

## Monterey Bay Aquarium Shark Researcher Awarded Fulbright Fellowship to Study Sharks, Rays in Galápagos

Dr. Salvador Jorgensen is first aquarium staff member to earn prestigious fellowship



Sal Jorgensen, left, research scientist for Monterey Bay Aquarium's Project White Shark, celebrates a successful tagging of an adult great white shark of California's Farallon Islands. ©TOPP

Monterey Bay Aquarium research scientist [Dr. Salvador Jorgensen](#) has been awarded a prestigious [Fulbright Fellowship](#) to study threats facing vulnerable shark and ray species in Ecuador's biologically rich Galápagos Islands.

Jorgensen, who leads the aquarium's white shark research team, is the first aquarium staff member to receive a Fulbright Fellowship. His research grant will take him to Ecuador in January 2019. He will travel there with his wife [Dr. Cheryl Logan](#), a faculty member at [California State University, Monterey Bay](#) - who is also a [Fulbright Scholar](#) - and their two young children.

"This is a tremendous honor," Jorgensen said. "I'm thrilled that the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board saw the merit of supporting work to inform conservation measures and improve the survival prospects for the abundant sharks and rays that congregate in the Galápagos."

"My research will have multiple benefits," he added. "The Galápagos region is an incredibly productive and important gathering place for many species of migratory birds, sea turtles, sharks and tunas, and interactions between these species and commercial fisheries are a huge conservation concern."

For the projects he'll pursue, Jorgensen will contribute [techniques developed at the Monterey Bay Aquarium](#) for tracking sharks and rays with electronic tags to determine their preferred habitats and potential fishing threats.

Jorgensen will be hosted by the [Galápagos Science Center](#) .

One of his projects will be to identify specific bays and lagoons in [the Galápagos Archipelago](#) where iconic (and endangered) schooling hammerhead sharks are born. By tracking small sharks in some of their nursery areas, the research team will gain an understanding of the important habitat features on which these pups depend. This will enable researchers to identify and list similar key areas throughout the Galápagos Island chain, to flag for future protection.

"Through extensive tagging studies in California and Mexico, we have discovered the key areas great white sharks depend on - where they feed, where their newborn pups live, what threats they face, and how fishing activity can be modified to reduce mortality. Now we want to apply these techniques to help conserve other sharks and rays of concern in the eastern Pacific."

Jorgensen's research focuses on the migratory patterns, feeding ecology and habitat use of adult white sharks at the Farallon Islands, Point Reyes and Año Nuevo Island, and studies of juvenile white sharks in southern California and Mexico. His research interests include the movements and migrations of

commercially targeted sharks and fishes, acoustic tagging and telemetry, and spatial analysis and population modeling.

In April, he and colleagues from Stanford University and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute [traveled offshore to the "White Shark Café"](#), a mysterious habitat for adult white sharks in the northeastern Pacific, between California and Hawaii. While all data and findings from the expedition are still being analyzed, the team confirmed having found an [abundance of life](#) in the midwater region of the Café-- a remote region of the Pacific previously considered an oceanic "desert". The expedition was sponsored by the [Schmidt Ocean Institute](#).

Jorgensen earned undergraduate degrees in environmental studies from Sonoma State University, and in art from John Abbott College in Montreal. He completed his doctorate in ecology at UC Davis, and was a postdoctoral scholar at Stanford University's Hopkins Marine Station.

The Fulbright Program was created by Congress as a way to increase the mutual understanding between the people of the United States and of nations around the world. It is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. Since its inception in 1946, more than 380,000 Fulbright scholars have headed overseas from the United States, or come to the U.S. as visiting international scholars.

Each year, the Fulbright Program awards about 8,000 grants for research, study and teaching opportunities in over 160 countries.

#### About Monterey Bay Aquarium

The mission of the nonprofit Monterey Bay Aquarium is to inspire conservation of the ocean. It is the most respected public aquarium in North America, and an innovator in living exhibits, public programs and social media-engaging nearly two million visitors a year and millions more around the world. It is a leader in science education, creating programs for young people and the adults who guide them as it nurtures a new generation of science-literate, conservation-minded young people to tackle the environmental challenges of the 21st century. And it is an influential global voice for ocean conservation, combining active programs in marine science, with policy initiatives and public outreach to secure the future of the ocean. Its science is the foundation for the sustainable seafood movement worldwide, and integrated with its policy and outreach programs, is shaping a sustainable future for global fisheries and aquaculture. Learn more at [montereybayaquarium.org](http://montereybayaquarium.org).