The Covino Family

SeaQuest (multiple locations), San Antonio Aquarium, Austin Aquarium, and Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve

Members of the Covino family—namely, brothers Vince and Ammon—have been involved in opening a number of aquariums across the U.S., including the following:

- **2021: Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve (Houston Interactive Aquarium) in Texas**
- **2016: SeaQuest, first location, with multiple locations following**
- **2014: San Antonio Aquarium in Texas**
- **2013: Austin Aquarium in Texas**
- **2012: Portland Aquarium in Oregon (closed in 2016)**
- **2011: Idaho Aquarium (Covino family involvement ended in 2014. It is currently operating as Aquarium of Boise.)**

Since the first Covino aquarium opened, hundreds of animals have died either at these facilities or during transport, including over 200 in a three-month period at the now-defunct Portland Aquarium. A total of 250 trout died in transport to SeaQuest Littleton in Colorado. In addition, dozens of people have reported injuries sustained by direct contact with wildlife at multiple SeaQuest locations.

Ammon Covino was sentenced in federal court to more than a year in prison after pleading guilty to conspiracy to commit illegal wildlife trafficking in 2013. He was sent back to prison twice in 2016 after violating his parole—which prohibited any activity involving the exhibition, purchase, or sale of fish or wildlife.

Despite being legally prohibited from doing so, Ammon was involved with the operations of the aquariums in Austin, Portland, and San Antonio (for which he was sent back to prison in February 2016). Then he was involved in the opening of SeaQuest aquariums in Nevada and Utah (for which he went back to prison again in November 2016).

SeaQuest aquariums had a lengthy history of animal welfare issues, animal deaths, legal violations, and injuries to employees and the public from direct contact with animals. As a result, five locations closed, CEO Vince Covino stepped down, and SeaQuest filed for bankruptcy in December 2024. The remaining four SeaQuest locations were sold to new owners.

Documentation is available upon request.

June 29, 2026/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve a critical repeat citation for failing to perform daily observations to assess the health and well-being of all animals. On June 4, 2026, the attending veterinarian euthanized a juvenile Patagonian cavy who was lethargic and had raw, irritated, and reddened skin, with a brown wound that appeared to extend into subcutaneous tissue and was infested with crawling larvae. There were also maggots along the cavy's back and abdomen. The attending veterinarian suspected that the injuries resulted from inter-herd aggression. The facility failed to recognize that the cavy had been sick for several days before reporting it to the attending veterinarian. The facility was also issued a critical citation for failing to ensure that animals housed together were compatible. Multiple Patagonian cavies displayed injuries as a

result of inter-herd aggression, including the young cavy who was euthanized on June 4, 2026, an adult named Rosemary who had a healing wound on the top of her right lower leg, an adult named Lavender who had a gait abnormality and several lacerations, including puncture wounds on the top of her head, abrasions on the rear hocks, and a laceration on her left shoulder, and an adult named Ginger with a healing five-inch-long laceration and raised, red pinpoint lesions that had scabbed over.

April 16, 2026/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve a direct citation for failing to provide adequate veterinary care to animals. An ostrich sustained injuries during attempts to corral her earlier in the day, and during her introduction to an emu the previous month. Neither incident was reported to the veterinarian before this inspection. In addition, a Patagonian cavy had an approximately two-inch-long healing wound on their leg. The veterinarian had not been notified. The USDA cited the facility for failing to keep the required vaccines for the otters and kinkajous up to date. A critical citation was issued for failing to properly handle animals.

- A water line was left on, flooding the armadillo enclosure by approximately 2 feet. The animal had to swim for a long time. By the time the issue was discovered, the animal was no longer able to swim, was lethargic, unresponsive, and cold (with purple skin), and was breathing abnormally. He was placed under a heat lamp and displayed signs of high stress. The attending veterinarian later cleared the armadillo medically.
- In March 2026, the emu was moved into an enclosure with an ostrich without a prior compatibility assessment. The ostrich reacted by running along the perimeter of the exhibit and crashed into the fence multiple times, resulting in an approximate 4-inch diameter wound and feather loss on her upper front chest. On the morning of April 17, 2026, the inspector noted: “The ostrich was panting and laying in the same spot as she was the day before (on April 16, 2026) and seemed uninterested in ambulation.” Two fresh flesh wounds were discovered on the top of her left foot, and she was non-weight-bearing on the same limb. The facility claimed the injuries occurred when the ostrich kicked a cattle panel that non-animal care staff used to try to corral her.
- The facility was using leftover food that had been sitting out in an exhibit throughout the day to feed animals the next day and/or until gone. “Food that sits out on exhibit is exposed to heat, humidity, pests, and contamination, which are conditions that favor rapid bacterial growth, which can cause severe illness or death if eaten by the animals.”

The USDA cited Houston Interactive Aquarium for failing to properly handle Peaches and Captain Hooks, Linnaeus's two-toed sloths, to minimize the risk of harm to the animal and to the public during public encounters. A perch was placed in the open doorway outside their enclosure, and a bench (about a foot wide) was placed in front of it. The sloths traversed their enclosure door without an attendant or facility employee present, and a large TV was within the animals' reach. In a photo submitted by the public, children are seen reaching across the bench to touch the sloths.

The USDA cited Houston Interactive for failing to maintain adequate records and counts of animals; failing to have a

complete contingency plan; failing to maintain records to demonstrate that the environmental enhancement plan for lemurs was being implemented; failing to dispose of deteriorating produce that was intended for primates; and failing to have an effective pest control program in the primate food prep and storage areas.

- Fruit flies congregated on and around the fruits contained in a plastic container.
- A large quantity of rodent poop was along the floor near the metal food storage containers and bedding material.

Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve was cited for failing to maintain adequate drainage in the warthog enclosure, which had excessive standing water, puddles, and mud covering approximately half of the enclosure, preventing the animal from accessing their shelter without walking through it. The facility also failed to adequately clean the enclosures; approximately half of the giraffe and petting-zoo yards were covered in feces. In addition, the facility lacked an effective pest control program; the camel repeatedly kicked and nipped at his legs to ward off flies that surrounded and landed on him, and there were excessive flies around the otters. A separate citation was issued for numerous small black bugs crawling among bits of food/dust on the floor of the food storage trailer, and for an excessive amount of rodent poop along the floor and on bags of shelved bird food, with mold growing on the floor underneath where the bags of food were stored. The facility was cited for failing to maintain any documentation demonstrating compliance with the avian environmental enhancement plan. Several birds displayed stereotypic behaviors in complaint videos received by Animal Care. Lastly, the facility was cited for failing to dispose of foul-smelling, discolored, and wilted leafy lettuce intended for the birds.

July 2, 2025/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued the Austin Aquarium an official warning for allegedly violating the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) by failing to handle animals with minimal risk of harm to the animal and the public during numerous public exhibitions occurring between June 2022 and May 2023, resulting in injuries to guests. During an encounter on June 13, 2022, a lemur bit a child on the hand; on August 27, 2022, a kinkajou bit a child on the hand; and on May 18, 2023, a lemur bit and scratched the face of an adult guest. The facility also allowed unsupervised guests to feed otters, posing a risk to both the animals and the public.

April 25, 2025/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued the Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve an official warning for allegedly violating the federal AWA by failing to communicate with the attending veterinarian in a timely manner about a squirrel with an active skin condition, failing to maintain an outdoor otter enclosure so that it wouldn't injure animals, and failing to maintain bird enclosures in good repair, resulting in the escapes of 40 parakeets and one eclectus parrot. (See the July 19, 2022, February 12, 2024, and April 3, 2024 entries).

December 10, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain acquisition and disposition records, failing to have an environmental enhancement plan for an individually housed budgie that could not see or hear other birds, and failing to maintain a capybara enclosure in good repair. The enclosure had an electrical cord hanging within reach of the capybara, posing a significant risk to the animal if they were to chew or pull on the cord.

December 9, 2024/ Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA cited the Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve for failing to provide adequate drainage in animal enclosures. As a result, large areas of standing water and mud covered over half of the enclosure spaces for a warthog, two mini pigs, and an ostrich. The facility was also cited for having two large bags of expired bird food and failing to have an effective program to control rodent populations, resulting in excessive amounts of rodent feces in the food storage areas.

