



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 10, 2005

**MEDIA CONTACT:**  
Marilee Menard, Executive Director  
720-887-5921  
ammpa@aol.com

## *The Dolphin is America's Sweetheart!*

### **NEW POLL REVEALS AMERICA'S FAVORITE AQUARIUM ANIMAL**

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Dolphins are America's darlings. According to the results of a new public opinion poll announced today, a full 40 percent of U.S. adults named dolphins as their favorite aquarium animal.

#### **DOLPHINS ARE A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND!**

**The new poll released by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums finds that higher percentages of women than men choose dolphins as their favorite aquarium animal exhibit, while higher percentages of men than women choose sharks:**

#### **Dolphins**

**Women - 46 percent  
Men – 34 percent**

#### **Sharks**

**Men– 17 percent  
Women – 8 percent**

Sampling error for the overall results: +/- 3 percentage points

Dolphins are especially popular among women, while men showed a preference for sharks. Forty-six percent of women surveyed listed dolphins as their favorite aquarium animal, while only 34 percent of men did the same. Overall, sharks came in a distant second with 13 percent of the total vote. But 17 percent of men said sharks were their favorite, while only 8 percent of women said sharks rule.

The poll, released by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums and conducted by Harris Interactive<sup>®</sup>, also showed that 91 percent of respondents agree that interacting with dolphins offers people a deeper understanding and appreciation of them.

“Our visitors tell us that they see and learn about dolphins by visiting marine life parks, aquariums and zoos,” said Marilee Menard, executive director of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, a 45-member international professional association. “We have always believed that seeing marine mammals in person helps increase people’s understanding and appreciation of them. This new research demonstrates that this is more than a belief – it’s a fact.”

Following are some additional findings from the new research:

- more -

- 97 percent of respondents agree that marine life parks, aquariums and zoos play an important role in educating the public about marine mammals they might not otherwise have the chance to see.
- 96 percent agree that marine life parks, aquariums and zoos provide people with valuable information about the importance of oceans, waters and the animals that live there.
- 93 percent agree that visiting a marine life park, aquarium or zoo can inspire conservation action that can help marine mammals and their natural environment.
- 93 percent agree that people are more likely to be concerned about animals if they learn about them at marine life parks, aquariums and zoos.
- If looking for educational information about marine mammals, 75 percent would either visit a marine life park, aquarium or zoo or go to their Web sites.

Menard said, “The ultimate goal at responsible parks and aquariums is to provide an educational and enjoyable experience for families while increasing their understanding and appreciation of these magnificent animals and the need to protect them in the wild. We feel extremely gratified to know that we are achieving this goal.”

Wondering how other aquarium animal exhibits rate? Here are the top five favorites among U.S. adults, chosen from a group of eight:

Dolphins	40%
Sharks	13%
Tropical fish	11%
Killer whales	8%
Sea turtles	7%

### **Methodology**

Harris Interactive® conducted the study online on behalf of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums between September 16 and 21, 2004 among a nationally representative

sample of 1,102 U.S. adults aged 18 and over, of whom 319 were aged 18-34. The data were weighted to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity and propensity to be online.

In theory, with samples of this size, one could say with 95 percent certainty that the results for the overall sample have a sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. Sampling error for the men's sample results is plus or minus 4 percentage points and for the women's sample results is plus or minus 5 percentage points. This online sample is not a probability sample.

### **About the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums**

The Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums ([www.ammmpa.org](http://www.ammmpa.org)) is an international association of marine life parks, aquariums, zoos, research facilities, and professional organizations dedicated to the highest standards of care for marine mammals and to their conservation in the wild through public education, scientific study, and wildlife presentations.

### **About Harris Interactive®**

Harris Interactive Inc. ([www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com)), the 15<sup>th</sup> largest and fastest-growing market research firm in the world, is a Rochester, N.Y.-based global research company that blends premier strategic consulting with innovative and efficient methods of investigation, analysis and application. Known for *The Harris Poll*® and for pioneering Internet-based research methods, Harris Interactive conducts proprietary and public research to help its clients achieve clear, material and enduring results.

Harris Interactive combines its intellectual capital, databases and technology to advance market leadership through U.S. offices and wholly owned subsidiaries: London-based HI Europe ([www.hieurope.com](http://www.hieurope.com)), Paris-based Novatris ([www.novatris.com](http://www.novatris.com)), Tokyo-based Harris Interactive Japan, through newly acquired WirthlinWorldwide, a Reston, Virginia-based research and consultancy firm ranked 25<sup>th</sup> largest in the world, and through an independent global network of affiliate market research companies. EOE M/F/D/V

# # #