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**NATIONAL AQUARIUM TO HOLD ANNUAL  
MARYLAND DOLPHIN COUNT ON FRIDAY, JULY 17**  
*Festivities to be held in Ocean City to celebrate and promote ocean health*

Baltimore, Md. - The National Aquarium will lead Maryland's annual dolphin count on Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup> in an effort to determine the state's dolphin population. Volunteers are welcome to participate from 9:00 a.m. until noon.

The dolphin count is part of the Aquarium's ongoing Ocean Health Initiative which actively protects and conserves specific habitats and species through marine animal rescue and outreach efforts that raise public awareness about ocean health issues.

**Thursday, July 16**

**Happy Hour at Seacrets  
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Join the National Aquarium for a special happy hour at Seacrets. Enjoy special activities and giveaways and support the Aquarium's conservation department!

**Bonfire on the Beach  
9 p.m.  
N. Division St. and the Beach**

Help the Aquarium celebrate the ocean by enjoying the evening around a beautiful bonfire on the beach! Learn more about the Aquarium's conservation efforts and Marine Animal Rescue program.

**Friday, July 17**

**Dolphin Count  
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Beginning at 9 a.m. staff from the National Aquarium in Baltimore, volunteers from the Aquarium's Marine Animal Rescue Program, and local community volunteers will be stationed at various locations along the 26 miles of Maryland coast, searching for dolphins. The Aquarium will also enlist the help of the Ocean City Station of the United States Coast Guard. As dolphins pass by, they are recorded on a tally sheet. Community volunteers allow the Aquarium to have more counting stations along the beach, providing a more accurate representation of the Maryland dolphin population.

Annual dolphin counts help scientists gather long-term information about dolphin populations, reproduction rates and ocean health. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries department monitors dolphin populations and regulations surrounding them.

Those interested in volunteering for the dolphin count can gather at one of the following locations:

**Assateague State Park  
40<sup>th</sup> Street Beach (media location)  
130<sup>th</sup> Street Beach**