November 7, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA issued SeaQuest an official warning for allegedly violating the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) by failing to provide two wallabies with appropriate and timely veterinary care. Both of them had torn toe claws. (See the September 30, 2024 entry.)

November 5, 2024/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat citation for failing to have an effective program to control populations of flies throughout the facility, particularly in the food preparation area. SeaQuest was also cited for failing to keep refrigerators clean where animal food was stored. The food storage refrigerators had build-ups of dust, food debris, and brown residue.

October 4, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA issued SeaQuest repeat citations for failing to have lids on trash receptacles in the food storage area and failing to control mouse and insect infestations. Mouse feces were observed throughout the facility, including near open feed, food preparation areas, and food and water receptacles, and a dead mouse was found on a sticky trap. Flying insects were also seen on food in macaw and Eclectus parrot enclosures, and ants were present in the sugar glider enclosure.

The facility was also cited for failing to keep water receptacles clean and sanitary. The container used to fill water in the animals' enclosures had a musty odor with debris and hay in it, creating non-potable and potentially distasteful water that could prevent the animals from drinking.

In addition, the facility was cited for failing to store food and enclosure substrate properly in order to prevent rodent feces from contaminating them; failing to have an adequate system of water drainage in the budgie enclosure, which was leading to standing water that could harbor mold; and failing to maintain the budgie enclosure, which had exposed screws and metal ferrules that were sharp and could injure the birds.

September 30, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA issued SeaQuest a direct citation for failing to follow appropriate methods to prevent and treat injuries for two wallabies. On September 28, 2024, the facility observed that a male wallaby named Chubs had torn claws on two of his toes and that another male wallaby named Cisco also had a torn toe claw. The facility attempted to contact the attending veterinarian but did not receive a response, so staff treated the injured toes with saline and silver sulfadiazine cream. During the inspection, the torn areas appeared tender. The wallabies also had many overgrown claws on their other toes that curved and shifted to the side.

September 27, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA issued SeaQuest repeat citations for failing to have the attending veterinarian approve a written program of veterinary care and a written environmental enhancement plan for birds. The facility was also cited for failing to have

lids on trash receptacles in the food storage area and the storage room near the budgie and macaw enclosures, which could create odors and attract pets.

September 19, 2024/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued SeaQuest a critical citation for failing to adequately control or handle animals during public interactions. This citation came after a sloth named Flash bit a member of the public on June 30, 2024, and a Bengal cat named Anubis bit a member of the public on August 31, 2024. (See related entries.)

September 18, 2024/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have its environmental enhancement plan for birds approved by the attending veterinarian.

August 31, 2024/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: A Bengal cat named Anubis bit a 9-year-old guest on the wrist during a public encounter.

August 27, 2024/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to remove an accumulation of old food and feces from the Indian runner duck enclosure. The accumulated waste had attracted gnats, which were seen crawling and flying around the enclosure.

August 22, 2024/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: An employee was scratched by a coatimundi after entering the animal's enclosure to provide food.

August 7, 2024/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA issued a critical citation to SeaQuest for failing to handle animals as carefully as possible to avoid physical harm. In July 2024, a parakeet became caught in an enclosure door and died. The facility was also cited for failing to have an effective method of fly control. Flies were in various areas of the facility, including clusters of them in the wallaby enclosure.

August 5, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA issued repeat citations to SeaQuest for failing to schedule regular veterinary visits to evaluate animals' health and well-being, failing to implement and document enrichment for birds, and failing to control mouse and fruit fly infestations. A mouse was observed in the storeroom, mouse feces were observed in multiple areas of the facility, and fruit flies were seen around food in the macaw and golden parakeet cages. The facility was also cited for failing to trim a pig's overgrown hooves, which were curving outward, causing splaying and abnormal positioning of the toes; failing to protect an electrical cord that was accessible in an enclosure housing two Bengal cats; and failing to maintain housing for birds in good repair. The enclosure of two Eclectus parrots had chewed wire with sharp points and chewed wood support beams with sharp splinters. The budgie room, which contained 184 birds, had several nesting boxes that were chewed, leaving sharp splinters, and a hanging perch with an exposed screw.

June 30, 2024/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: A sloth named Flash bit a guest on the arm during a tour, leaving two puncture marks.

June 25, 2024/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection issued SeaQuest a notice of violation and a $2,500 fine after an investigation revealed violations of several state regulations regarding animal exhibition. Violations included failing to provide animals with adequate and timely veterinary care, failing to provide animals with adequate enclosure space, failing to ensure new animals were free from infectious diseases, failing to prevent public contact with potentially

dangerous animals, failing to prevent the public from feeding unauthorized food to animals, allowing unauthorized public interaction with animals, failing to provide animals with an adequate diet, failing to provide the agency with the required and accurate reports, modifying records without the agency's approval, purchasing animals illegally, and failing to provide animals with adequate enclosures that resulted in unnecessary illnesses, injuries, deaths, and escapes. The notice required that the facility immediately provide all regulated wildlife with adequate veterinary care and cease all public interactions with unauthorized animals. The agency also put SeaQuest on administrative probation until further notice, which prohibits it from acquiring any new regulated animals.

June 13, 2024/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to ensure that animals were exhibited only for periods of time and under conditions consistent with their good health and well-being. A Patagonian cavy, a wallaby, and three silkie chickens were confined to enclosures without areas for the animals to be out of public view.

May 28, 2024/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to provide a toucan with food that was free of contamination. The food had numerous fruit flies on it.

May 1, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have an attending veterinarian, failing to have an approved environmental enhancement plan for the birds, and failing to have an effective program to control mice. Large amounts of mouse feces were observed along the walls of the space housing a golden parakeet.

April 3, 2024/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued a repeat critical citation to the Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve for failing to maintain a structurally sound enclosure in good repair that could securely contain birds. Due to a hole in the mesh of the enclosure, an Eclectus parrot escaped from the facility and was not recovered.

March 12, 2024/SeaQuest, Lynchburg, Virginia: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have appropriate equipment or personnel to safely trim the nails of three wallabies, which were extremely long, causing their toes to twist and turn to the side. The inspection report noted that excessively long nails can put pressure on the bones and joints of the toe, leading to unnecessary injury and discomfort.

February 28, 2024/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: According to a news article published by KSTP 5 Eyewitness News, a fish jumped out of the water and bit a 5-year-old child on the hand, breaking the skin.

February 21, 2024/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: A flying squirrel bit a 4-year-old child on the finger during a public interaction.

February 12, 2024/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued a critical citation to the Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve for failing to maintain a structurally sound enclosure in good repair that could securely contain birds. Due to a hole in the mesh of the enclosure, 40 parakeets escaped from the facility and were not recovered.

January 29, 2024/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection urged SeaQuest to temporarily discontinue public interactions with regulated animals due to a

mycobacteria outbreak at the facility, which caused shell rot infections in the turtles and is very contagious and deadly to other animals. The agency noted that poor husbandry is one of the main causes of shell rot infections.

January 4, 2024/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat citation for failing to clean enclosures often enough to prevent contamination and reduce disease hazards and odors. The porcupine and turaco enclosure had an abundance of flies, many of the shavings on the floor of the enclosure were wet, the area around the turaco's food bowl had a large amount of dried food and feces, and the porcupine didn't have enough space to avoid his excreta. The kinkajou enclosure was not cleaned regularly because staff couldn't enter the enclosure due to the animal's aggressive behavior. Old food was scattered on the floor and the feeding shelf.

The facility was also cited for failing to have a suitable method to eliminate excess water in the otter enclosure. The facility was housing four otters in an enclosure designed for two, leading to a wet floor because the otters jumped in and out of the pool. The inspection report noted that wet surfaces can predispose animals to health issues, especially skin infections. In addition, the facility was cited for failing to have an effective method of fly control. Many flies were seen in multiple enclosures.

December 29, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection sent a letter to SeaQuest listing the following concerns documented during an inspection: discrepancies between the number of animals at the facility and what was documented on records; a Uromastyx lizard with a piece of shed skin stuck to their body, which could cause serious health concerns if not properly treated; and failure to provide veterinary records for regulated animals. The letter also stated that no unauthorized interactions between regulated animals and the public were allowed, including that the animals shouldn't be walked on leashes.

December 10, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: A flying squirrel bit a guest on the finger during a public interaction.

