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Bay Area Students Head to Pacifica for 31st Annual Kids Ocean Day

Marine Science Institute Brings Beloved Coastal Stewardship Event to Pacifica State Beach with New Community Partnerships and a Giant Guitarfish Aerial Art Message

(Tuesday, May 19, 2026 – Pacifica State Beach, Pacifica)

Pacifica, Calif., May 18, 2026 — More than 250 Bay Area students will gather tomorrow at Pacifica State Beach (Linda Mar Beach) to clean the coastline and create a giant aerial art image in the sand during the 31st Annual Kids Ocean Day Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup, hosted by the Marine Science Institute in partnership with the California Coastal Commission. This year marks a major milestone for the long-running event as Kids Ocean Day officially moves from Ocean Beach in San Francisco to Pacifica State Beach.

The move represents more than just a change in scenery. Organizers say the shift to Pacifica brings the event into a more intimate, community-centered coastal space that better reflects the heart of the program and its deep connection to local ecosystems.

“We’re incredibly excited to bring Kids Ocean Day to Pacifica,” said Tiffany Murzi-Moyce, Community Outreach Coordinator at MSI. “There’s something really special about this beach and this community. It feels closer to home for us and more connected to the kind of hands-on, adventure learning we believe in so deeply. My biggest hope is always just getting kids outside and connected to the coast in a real way. There’s incredible power in place. The moment students step onto the beach, feel the wind, and experience the ocean for themselves, environmental stewardship stops being abstract and becomes personal.”

This year’s theme, *One Coast for All*, celebrates the idea that California’s shoreline belongs to everyone and that caring for it is a shared responsibility across communities, generations, and cultures.

After participating in a large-scale beach cleanup, students will work together to create a massive aerial art image in the sand: a giant shovelnose guitarfish. The species holds special meaning for MSI staff and educators this year, as recent educational trawls in the South Bay have revealed an exciting abundance of juvenile guitarfish in local waters. Shovelnose guitarfish

are uniquely connected to both the San Francisco Bay and the open coast, using Bay habitats as important nursery grounds before returning to the ocean and continuing their life cycle. For organizers, the species serves as a powerful reminder that these ecosystems are deeply connected and that protecting one shoreline helps protect them all. Through the aerial art experience, students become part of that larger story of stewardship, restoration, and connection to the coast.

Kids Ocean Day combines environmental education with direct stewardship action. Participating schools receive classroom presentations ahead of the event focused on watersheds, marine debris, coastal ecosystems, and human impacts on the environment. For many students, the program is their first opportunity to experience the Pacific Ocean firsthand.

MSI is also excited to collaborate this year with Pacifica Parks, Beaches & Recreation Department and the broader Pacifica community, whose support helped make the transition to Pacifica possible.

“The City of Pacifica is pleased to welcome Kids’ Ocean Day to Linda Mar Beach and support a day focused on ocean education and environmental stewardship,” said Scott Leslie, Director of Parks, Beaches & Recreation for the City of Pacifica. “Events like this help foster a deeper appreciation for our coastline and inspire the next generation to care for our natural environment.”

Christine Boles also shared her enthusiasm for the partnership and the event’s arrival in Pacifica.

“We are so very excited to welcome the Marine Science Institute and students to Pacifica and look forward to building a long-lasting partnership,” said Mayor Boles. “With six beautiful miles of coastline, we as a city, along with our essential nonprofit partner, the Pacific Beach Coalition, are committed to stewarding our coastline and educating youth to build long-lasting sustainability and resilience. If we’re lucky, as we often are this time of year, we may even see gray or humpback whales from shore as they migrate to Alaska.”

Kids Ocean Day is part of a broader statewide coastal stewardship initiative coordinated by the California Coastal Commission and supported through the Whale Tail® License Plate Fund and donations to the Protect Our Coast and Oceans Fund.

Participating schools represent communities from across the Bay Area and reflect the program’s ongoing mission to connect students with the California coast through meaningful, hands-on environmental action.

Event Details:

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2026

Location: Pacifica State Beach/Linda Mar Beach, Pacifica, California

Event Schedule:

- 9:30–10:30 AM – Student Arrival
- 10:00–11:30 AM – Beach Cleanup
- 12:00 PM – Aerial Art Formation
- 12:30 PM – Drones Fly Over for Aerial Photography

About the Marine Science Institute

The Marine Science Institute is a nonprofit environmental education organization based in Redwood City. Its mission is to inspire environmental stewardship through hands-on learning and exploration of San Francisco Bay ecosystems. Each year, MSI serves over 50,000 students through immersive shipboard and land-based programs.

Mission: *To inspire environmental stewardship through hands-on learning and exploration of San Francisco Bay ecosystems.*

Vision: *A future where every individual is deeply connected to marine life, fostering a culture of ecological responsibility.*

Learn more at www.sfbaymsi.org.

About the California Coastal Commission

The California Coastal Commission is committed to protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations. Kids Ocean Day is a core component of its public education and stewardship programming. Learn more at www.coastforyou.org.

Image:



- **Date Taken:** May 20, 2025
- **Photographer:** Kevin Lozaw
- **For more information,** visit: <https://kevinlozaw.photoshelter.com/index>

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