, we're talking with visitors today about a new exhibit idea. Do you have just a few minutes to answer some questions?

1. The Aquarium is planning to develop a new exhibit about otters. When you think about otters, what comes to mind? [**Probe:** What thoughts or feelings do you have when you think about otters?]

2. Sea otters, like the ones we have here at the aquarium, are just one kind of otter. Were you aware that there are also river otters? Yes No **If No, skip to Q3**

2a. What specifically have you heard about river otters? _____

3. **Hand photoboard:** Besides sea otters, there are also many species of river otters living all over the world, including North America. Do you think this new otters exhibit would include **both river and sea otters, sea otters only, or river otters only?**

- River and sea otters Sea otters only River otters only **If River otters only skip to Q4**

3a. You probably know that we already have sea otters in the main part of the aquarium. If we only had river otters in this new exhibit would you be disappointed? Yes No

3b. [**If Yes**] Why would you be disappointed?

3c. [**If No**] Why not?

4. **Have visitor turn photoboard over:** Besides otters, there would also be other animals in the exhibit. Which two of the following kinds of animals would you be most interested in seeing in an otters exhibit? You can just read me the numbers.

- 1 2 3 4

4a. Why did you pick number ____? _____

4b. Why did you pick number ____? _____

5. The majority of the aquarium’s tanks are saltwater, while the otters exhibit would include more freshwater tanks. Do you think these freshwater tanks would be **More interesting**, **Less interesting** or **About as interesting** as saltwater tanks?

- More interesting
- Less interesting
- About as interesting

5a. Why did you say _____? _____

6. **Hand paper:** Which two of the following would you most like to see included in an otters exhibit? You can just read me the letters.

- A B C D E F

6a. Why did you pick letter ____? _____

6b. Why did you pick letter ____? _____

NOW JUST A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU....

7. Is this your first visit to the aquarium? Yes No

8. Are you a member of the aquarium? Yes No

9. What year were you born? _____

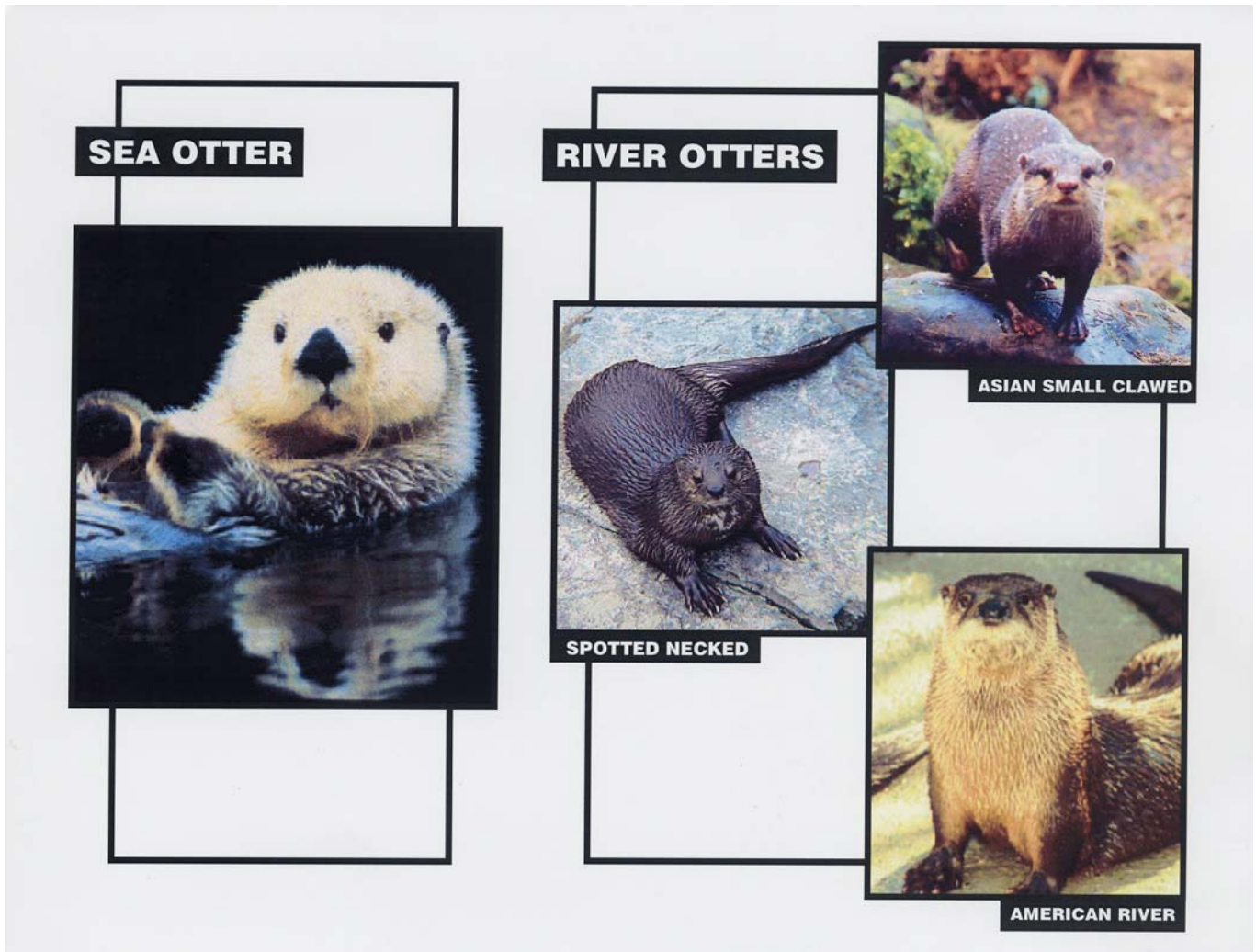
10. Are you visiting with anyone under 18 today? Yes No

11. What is your zip code (or country of origin)? _____

12. **[Interviewer Records]** Gender: Male Female

Thank you for your time!

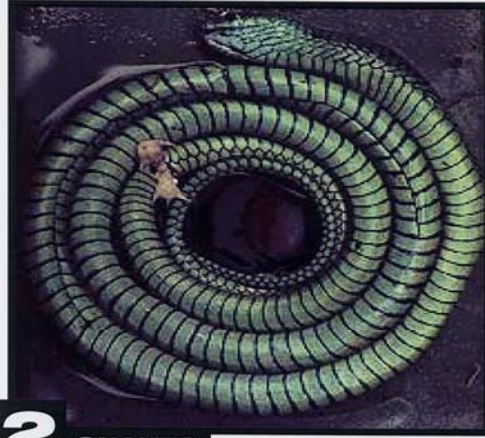
Appendix D
Photos for Q3 – Sea Otters and River Otters



Appendix E
Photos for Q4 – Other Animals in Exhibition



1 INSECTS



2 SNAKES



3 FROGS



4 BIRDS

Appendix F
List of Activities for Q6

Which two of the following would you most like to see included in an otters exhibit?

A. Videos of animals interacting in their natural habitat.

B. A play area for kids that relates to otters.

C. A walk-through aviary where you are surrounded by different kinds of birds.

D. An activity the whole family can do together.

E. Hands-on exhibits about otters and how they eat.

F. An art and craft room with river otter activities.