December 2, 2023/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: A veterinary report submitted to Clark County Animal Protection Services stated that an iguana named Godzilla was euthanized after she was found to have a gravel impaction in her digestive tract that didn't respond to treatment. She had been experiencing weight loss as well as decreased activity and appetite, and bloodwork revealed chronic inflammation, infection, and low electrolyte levels.

November 29, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to remove significant accumulations of parakeet feces from the tops of several shelter boxes within the enclosure.

November 28, 2023/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have a method to eliminate water from an enclosure rapidly and keep it dry. Approximately a third of the dirt substrate in the chicken enclosure was saturated with water from an overturned water bowl, leaving the area muddy.

November 27, 2023/SeaQuest, Lynchburg, Virginia: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have adequate lighting distribution in the toucan enclosure. A toucan was moved into the enclosure with the facility's existing toucan, and the newly introduced bird didn't have an appropriate amount of lighting, which could lead to

suffering from hormone imbalances, unhealthy skin and feathers, and stress.

October 17, 2023/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA cited the San Antonio Aquarium for failing to have the attending veterinarian update the written program of veterinary care to include avian species.

October 5, 2023/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to clean the back holding area for the otters, which had an accumulation of grime along the edges of the floor and up the walls, and for failing to keep the food preparation area clean. The area was "filthy" and had a large amount of clutter, the floors didn't appear to have been cleaned in a long time, and one of the prep table shelves was covered with rust.

September 28, 2023: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection sent a letter to SeaQuest documenting multiple concerns observed at the facility during an inspection, including two red and green macaws with an alarming number of missing feathers, a two-toed sloth and a blue-tongued skink without access to adequate amounts of drinking water, an Asian water monitor without access to enough water to swim or soak in, a red tegu with abnormal white areas on his back that hadn't been assessed by the veterinarian, exposed insulation in the blue-tongued skink enclosure, and a sick tegu housed in close proximity to the food preparation area.

The letter also noted that a newly acquired baby sloth had died less than a month after arriving at the facility and that the facility had failed to intervene when animals housed together showed signs of aggression, potentially leading to the death of a water monitor.

The facility was also advertising unauthorized interactions with regulated species, and it was ordered to end all such interactions with those animals immediately. The agency also put SeaQuest on administrative probation for a year, prohibiting it from acquiring any new regulated animals and implementing new public interactions during this period.

September 25, 2023/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have complete acquisition records for over 70 birds, storing bottles of cleaning solutions adjacent to the bird food preparation area, and having an open electrical socket inside the primary enclosure of the kookaburra within reach of the bird.

September 14, 2023/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA issued the San Antonio Aquarium an official warning for allegedly violating the federal Animal Welfare Act by failing to maintain structurally sound enclosures in good repair to protect animals from injury, resulting in the death of a female African crested porcupine. (See the August 1, 2023, entry.)

September 12, 2023/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have sufficient barriers present between animals and the viewing public. During the inspection, guests were seen feeding two ducks an unknown substance and attempting to touch ducks without an attendant present. No barrier was present to prevent this kind of interaction, and the attendant was in another room. The facility was also cited for failing to provide ducks with a large enough dry area to allow adequate freedom of movement. The dry area available for the ducks didn't allow them to extend their wings fully without making contact with the wall, and the area was only big enough for one duck to stand

and eat at a time. The facility was also cited for failing to sanitize water receptacles at least once every two weeks.

September 12, 2023/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA cited the Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve for failing to have an employee present during periods of public interaction with a camel and a giraffe. Two guests were seen touching and taking photos with the camel, and three other guests, including a child, were seen petting the giraffe, all without any knowledgeable attendant present.

September 7, 2023/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA issued SeaQuest an official warning for allegedly violating the federal Animal Welfare Act by failing to ensure that enclosures were structurally sound and maintained in good repair to protect animals from injury, resulting in an injury to a sugar glider. (See the July 17, 2023, entry).

August 20, 2023/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: SeaQuest closed its Trumbull location permanently.

August 17, 2023/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, an otter named Clyde bit an employee on the hand while they were cleaning the exhibit.

August 17, 2023/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA cited the Austin Aquarium for failing to have a method to control flies in the capybara enclosure, where flies swarmed around the capybara, and for housing an 8-week-old lemur in a crate that didn't meet minimum space requirements. Enclosures for infant primates are required to be at least 20 inches in height, but this young lemur was confined to a 15-inch-high crate for 10 to 12 hours overnight.

August 4, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection sent a letter to SeaQuest denying its request to add more interactions between regulated animals and the public.

August 1, 2023/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA issued the San Antonio Aquarium a repeat critical citation for failing to maintain structurally sound enclosures in good repair to protect animals from injuries. On July 28, 2023, staff found a female African crested porcupine dead in an enclosure with a male porcupine. Quills from the male were embedded in her upper body. Due to incompatibility issues, a plywood wall had been used to separate the two animals, but the female was still able to gain access to the male's enclosure, resulting in her death.

July 19, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: During a public encounter, a squirrel bit the toe of a guest, who sought treatment for the injury at an urgent-care facility.

July 17, 2023/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA issued SeaQuest a critical citation for failing to ensure that all parts of an enclosure were appropriate for the animals and wouldn't pose a risk of injury. The facility installed a piece of enrichment in an enclosure for a sugar glider named Luna, who was later found with her tail entangled in the chain of the new equipment, causing an injury that required approximately half her tail to be amputated.

July 13, 2023/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The Trumbull Health Department found SeaQuest in violation of local municipal code for operating a fish spa in which patrons could dip their feet into a

tub of water filled with fish, which is prohibited. The agency ordered the facility to cease and desist all fish pedicure services. According to a letter from the health department, the conditions of the foot baths "were extremely unsanitary" and had "the potential to cause infection and disease in patrons."

July 11, 2023/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA cited the San Antonio Aquarium for failing to have identification for two male Bengal cats.

June 28, 2023/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain an effective method of fly control. The inspector observed an abundance of flies around a capybara enclosure during an inspection.

June 25, 2023/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: According to a report from Fort Worth Animal Care & Control, two otters named Nelson and Sarah bit an employee in the legs.

June 20, 2023/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have sufficient distance and/or barriers between an animal and the public during an interaction that occurred on May 30, 2023. Two employees were present during an encounter between five members of the public and a wallaby. Both employees were several feet away from the wallaby and had no means to control the animal during the interaction. During the encounter, three children surrounded the wallaby and touched the animal's face and neck and one child's face was in close proximity to the animal's face and mouth. Neither employee intervened during this interaction to ensure that sufficient distance was maintained between the wallaby and the children.

June 6, 2023/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have sufficient distance or barriers between animals and the public to ensure safety during an encounter. On March 15, 2023, during a feeding encounter between a wallaby and a child, the wallaby suddenly jumped toward the child and her front paw contacted the child's face.

May 24, 2023/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to ensure the safety of animals and the public during an encounter in which a sugar glider bit a child. On May 13, 2023, one staff member was present during an interactive experience between two guests and five sugar gliders. The animals, who were between 16 and 18 weeks old, were allowed to run freely over the guests, and one of them bit a guest after the customer closed their hands and squeezed the animal. Staff couldn't identify who had bitten the guest, and all five sugar gliders were quarantined by state health officials. The facility was also cited for failing to have a safe and effective method for controlling flies. They were present in enclosures housing two Patagonian cavies and six chickens, and a large number of flies were present in a pig enclosure and were observed landing and crawling on a pig. Many fruit flies were present in a room where animal food was stored.

May 23, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain a guinea pig enclosure in good repair. The enclosure housing two guinea pigs had two structures with damaged wood, and an obvious liquid stain was present in one of them.

May 22, 2023/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued Austin Aquarium a repeat critical citation for failing to ensure the safety of both the public and animals during interactive encounters. On May 18, 2023, a lemur named Biggie jumped onto a woman's shoulder, bit her on the side of her

face, and scratched her lip, causing her to seek medical treatment.

May 9, 2023/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain a rabbit enclosure, which had a section of broken wall, in good repair and failing to provide a sugar glider, named Hermione, with adequate veterinary treatment. She needed to receive medication twice daily, but the facility had no documentation that she had received a second dose of medication on April 5. When asked, the facility stated that the dose had likely been missed.

May 9, 2023/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to thoroughly clean enclosures housing otters, a sloth, African crested porcupines, and pigs, all of which had buildups of organic material and grime on the walls.

