

# The Pier Aquarium presents the Celebrity Critter of the Week!



## Lined Sea Horse

Scientific name: *Hippocampus erectus*

**Description:** Have rings of bony plates that cover their body, small trumpet-like mouths, small pectoral fins and a small dorsal fin. Their long tails have the strength to hold onto sea grasses or other objects.

**Habit:** Shallow sea grasses, shallow bays and rocky areas during summer and move to deeper waters in the winter months

## Top 10 Facts:

1. Lined Seahorses have dark lines on the head, neck and back.
2. Their mouths are toothless. They use a suction motion to eat their prey.
3. They like to eat brine shrimp, larval eggs and other planktonic creatures.
4. The head, which is shaped like that of a horse, is perpendicular to the body. Their eyes can swivel independently or converge to achieve binocular vision.
5. They usually grow to five-six inches.
6. Lined Seahorses camouflage by changing colors for hunting and protection from predators.
7. The Lined Seahorse varies in color from mottled yellow and orange to brown, gray or black depending on its surroundings.
8. The male and female go through an elaborate courtship, after which the female lays her eggs into the male's brood pouch (a kangaroo-like pouch on its ventral side). The eggs are fertilized and cared for by the male. After about two weeks, the male releases a cloud of tiny, well-formed seahorses from the top of the pouch.
9. Lined Seahorses are poor swimmers.
10. "Serae" are the long sea grass looking appendages on a female Lined Seahorse. The female with the longest serae is the "Alpha" female and gets to choose her mate first!