

Conservation Activities

1. Look for stream, river and coastal clean-up days. See the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (<http://montereybay.noaa.gov/>) and California Coastal Commission (<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/index.html>) websites for more information on these activities.
2. Set up a booth at your school or local mall to teach others about sea otters.
3. Plan school sea otter awareness days or participate in Sea Otter Awareness Week.
4. Have middle school students give presentations about sea otters to younger students.
5. Invite a sea otter researcher, wildlife veterinarian, or aquarium staff to come speak to your class.
6. Request the sea otter trunk (contactdefenders@mail.defenders.org) that contains books, graphics, sea otter puppet, sea otter track molds, sea otter skull replica, sea otter prey items. These tools can assist you in creating conservation activities.
7. Make your voice heard - write letters to your elected representatives.
8. With Permission from the Monterey Bay Aquarium the following activities, as described in the book, "*Sea Searcher's Handbook: Activities from the Monterey Bay Aquarium*" (Monterey Bay Aquarium Foundation, 1996) are useful exercises:
 - I. A Habitat is Home (Every Home is Different, pg. 10, Handbook) – sea otters live in various types of habitats (kelp forests, rocky shores, tidal estuaries, etc.). Use this activity to help familiarize yourself with where sea otters and other marine species live and how these habitats differ.
 - II. The Rocky Shore, Searching for More (Sometimes Wet, Sometimes Hot, pg. 21, Handbook) – How do you think sea otters might be affected by changing tides? Use this activity to build upon your math skills.
 - III. The Rocky Shore, Searching for More (What do you Think?, pg. 23, Handbook) – Humans have impacts on the shore. This activity will help you think about both the positive and negative impacts.
 - IV. The Sandy Shore, Searching for More (Seashore Math, pg. 36, Handbook) – Sea otters eat many types of food items. This math activity will help you understand how much a sea otter eats each day.
 - V. The Wetlands, Searching for More (A Web of Life, pgs. 54-55, Handbook) – Various marine species that inhabit an ecosystem, like wetlands, rocky shores, etc., are connected by what they eat, as well as what role they play in this system. Use this activity to supplement the "Web of Life" reading article and to better understand how animals in the ocean are interconnected with one another.

- VI. The Kelp Forest, Searching for More (Producers on Land and in the Sea, pg. 66, Handbook) – Use this activity to understand how important food chains are and what happens if they are disrupted.
- VII. The Kelp Forest, Searching for More (Kelp Forest Crossword Puzzle, pg. 68-69, Handbook) – Activity to get you better acquainted with the kelp forest ecosystem in which sea otters live and play a very important role.
- VIII. Suited for the Sea, Searching for More (At Home in the Sea, pg. 114, Handbook) – This activity illustrates the important survival needs for animals living in the ocean as compared to humans.
- IX. Marine Mammals, Searching for More (An Oily Mess and There aren't Many Left, pg. 136, Handbook) – Begin this activity by reading, "What is a Sea Otter", pgs. 129-131, Handbook. Then, use the two activities to learn more about how oil is a major threat to sea otters and how we can better protect animals (especially ones like sea otters that have low population numbers).
- X. People and the Sea, Searching for More (Connected to the Sea and Trash's Trek to the Sea, pg. 189, Handbook) – Use these activities to better understand how humans and our everyday actions can have impacts on the ocean and its inhabitants.
- XI. People and the Sea, Searching for More (Less is Best, pg. 191, Handbook) – This activity illustrates the importance of everyday recycling, awareness about where we dispose of our trash, and how drains (storm, sink, etc.) might affect our rivers and oceans.
- XII. People and the Sea, Searching for More (Keep it Clean, pg. 194-195, Handbook) – This activity illustrates how different pollutants and contaminants might affect marine species.

*These are just some of the suggested activities from this Handbook. The Handbook would be a good resource to have in your classroom, especially if you plan to use any of these.

9. There are also other teachers' resources that may be of assistance to you as you develop and implement these and other conservation activities:

Biological Sciences Curriculum Study: <http://www.bscs.org/>

Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley – Marine Activities, Resources & Education: <http://mare.lawrencehallofscience.org/>