May 1, 2023/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain appropriate humidity and temperature in the sloth enclosures. The inspector noted that sloths are "very sensitive to temperature and humidity, requiring temperature of 75–86 degrees F and 60–80% humidity for their health and comfort." The humidity in each of the sloth enclosures ranged from 46% to 55%. The temperature and humidity had not been recorded since April 18, 2023, when they were also not within the appropriate ranges.

April 25, 2023/SeaQuest, Lynchburg, Virginia: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to construct a sloth enclosure in an appropriate way for the species. A male sloth named Flash sustained an injury after catching a nail in a double mesh barrier separating him from another sloth.

April 20, 2023/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection sent a letter to SeaQuest denying its request to add more animal interactions. The agency stated its concern about the health and safety of both the animals and the public and urged SeaQuest to allow the animals currently confined there to engage in normal behavior patterns and to prevent disease, escapes, and accidental injuries to the animals and the public.

April 11, 2023/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA issued San Antonio Aquarium a repeat citation for failing to maintain enclosures in good repair. A kangaroo and cavy enclosure had a chewed and splintered wooden box. A citation was also issued for failing to maintain a lemur enclosure in good repair. The enclosure had a worn and frayed rope hanging near a swinging perch. Lastly, a citation was issued for failing to maintain an enclosure floor in good repair. The paint had peeled off in an area inside a kinkajou enclosure, which made proper sanitization of the area difficult.

February 21, 2023/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA issued SeaQuest Littleton a critical citation for failing to handle animals in a way that minimized the risk of harm to them and the public. On July 16, 2022, a Savannah cat bit a member of the public, breaking the skin. The facility was unsure which cat was involved in the incident, which meant that all three Savannah cats there had to be quarantined for six months. The inspector noted that "animals involved in injuring the public could be at risk of euthanasia." (See also the July 16, 2022, entry).

January 9, 2023/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued Austin Aquarium a repeat citation for failing to handle animals in a way that minimized risk of harm to them and the public. The facility had installed two clear tubes in the otter enclosure for public feeding interactions,

which were open at all times. The otters could reach into the tube and touch the inspector's finger, which meant these tubes allowed unsupervised members of the public to transmit foreign material or food into the enclosure and touch the animals. No barriers or signs were present to discourage contact.

December 8, 2022: The USDA issued SeaQuest a penalty of $4,500 for alleged violations of the AWA, including failing to handle animals as carefully as possible, leading to the death of a flying squirrel who got caught in a door while an employee was closing it; failing to construct and maintain structurally sound enclosures, causing an enclosure door to fall on an otter and injure his foot; and failing to handle animals in a way that assured the safety of both the public and animals on the following dates.

- August 26, 2019: A guest was bitten while feeding an otter.
- October 9, 2019: A guest was scratched by a coatimundi who was trying to climb up the person's leg.
- November 11, 2019: A guest and an employee were bitten by a South American coati named Gus.
- December 27, 2019: On or about this date, a guest and an employee were bitten by a South American coati named Gus during a public interaction.
- September 28, 2021: A guest was bitten by a kinkajou, causing a puncture wound to the tip of a finger.
- November 13, 2021: On or about this date, a guest was bitten by an otter while trying to hand the animal a toy.

November 4, 2022/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: A SeaQuest employee's wrist required medical attention from an urgent care center after a coatimundi bit him.

November 2, 2022/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to inform the attending veterinarian about a wound on the tail of a wallaby named Watson.

October 28, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, a sloth named Captain Hooks bit an employee on the finger during a training session.

October 27, 2022/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued Austin Aquarium an official warning for two alleged violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act. Both were for failing to handle animals as expeditiously and carefully as possible. (See the August 24, 2022, and August 2, 2022, entries.)

October 26, 2022/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection sent a letter to SeaQuest documenting multiple concerns observed at the facility during an inspection, including at least 50 loose nails scattered on the floor of the coatimundi enclosure, food and debris scattered across floors and walkways, a container of mealworms left out in the public area, a macaw with no access to food or water, food dispensing machines that weren't cleaned frequently enough, a feeding tube for the Asian small-clawed otters with a thick film of sludge at the bottom, and coatimundis housed too close to the food preparation area, risking contamination of the food and the spread of disease.

October 11, 2022/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to monitor the temperature and humidity in the enclosure of a sloth named Perry. The temperature and humidity monitor wasn't functioning, and measurements hadn't been recorded for

over a month. The facility was also cited for failing to maintain the kitchen floors in good repair so that they could be adequately cleaned and disinfected. The floors had areas of exposed concrete and peeling paint.

September 26, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: According to records from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, an Asian water monitor bit the fingers of a child who was attempting to feed the animal.

September 22, 2022/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat citation after a wallaby bit a child on the finger. The USDA stated, "This facility has a history of public injury during it's [*sic*] 'animal encounters.'" The inspection report said that SeaQuest "needs to ensure that animals and people are not put into situations where either is injured or stressed during these encounters."

Repeat citations were also issued for failing to keep the linoleum in the sloth enclosure in good repair (it was peeling up from the concrete in areas and allowed urine to seep underneath, preventing the enclosure from being adequately cleaned) and failing to clean the Asian small-clawed otters' back holding area. The white walls and concrete block walls had staining, and the floor had an accumulation of feces and staining.

August 29, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to store food in a way that protected it from deterioration and molding. During the inspection, black mold was present on the back wall and grates of a refrigerator used to store yams and bananas. The unit wasn't working, so the interior was warm. A box on the top shelf was filled with black, moldy bananas, and there was a box of yams on the bottom shelf. The inspector noted that the "yams are a perishable food item [and] they need to be stored in a working refrigerator unit."

August 25, 2022/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued SeaQuest a critical repeat citation for failing to maintain a sugar glider enclosure in good repair. Five sugar gliders had disappeared a couple of days after being moved into a new enclosure. The facility found that the fake tree in the enclosure had a 5-foot-tall vertical PVC pipe that didn't have a cover. The sugar gliders had fallen into the pipe and were unable to escape. They were found dead in the pipe. A citation was issued for failing to provide a Patagonian cavy and a capybara with appropriate space to perform normal postural and social adjustments. Both were housed in an approximately 20-foot-by-6-foot enclosure with a small pool for the capybara. The cavy was fed and housed overnight in a 3-foot-by-3-foot enclosure within the 20-foot-by-6-foot enclosure. The inspector noted that the "enclosures [did] not allow either animal the opportunity to perform normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement such as running, playing, foraging, or hiding." The USDA also cited SeaQuest for failing to have an adequate number of employees to consistently provide animals with appropriate care. During the inspection, many of the animal enclosures were in various stages of daily maintenance but very few employees were noted. The facility stated that only two mammal keepers showed up reliably out of the five who were supposed to be on staff. The other three keepers were said to "show up occasionally."

August 24, 2022/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued Austin Aquarium a critical repeat citation for failing to handle animals in a way that assured the safety of both the public and animals. On August 27, 2022, a boy was bitten on the hand by a kinkajou during an encounter in

which an adult and an animal attendant were present. During animal encounters, visitors were allowed to use two fingers to pet the kinkajou on her back and were sometimes allowed to feed her.

August 22, 2022/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Jefferson County Animal Control issued SeaQuest a warning for allegedly violating Colorado's cruelty-to-animals statute. The facility was keeping numerous fish in dirty, clouded tanks and wasn't providing two red-footed tortoises with access to UVB lighting.

August 7, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: According to records from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, a guest and her 2-year-old child were injured after an iguana jumped on them and scratched them, drawing blood. The mother had scratches on her hand, and the child sustained scratches to the ear, back, and neck.

August 2, 2022/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued Austin Aquarium a critical citation for failing to handle animals in a way that assured the safety of both the public and animals. On June 13, 2022, a 10-year-old boy was bitten by a 1-year-old ring-tailed lemur. During an animal encounter, the lemur had "jumped towards the child and as the boy was putting his hands up to cover his face, the lemur bit his hand."

July 29, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, a kinkajou named Honey bit an individual on the hand.

