

The Pier Aquarium presents the Celebrity Critter of the Week!



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Garden Eel

Scientific Name: *Heteroconger hassi*

Description: Long and thin with speckled coloration and larger black spots along body. Adults have a whitish body with black spots. Juveniles are all black.

Habitat: found in tropical waters in the Indo-Pacific region from Africa to Japan and Australia.

Top 10 Facts:

1. Garden Eels are members of the conger eel family, which usually have smooth scale-less skin, large pectoral fins and easily visible continuous marginal fin rays.
2. These species live in large colonies (see above photo).
3. They live in burrows in the sand and usually only half their body is seen. The main portion is buried in the sand.
4. They are typically found in sloping sandy bottom environments that are exposed to current. The current's movement makes them look like they are "dancing."
5. They are known to be very frightened of humans.
6. When one is spotted, the eels will dart back into the holes they live in and rarely do they ever leave their burrows.
7. Garden Eels face into the current so they can pick up plankton through passing water.
8. Spotted Garden Eels can grow up to 24 inches long.
9. The skin in the tail contains a hard substance that makes it painless to burrow into the sand.
10. This species reproduces by leaning over and intertwining with an adjacent mate.