

## Museum Manners

The behavior of school, day camp and scout groups as they visit museums, aquariums and nature centers has been a concern of the staff at the Chula Vista Nature Center for several years. Many group leaders do not fully emphasize the importance of following a few simple rules that can make a visit more enjoyable for all persons participating as well as enhancing the learning opportunities.

Leaders should not schedule visits to a museum if they are not willing to prepare their group for the visit. Preparation includes:

1. Having a reason for visiting. The group should be studying a topic that is emphasized at the site.
2. The group should be familiar with vocabulary used by docents and interpretive guides.
3. Pre-visit activities should be done before the visit.

Group leaders and chaperones please be prepared to maintain quiet voices at all times when children are with their docent and when they are on their own.

Remind children not to bang on exhibits because it frightens animals. Often leading to injury.

Talk to children about how to use interactive exhibits; manipulating them in a way that is quiet and non-destructive. Exhibits with push buttons have certain use constraints.

In natural preserves and refuges, children, as well as adults, must stay on designated pathways rather than take shortcuts, and leave natural objects like stones, feathers and shells behind. This is part of learning to respect all living things, natural, historical and cultural features of a site, as well as other people who are visiting for their own enjoyment.

### **Specific Behavior Guidelines for the Chula Vista Nature Center and Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge.**

During your scheduled visit to the Nature Center, your group will not have enough time to linger at the Interactive Video Kiosk, the Shark and Ray Experience, use the Rubbing Tables, the Floating Nest or the Sound Boards at the

Clapper Rail Booth, Burrowing Owl and Eagle Mesa exhibits. If there is time after your tour and you have enough parent chaperones, children may visit these interactive features 5 at a time with a chaperone. They may also visit the Gift Shop, 5 at a time with a chaperone. Your docent will tell the students that they can return with a coupon found in your packet.

The following guidelines should be reviewed with your group before their visit.

In the Discovery Center

Putting hands on aquaria glass leaves fingerprints. Climbing is not allowed.

If given clipboards for question sheets, please hold them in your arm, not against the exhibits.

At the Shark & Ray Experience

Hands must be washed before and after use. You are in their habitat. Animals must not be restrained or picked up.

On the Grounds

Always walk. Stay on walkways and paths.  
Do not climb on or jump off walls, steps, or benches.  
Flowers are for all to enjoy. We do not pick them.

In the Walk-through Aviary:

Always walk and talk quietly.  
Please close doors quietly and never hold them open – we could lose a bird.  
Don't open the inner doors until the outer doors are closed.  
Take turns using the interactive exhibits.

At the Floating Nest:

Only one person at a time can use it.

At the Rubbing Tables:

Keep control of papers, and crayons.  
Return the crayons to the gift shop

On the Refuge and Photo Blind

Stay within the roped trails. Do not leave trash.  
Do not pick flowers or remove anything.