July 20, 2022/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA cited San Antonio Aquarium for failing to have auxiliary ventilation for the rabbit enclosure. The HVAC wasn't working properly, and the temperature near the rabbit enclosure was 85 degrees. The inspector was told that fans would be brought into the area or the rabbits would be moved somewhere else. An hour and a half later, the temperature had risen to 89 degrees but fans hadn't been brought in and the rabbits hadn't been moved. A rabbit was lying stretched out next to the cool brick wall, and the inspector noted "[t]his is a sign the rabbit may be experiencing discomfort due to the temperature increase." A citation was issued for failing to house two juvenile kangaroos in a dedicated enclosure. The two kangaroos were housed in pouches hanging on hooks on the walls in the animal-care staff office. Electrical cords, tools, and other supplies in the office posed a risk of injury to the animals. Another citation was issued for failing to have a contingency plan for the HVAC system failure. The inspector noted that a contingency plan for an HVAC failure could "reasonably be anticipated considering the age of the building and demands placed on the HVAC system in the extreme summer heat."

July 19, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection entered a memorandum of understanding with SeaQuest Connecticut to resolve issues raised by the agency in a May 2, 2022, letter. The facility was required to remove kinkajous and a porcupine. (See also the May 2, 2022, entry.)

July 19, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve repeat citations for failing to communicate with the attending veterinarian in a timely manner about a squirrel with an active skin condition and failing to maintain an outdoor enclosure so that it wouldn't injure animals. The temperature of the metal inside the otter enclosure ranged from 143 to 147

degrees, which could have burned the animals. The facility was also cited for failing to have a complete contingency plan in the event of an emergency and failing to have a complete veterinary care plan for a dog on the premises.

July 16, 2022/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The Colorado Department of Public Health imposed a 180-day quarantine on the Savannah cats at SeaQuest Littleton after a child was bitten during an interaction. Staff were unable to identify which cat caused the injury. (See also the February 21, 2023, entry.)

July 8, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, a dog named Xander, who was housed at the facility, attacked an employee, causing severe injuries, including multiple bite wounds on her body.

July 6, 2022/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain a hybrid cat enclosure so that it had no sharp points or edges. The ceiling was made of hardware wire, which had been cut into to create an access point for maintenance of the space above the enclosure, leaving sharp points. The walls had carpet on them, allowing the cats to access the area with sharp points.

July 6, 2022/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to provide rabbits with ample light in. The enclosure for two rabbits was in a room without windows, and the only available light during the inspection was on a motion sensor and activated only if a human was in the room. The rabbits were in the dark without any type of light for most of the day.

June 27, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve an official warning for four alleged violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act: failing to handle animals as expeditiously and carefully as possible (see the April 27, 2022, entry); failing to provide animals with food that was wholesome, palatable, and free from contamination; failing to take appropriate measures to protect animals from climatic conditions; and failing to have a sufficient number of adequately trained employees to maintain professionally acceptable levels of husbandry practices. (See the February 24, 2022 entry.)

June 21, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, a lemur named Dexter bit an employee on the knee.

June 21, 2022/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The Woodbridge Department of Health and Human Services issued SeaQuest a notice of violation for an extensive roach population at the facility. The health department explained that "[l]ive and dead roaches were observed in all stages of development throughout the facility" and that "[d]ue to the level of infestation observed," action needed to be taken immediately. It warned SeaQuest that "failure to significantly improve the level of roach activity harbored at the SeaQuest facility within 30 days may result in enforcement action."

May 29, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to reports from Harris County Public Health, a lemur named Dexter bit an employee and caused a laceration on the forehead of another one.

May 2, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection revoked SeaQuest Connecticut's exempt

exhibitor status after it failed to comply with six exemption requirements on multiple occasions. The facility was ordered to remove all Category 1, 2, and 3 Wild Animals and any animals subject to USDA inspections from the state of Connecticut. SeaQuest appealed this ruling, which resulted in a settlement that allowed the company to keep its exempt status but required the removal of the kinkajous and a porcupine from the facility. (See the July 19, 2022, entry.)

April 27, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve a direct citation for failing to handle a juvenile camel in a way that wouldn't cause trauma, behavioral stress, or unnecessary discomfort. During the inspection, the camel was observed pacing back and forth continuously and never lying down, "standing calmly, or chewing his cud. He was also mouthing/cribbing and chewing on various parts of the fencing along his enclosure" and "was seen rubbing against a pole and plucking his own hair out." The licensee had implemented only "two of the many recommendations made by the attending veterinarian." The inspector noted that this behavior was "significantly abnormal" for a ruminant and an indicator of stress, anxiety, and potentially stereotypic behavior. Social media posts have documented this camel's abnormal behavior since March 2022.

The USDA issued the facility a repeat citation for failing to handle a lemur in a way that ensured minimal risk of harm to the health and well-being of the public and the animal. On April 20, 2022, a minor was scratched on the leg by a lemur during a public interaction encounter. A repeat citation was also issued for failing to build appropriate animal structures. The facility created a goat-enrichment structure out of a piece of sheet metal cemented to the ground. The inspector stated that the structure was "hot to the touch, as my hand could not be placed on the object longer than a few seconds without causing pain/burning. The metal easily retains heat, and consequently poses a hazard to the well-being of these animals as they could burn and injure themselves during its use."

The facility was also cited for failing to have expiration dates labeled on multiple prescribed drugs for USDA-covered species. Another citation was issued for failing to control fruit fly populations. During the inspection, "numerous fruit flies [were] both flying around and settled on the food for two kinkajous." Flies were also seen on the produce stored in the prep kitchen used for other species.

April 26, 2022/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: The USDA issued SeaQuest a critical citation for failing to maintain an enclosure housing two Asian small-clawed river otters in good repair. While shifting the animals off exhibit, the cable used to manipulate the shift door came loose, causing the door to fall down and injure the front foot of a male otter named Dale. He sustained a dislocation of the second digit, a fracture of the fifth digit, and a laceration on the main pad of his foot. Also, the coatimundi enclosure contained a worn faux tree stump with exposed loose foam and other material that created an ingestion risk, which could injure the animals.

April 26, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston, Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, a dog named Xander, housed at the facility, attacked an individual, who then sought medical attention for an injury to her arm.

April 19, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium & Animal Preserve, Houston,

Texas: According to a report from Harris County Public Health, a lemur scratched a visitor during a public encounter.

April 18, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat violation for failing to handle animals in a way that minimized the risk of harm to them and the public. During two sloth encounters observed by the inspectors, the public was allowed to interact with the sloth while an employee was at least 5 feet away, with no control of the animal to ensure minimal risk of harm.

Another repeat citation was issued for failing to keep enclosures clean of trash and debris. Two bags of vermiculite and a metal scale had been left within the sloth enclosure, where the sloth had direct access to them.

The USDA also issued SeaQuest a citation for failing to keep enclosures clean. The otter enclosure and the area around the den box "had an accumulation of feces, shells, small fish and debris present, and there was an unpleasant strong odor noted when standing next to the enclosure and den box."

A citation was issued for failing to provide rabbits with water. The rabbits did not have any food or water and when given water, one rabbit began to drink immediately for 1.5 minutes. A citation was issued for failing to have accurate and complete animal transfer paperwork for a newly acquired Bengal kitten. The USDA also issued a citation for failing to have an adequate "pest"-control program. A large population of fruit flies was present in the animal enclosures and food prep/kitchen area. Fly strips placed around the facility were "very full" and flies were observed on the walls, counters, knife, cutting board, and food containers.

April 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: According to records from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, a wallaby scratched an individual.

March 3, 2022/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA issued Austin Aquarium a citation for failing to notify the attending veterinarian of abnormal behavior exhibited by two young otters. During the inspection, Scooter, a male otter, "was observed constantly sucking his right front foot. His foot remained in his mouth even when he was walking in the exhibit." Sadie, a female otter, "was observed repetitively running in a circle around one area of the exhibit. She tossed her head as she moved. This behavior stopped only briefly before it started again." The animal care manager stated that Scooter had always exhibited this behavior. She also stated that Sadie's stereotypic behavior began several weeks before the inspection, after the facility started to allow public feeding throughout the day.

