

Butterfly Pavilion Announces Major Expansion of Water's Edge, Debuting a Giant Pacific Octopus This September

Westminster attraction's saltwater galleries double in size with 8 new exhibits, 325 additional square feet and 12 total habitats exploring the ocean's hidden depths

WESTMINSTER, Colo. — (August 10, 2026) — Butterfly Pavilion, Colorado's premier invertebrate zoo, today announced a major expansion and reimagining of its beloved Water's Edge exhibit, marking the attraction's first-ever Giant Pacific Octopus. The current exhibit will close to guests on Monday, August 17, and the transformed space is scheduled to reopen on Monday, September 14, inviting guests to dive deeper into the invertebrates in the depths of the ocean.

The reimagined Water's Edge, Exploring the Depths of Ocean Life, expands the gallery to 1,100 square feet and triples Butterfly Pavilion's saltwater capacity to more than 3,000 gallons. The refreshed exhibit will feature 12 habitats, including 8 brand-new exhibits, and introduce guests to more than 100 different species represented by hundreds of individual invertebrates — from sea stars and anemones to a mantis shrimp with one of the fastest strikes in the animal kingdom.

At the heart of it all is a Giant Pacific Octopus, one of the ocean's most intelligent and captivating animals and the first Giant Pacific Octopus in Butterfly Pavilion's history, making it just the second place in Colorado where guests can encounter one. Known for solving puzzles, recognizing faces and moving with startling intention, the Giant Pacific Octopus is expected to become an instant guest favorite and a signature reason to keep coming back to Butterfly Pavilion repeatedly.

"Butterfly Pavilion is dedicated to creating new experiences that give guests a reason to keep coming back and explore our spaces to learn more about invertebrates and how essential and powerful these animals are," said Ryan Welch, CEO of Butterfly Pavilion. *"The new Water's Edge is a celebration of everything that makes these animals extraordinary, and we can't wait for our guests to experience it for themselves."*

Guests exploring the new Water's Edge will move through an experience built around two kinds of depth: the physical, still largely unexplored depths of the ocean, and the hidden behavioral depths of the animals that call it home. New hands-on interactives bring that story to life, such as:

- **Living Tidepool:** an immersive Pacific touch tank where guests can get hands-on with sea stars and anemones and other intertidal invertebrates

- **Illuminated Reefs:** an opportunity to create glowing, interactive Coral reef patterns

While Water's Edge is under construction, Butterfly Pavilion will keep the excitement going with special programming throughout the closure, including live story time experiences, an invertebrate matching challenge, closure-wall videos with zookeeper Q&As, and expanded animal encounters, nature walks and Learning Lab experiences, keeping every visit full of discovery even before the doors to the new exhibit open.

Butterfly Pavilion invites the community to be among the first to explore the new Water's Edge when it reopens and to meet the newest Giant Pacific Octopus to call the Denver metro area home. Tickets and updates will be available at butterflies.org.

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About Butterfly Pavilion

About Butterfly Pavilion: Founded in 1995, Butterfly Pavilion is the first Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)-accredited, standalone, non-profit invertebrate zoo in the world. Located in Westminster, Colorado, Butterfly Pavilion is a global leader in invertebrate conservation, research, and education. From restoring pollinator habitats and conducting tarantula research to inspiring over 100,000 students each year, Butterfly Pavilion works locally and globally to protect the small but mighty animals that keep our planet thriving. Learn more at www.butterflies.org.

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