February 24, 2022/Houston Interactive Aquarium, Houston, Texas: The USDA issued the Houston Interactive Aquarium a critical citation for failing to provide a young male giraffe with wholesome and palatable food of sufficient quantity and nutritive value to keep him healthy. Since the giraffe's arrival, he "was fed 3-5 pounds of produce (potatoes, carrots, cucumbers, kale, and apples), rye crackers along with free choice alfalfa hay and approximately 4 pounds of herbivore pellets." Staff and members of the public would feed him romaine lettuce throughout the day. The inspector noted that records indicated that the giraffe didn't consume all the pellets offered each day and wasn't provided with additional browse once he ate what was growing in his enclosure. About a month after arriving at the facility, he developed a "life-threatening neurological condition which veterinary

records indicate was diet related. A diet consisting of large amounts of produce with little browse and roughage is not an adequate diet for a giraffe and may result in health problems and death."

A critical citation was also issued for failing to have employees who were "knowledgeable about adequate nutrition" for the giraffe who became ill. "Not only was the animal not fed a proper diet for the species, but also measures were not taken when the employees saw he was not consuming adequate amounts of various types of feed to avoid any nutrition-related health problems. As a result, the animal nearly expired one month after his arrival. Adequately trained employees are vital to the overall health and well-being of the animals, as these animals can suffer deleterious effects, and possibly death, if acceptable levels of husbandry are not maintained."

The USDA issued the facility a direct citation for failing to handle a 12-year-old lemur properly to protect him from the weather. The inspector observed that the lemur was shivering for minutes at a time on several occasions in a new outdoor enclosure that had no heat source. The ambient temperature outside was about 33 degrees, and the ground temperature inside the enclosure was about 52 degrees. A citation was also issued for failing to provide him and a 2-year-old female lemur with adequate housing facilities. The female lemur was housed in a new, separate outdoor enclosure that also had no heat source. The attending veterinarian confirmed that she had not approved exclusively housing the lemurs outdoors in such low temperatures or determined that the lemurs were acclimated to those temperatures. A citation was issued for failing to provide a female capybara with adequate housing facilities. The current shelter "allowed heat to escape and had an air draft into it, through the many gaps between the single layer of wooden floor planks. There also was no bedding on the floor of the shelter." Another citation was issued for failing to have adequate supervision during a kangaroo encounter. During inspection, there were 10 people in the enclosure with three kangaroos and only one attendant. Children were observed interacting with the kangaroos while the attendant was busy with another animal.

February 24, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to properly handle a kinkajou who scratched the face of a young child during an encounter. Two children and a staff member were in the enclosure with the kinkajou at the time of the incident.

A citation was also issued for failing to keep the African crested porcupine's enclosure in good repair: The wooden doorframe was chewed, and splintering wood posed a risk to the animal's safety. Another citation was issued for failing to properly clean the wall between the Bengal cat and kinkajou enclosures. The kinkajou enclosure had previously been part of the aviary, and there was an accumulation of feathers and birdseed between the wooden frame and plexiglass between the two enclosures.

February 19, 2022/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: A woman fainted after an eel bit her finger at SeaQuest Woodbridge.

February 12, 2022/SeaQuest, Lynchburg, Virginia: During a public encounter, a pig bit a 3-year-old child on the hand. The pig was on a leash, but the employee had trouble controlling the animal.

January 20, 2022/SeaQuest, Lynchburg, Virginia: The USDA issued SeaQuest a Teachable Moment for failing to sanitize

hard surfaces in the cat enclosures on a routine basis.

January 13, 2022/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA cited Austin Aquarium for failing to adequately clean the pool inside the capybara enclosure. The water was cloudy and brown/yellow in color with fecal matter floating around, and there was a buildup of brown material at the bottom of the pool.

January 5, 2022/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to maintain enclosures in good repair. A wood-and-rope bridge apparatus in the Bengal cat enclosure used two ropes strung between wooden slats. During inspection, the rope on the left side of the bridge was broken, allowing it to fall sideways.

December 13, 2021/SeaQuest, Layton, Utah: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat critical citation for two separate incidents. The first took place on September 28, 2021, when a guest was bitten by a kinkajou. Security footage showed that the guest and a child were attempting to interact with the kinkajou and were not observed or stopped by an employee.

The second incident occurred on November 13, 2021, when Chip, a small-clawed otter, bit the thumb of a guest during an interaction session.

November 30, 2021/SeaQuest, Woodbridge, New Jersey: The USDA issued SeaQuest a critical citation for an incident on June 24, 2021, in which an employee shut a secondary door on a flying squirrel. After an encounter, the employee escorted a member of the public out of the enclosure into a vestibule. When the employee shut the secondary door, the flying squirrel tried to escape and was caught in it. The squirrel died at the time of the incident.

November 11, 2021/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Honey, a 2-year-old kinkajou, was quarantined for 10 days after biting an employee.

November 1, 2021/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have a readily identifiable attendant present at all times during public contact with animals. An area housing two pigs, two wallabies, and two rabbits lacked public barriers and allowed contact between animals and the public without an attendant present.

October 12, 2021/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat citation for failing to maintain an animal enclosure in good repair. The facility had not adequately applied caulking to the baseboards of the Bengal cat off-exhibit holding area. The caulking was easily pulled away from the wall, which was an ingestion health hazard for the cats. The area underneath the caulking was also dirty, indicating that it was not doing its intended job of sealing the area from water and dirt.

October 8, 2021/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Colorado Parks and Wildlife issued SeaQuest a criminal citation for unlawfully purchasing and possessing a snapping turtle. The business was also issued five warnings for illegally possessing Russian tortoises, a painted turtle, a yellow-bellied slider, and an ocellated skink. On November 18, 2021, SeaQuest pleaded guilty to illegally purchasing the snapping turtle and was fined $250.

August 4, 2021/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to use materials that can be readily cleaned and sanitized in the construction of the concrete entryway, vertical wooden

supports, and surfaces of a climbing tree in the Bengal cats' enclosure. All the aforementioned surfaces were unsealed.

July 22, 2021/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: During a focused inspection, the USDA cited SeaQuest for housing two rabbits in the same primary enclosure with another species (a potbellied pig) and for failing to maintain the wallaby enclosure properly. The walls of the wallaby enclosure were constructed of fake rock and bamboo slats, and in at least four areas, there were gaps between the bamboo slats that were large enough to allow visitors to gain access to the animal or for the animal to escape.

July 13, 2021/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have a responsible, knowledgeable, and readily identifiable employee present during all times of public contact with animals. During the inspection, a visitor was observed reaching over the enclosure fence and petting a capybara without an attendant present.

June 22, 2021/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued a repeat citation to SeaQuest for failing to have attendants present during possible interactions between animals and the public at the facility. Two rabbits and an armadillo were within easy reach of the public in enclosures with 2-foot-tall fences and no barriers, and no employee was present to monitor the encounter. The USDA also issued a repeat citation to SeaQuest for failing to maintain the Bengal cat enclosure in good repair. Two of the walls in the off-exhibit area were constructed of sheetrock, which the USDA noted was not an appropriate material for animal enclosures, as it can be easily scratched and cannot be adequately cleaned or disinfected. The sheetrock had large areas where the outer paper was torn off, and there was a large hole in it at floor level. The wood around the door into the exhibit was stained and gouged and could not be adequately cleaned. The wire mesh separating the cats from the public had a hole with exposed sharp edges that posed a risk of injury to the cats.

June 3, 2021/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA issued a critical repeat citation to SeaQuest for failing to provide a means for a wallaby named Ben to climb out of an aquarium tank safely at the back of his enclosure. As a result, he drowned. The incident happened after the facility closed for the evening on September 16, 2020, and Ben was found dead in the tank the next morning. While the wallabies had access to the aquarium tank, at the time, it had no climbing structures on the inside to allow an animal to climb out safely.

SeaQuest also received a citation for failing to store food and bedding in a manner that would protect it from contamination, deterioration, and mold. An open bag and another, ripped bag of bedding were in the main guest area, to which the public had access. In the food preparation area, there was an open bag of Timothy biscuits for the two guinea pigs that wasn't stored appropriately to protect it from deterioration and contamination.

May 24, 2021/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA cited Austin Aquarium for failing to maintain the flooring in the animal quarantine room in good repair. There were pitted and eroded areas on the surface of the flooring that needed to be repaired or replaced. An enclosure with two miniature pigs was in the room at the time of the inspection, and debris was accumulating in the eroded area of the floor, making sanitation difficult.

April 15, 2021/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: According to a Facebook review with photos, a toddler's hand was badly bitten by an arowana fish.

April 8, 2021/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Another sloth named Flash died under similar circumstances at SeaQuest Las Vegas. (See the July 30, 2020, entry.) The second Flash had only been at SeaQuest Las Vegas for five months before he died. The necropsy documented that he had been found "minimally responsive on the floor" and had "developed twitching behavior" and lack of appetite—similar symptoms to those displayed by the first Flash, who died just seven months after his arrival at SeaQuest.

March 25, 2021/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to handle otters in a manner that did not cause them trauma, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort. In June 2020, an employee hit otters with a metal food bowl when the animals jumped on and around the employee, who was performing assigned husbandry duties. It was also cited for failing to have an effective barrier around the otters during a public feeding, which resulted in an incident in which a small child was bitten in July 2020. Similarly, the capybara enclosure was kept unlocked and unattended, allowing a member of the public to enter the enclosure.

SeaQuest was also cited for storing food and bedding directly on the floor, which could get wet and contaminate the supplies, since aquatic tanks and equipment were in the same area. A citation was also issued for failing to have complete acquisition/disposition records for goats, hedgehogs, and Bengal cats.

February 3, 2021/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have a sufficient barrier around the capybara enclosure after a child, who was able to reach over the side of the enclosure, was bitten by an adult capybara, causing the child's hand to bleed. It was also cited for failing to have appropriate barriers protecting two adult Kunekune pigs and a rabbit from unmonitored public contact and for not fully monitoring an "animal encounter" during which a member of the public attempted to pet a sloth when the attendant's back was turned, resulting in the sloth biting the guest.

SeaQuest was also cited for failing to provide safe enclosures for animals. A sloth was being housed in an enclosure with sheetrock walls with peeling rubber trim. "Sheetrock is not an appropriate material for animal enclosures" because it "can be easily scratched and gouged by an animal and cannot be adequately cleaned and disinfected." The off-exhibit area for the small-clawed otter had a rotting wall, exposed insulation, and a gap large enough for an otter's arm or leg to go through between the plywood door (which had mold along the bottom, indicating that it couldn't be cleaned adequately) and the cinderblocks.

Finally, the USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to clean the area surrounding the Bengal cat enclosure and failing to maintain complete records of animal acquisitions and dispositions. These records did document that an otter had died and seven had been shipped off to other facilities and that the whereabouts of two capybaras who should have been at the facility were unknown.

November 4, 2020/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA cited the San Antonio Aquarium for failing to keep the painted shelter box for a woodchuck in good repair. The sides and entrance had been chewed, creating a rough wood surface that posed an injury risk to the animal.

August 21, 2020/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have acquisition forms and

appropriate identification for three Bengal cats.

July 30, 2020/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Flash, a 1-year-old two-toed sloth, died after suffering from intermittent twitching, weakness, and inappetence for a month from an undetermined cause. Various medical treatments were tried and subsequently failed. Flash was noted to be thin at the time of his death.

July 16, 2020/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: Two weeks after resuming public interactions with otters, following the completion of a six-month quarantine from a previous biting incident (See the August 21, 2019 entry.), an otter bit a 9-year-old child's finger during a public encounter. This incident led to a citation from the USDA. (See the March 25, 2021 entry.)

March 21, 2020/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The San Antonio Aquarium was shut down by police after the owner refused to close. The Leon Valley Police Department had advised the facility on March 18 that it could not open to the public in light of the emergency declaration by the state that nonessential establishments should close their doors because of the coronavirus pandemic. The aquarium's manager was given a citation and ordered to close the facility immediately after police arrived on March 21. Officers returned an hour later and found that there were still people at the aquarium and that it was "operating as if there was no emergency declaration in place," according to Chief of Police Joseph Salvaggio. A second citation was issued, and visitors and nonessential employees were removed by police.

February 25, 2020: SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: A coatimundi named Rocket jumped on a child during a public interaction and scratched or bit the child's lip. As a result, the animal was removed from public interactions for a 30-day quarantine period.

January 13, 2020/SeaQuest, Layton, Utah: The USDA issued SeaQuest a critical repeat citation for allowing public interactions with Gus, a South American coatimundi, without adequate barriers or direct control of him. A guest and an employee were bitten by Gus during a public interaction session. Two coatimundis were allowed free physical contact with seated guests within the enclosure.

January 3, 2020/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: An employee was bitten by Chip, a small-clawed otter, during a presentation. Chip was quarantined for 10 days because of the risk of rabies exposure. This was his second attack. (See the September 7, 2019, entry.)

November 26, 2019/SeaQuest, Layton, Utah: Vince Covino's father was bitten on the hand by an otter. The animal was placed in quarantine for 11 days. On the same day, an employee was bitten by a coatimundi at this location.

November 21, 2019/SeaQuest, Layton, Utah: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to handle Gus, a South American coatimundi, in a manner that would minimize risk to the public and the animal. The facility allowed public interactions without adequate barriers or direct control of Gus, resulting in bites to a visitor and an employee.

November 18, 2019/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA issued SeaQuest a repeat citation for failing to handle four young coatimundi properly, in order to ensure minimal risk of injury to the animals and the public. One inspector asked the facility to demonstrate how animals are handled during public interactions. The inspectors then entered the enclosure and sat down, and two coatimundis were

allowed to climb onto their laps. An inspector noted, “The method of control was to grab the animals if they started a behavior that was not appropriate. One of the coati was able to grab my arm in its mouth before the attendant was able to restrain [the animal].”

October 22, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA cited SeaQuest for housing two rabbits with a toucan, which could cause the rabbits stress and spread disease and contamination. The facility was also cited for failing to maintain in good repair an enclosure holding two wallabies. The back wall had two holes exposing drywall, which could be a health hazard if ingested by the animals.

September 7, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Chip, an 8-month-old small-clawed otter, bit an employee on the wrist. The animal was placed in quarantine for 10 days.

August 26, 2019/SeaQuest, Layton, Utah: An otter bit a patron’s index finger while being fed. The animal was quarantined for 10 days because of possible rabies exposure.

August 24, 2019/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: A lemur named Jasmine bit a patron’s hand during an encounter. The animal was quarantined for 30 days because of possible rabies exposure.

August 21, 2019/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: An otter bit a 12-year-old child’s thumb. The animal was quarantined for six months because of possible rabies exposure.

July 25, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have acquisition records for several animals and failing to have records pertaining to a sloth, two capybaras, and two Asian small-clawed otters who were no longer at the facility.

July 22, 2019/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA cited the San Antonio Aquarium for failing to have an effective barrier for an exhibit holding an armadillo and an African crested porcupine. The inspector was able to “reach over the door and touch the [porcupine]” easily.

July 1, 2019/SeaQuest, Roseville, Minnesota: Flash, a two-toed sloth, bit a guest during an encounter. SeaQuest failed to obtain the victim’s contact information after the incident, but the victim later reported to the Minnesota Department of Health that the bite had “redness and puffiness.” Flash had not been vaccinated for rabies at that time and was put into a 30-day rabies quarantine after the incident.

June 25, 2019/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: A lawsuit was filed by the parents of a 10-year-old girl who was allegedly bitten by a lemur. The lawsuit alleges that the aquarium initially told the parents that the lemur was vaccinated but later informed them that this was not the case, leading to thousands of dollars in medical expenses.

June 19, 2019/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest again for failing to reduce the risk of injury to visitors during public encounters with an Asian small-clawed otter. Since the previous citation of February 5, 2019, there had been two incidents in which patrons sustained minor wounds from the otter.

June 7, 2019/SeaQuest, Trumbull, Connecticut: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have a written program of veterinary care.

May 31, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A patron reported on Yelp that a pig—located in the bird encounter—bit a 3-

year-old through her pants, breaking the skin.

May 29, 2019/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA cited Austin Aquarium for failing to consult an attending veterinarian to determine the cause of ear problems exhibited by kangaroos prior to treating them. The manager stated that the animals were undergoing an ear mite treatment recommended by a facility employee.

May 20, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Dale, a 4-month-old small-clawed otter, bit an employee while being bathed. The animal was placed in quarantine for 10 days.

April 25, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A pig bit a person. The animal did not have an up-to-date vaccination and was thus quarantined for 15 days.

April 23, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A pig lunged at and bit a patron.

April 3, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Clark County Administrative Services revoked SeaQuest's exotic-animal permit because the facility possessed unpermitted otters and coatimundi. The permit was later reissued with additional conditions.

April 1, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Colorado Parks and Wildlife suspended SeaQuest's exhibitor's license for two years. The suspension required that the facility send regulated animals—including otters, capybaras, kookaburras, some fish, a sloth, and three types of snake—to other facilities. The hearing examiner's decision states, "The best interest of regulated wildlife and public safety is at the center of this suspension decision. SeaQuest has repeatedly ignored, or failed to report violations, that included human injuries and wildlife care issues."

March 30, 2019/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: An Asian small-clawed otter named Xander bit a visitor on the leg during an "otter interaction," leaving several teeth marks and causing soreness, redness, and a rash. As a result, the otter was removed from public interactions for a 30-day quarantine period.

March 26, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: In a hearing regarding a $2,000 fine imposed by Clark County Animal Control over unpermitted otters, information was disclosed on a female Asian small-clawed otter named Jelly, who died after one of her arms became caught in a water pool filtration system. A necropsy was performed, and it was determined that her cause of death was drowning.

February 24, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: According to a KTNV investigation, five former SeaQuest employees came forward with concerns about the interactive environment and animal and public safety. One former employee stated, "Oftentimes because they let people walk around, the kids would stomp on the birds and kill them. And then [staff] would throw the birds in the garbage so they didn't have to record it or show that the birds were dead." Another former employee claimed that the same thing happened with turtles, adding that "some were actually crushed by kids." Another alleged that an octopus "cooked alive and burned to death in [his or her] own water" overnight.

February 23, 2019/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: An Asian small-clawed otter named Xander bit a six-year-old child. As a result, the otter was removed from public interactions for a 30-day quarantine period.
February 22, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: After a litter of Asian small-clawed

otters was born, Clark County Animal Control fined the facility $2,000 and issued it a citation for having unpermitted animals. SeaQuest's permit also prohibited it from breeding the otters. The hearing clerk upholding the fine stated, "Instead of remedying this violation, SeaQuest Aquariums attempted to capitalize and profit from it" and "willfully tried to take advantage of the situation by marketing and attempting to exhibit the baby otters."

February 9, 2019/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: A coatimundi named Moe bit and scratched two employees. The animal was quarantined for 10 days because of possible rabies exposure.

February 7, 2019/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to have animal records available at the time of inspection for examination and failing to have walls and interior surfaces constructed of materials that could be readily sanitized for the health and well-being of the animals.

February 5, 2019/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA cited SeaQuest for failing to reduce the risk of injury to visitors during public encounters with an Asian small-claw otter. Two visitors were injured during the month that the otter was on exhibit.

January 18, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Stormin' Norman, a tortoise, bit a patron's hand.

January 10, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Spartacus, an Asian water monitor, jumped up and bit an employee while being fed.

January 7, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana jumped onto a 6-year-old child's chest and "got a claw inside her mouth."

January 5, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A pufferfish bit an 8-year-old-child on the thumb.

January 5, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana jumped onto an employee's left shoulder and caught his or her nail in the person's face under her eye.

January 2, 2019/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana trying to climb a patron's leg scratched an employee's wrist and hand when the employee tried to remove the animal.

December 27, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit a child who was feeding the animal.

December 21, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A pufferfish bit the thumb of a patron who was feeding the animal.

December 19, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Jefferson County Animal Control verbally warned SeaQuest about the heat lamp in the sloth enclosure, which posed a burn hazard. This was the second verbal warning after a sloth named Flash was severely burned. (See the December 7, 2018, entry.)

December 11, 2018/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: Less than a month after opening, a patron found a dead stingray in the touch tank. According to CBS Sacramento, children were hovering around the pool, touching the animal, who was lying at the bottom of the tank.

December 9, 2018/SeaQuest, Folsom, California: Video footage received by PETA showed a fish who had reportedly jumped out of a tank and was struggling on the floor, likely suffocating for about two minutes before an employee used a sweatshirt to return the animal to the water.

December 9, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A stingray stung an employee. The barb became lodged in the employee's hand, and medical attention was sought at an urgent-care center.

December 7, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Jefferson County Animal Control issued SeaQuest a verbal warning for the otter exhibit. The enclosure had a feeding tube that the otters could put their paws into, potentially allowing them to come into contact with the public. SeaQuest also received a verbal warning for using heat lamps with inadequate screens to prevent the animals from sustaining burns. (See the November 8, 2018, entry.)

November 28, 2018/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The San Antonio Aquarium was evacuated and shut down by the Leon Valley Fire Department after a number of safety hazards were discovered during a routine fire inspection. The aquarium reopened on December 8, 2018.

November 25, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit a patron's finger while being fed, and a white cockatoo bit an employee's finger.

November 23, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana scratched an employee's arm.

November 20, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit a 4-year-old child while being fed.

November 8, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Flash, a sloth, was severely burned by a heat lamp in his enclosure. This was the second time he had been injured by the lamp. (See the October 18, 2018, entry.) The second burn caused swelling of his entire face, including around his eyes, nose, mouth, and lips. There were multiple raw areas and redness on his face with scabbing and skin sloughing, and a couple of the wounds were oozing. According to staff, he winced when eating strawberries and his remaining food had to be cut smaller in order for him to eat.

Jefferson County Animal Control received an anonymous tip about Flash the following day. It visited SeaQuest and was informed that the sloth had been seen by the aquarium's veterinarian, who recommended that staff treat the burn with coconut oil, honey, and Neosporin. Animal Control followed up with the veterinarian, who stated she had not been notified of Flash's injuries and did not prescribe any treatment. When she saw Flash on her regular visit on November 27, 2018, the injury appeared to be healing. She did not know the full extent of the injury until she spoke with a Colorado Parks and Wildlife officer on December 9, 2018. The veterinarian stated that she would have expected to be contacted by SeaQuest, would have wanted to see the sloth, and would have considered treatment for inflammation, infection, and pain control—not coconut oil and honey.

The employee who falsely claimed that a veterinarian had been consulted was charged with cruelty to animals for neglecting an animal by depriving Flash of veterinary care. The employee was acquitted at trial. SeaQuest and the facility's general manager were both given warnings under Colorado's cruelty-to-animals law. SeaQuest was also issued a permit citation for failing to report the injuries to Flash.

November 6, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Spartacus, a water monitor, bit a patron's finger. According to the injured visitor's Yelp review, the bite caused what appeared to be serious lacerations to his hand. The patron wrote that "[SeaQuest] handled everything so poorly but promised to take care of everything and sent me to

their workers comp facility to treat me. After three weeks of avoiding me they sent me a letter denying responsibility."

November 2, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A pacu bit a patron who was feeding the fish.

October 28, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A horn shark bit a 7-year-old child while being fed.

October 27, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana scratched an employee who was removing the animal from a tree outside the exhibit.

October 24, 2018/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: The USDA cited the San Antonio Aquarium for failing to use only trained lemurs under the direct control of an experienced handler during public encounters. An observation record book described several incidents in which the lemurs had bitten or scratched members of the public during interactive encounters. A lemur scratched a boy's arm and then "jumped on [his] head grabbing him aggressively." According to the USDA inspection report, "Three of the six [l]emurs used in public encounters have bitten or scratched the public."

October 23, 2018/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: SeaQuest was cited and fined after a capybara named Wesley escaped while being transported to a veterinary office. He was in a dog crate in the back of an open-bed pickup truck when he escaped. He was reportedly recaptured two blocks away in a Target parking lot. Clark County Animal Control records noted that Wesley "had several injuries" and was "bleeding quite a bit." The veterinarian's report stated that the capybara was bleeding from his face and mouth and had a deep dermal abrasion, superficial wounds, a limp, and swelling. An examination found that both of his upper incisors were broken at the gum line.

October 23, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit a toddler while being fed.

October 20, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: When being fed, an iguana bit a patron.

October 18, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Flash, a sloth, was burned by a heating lamp in his enclosure. A print of his nose was observed on the lightbulb. After the incident, staff did not cover the lamp or make it inaccessible to Flash. The attending veterinarian was not consulted about the injury, and staff treated the wound with honey, coconut oil, and Neosporin.

October 17, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana scratched an employee who was trying to remove the animal from a tree in the enclosure.

October 15, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit an 8-year-old child while being fed.

October 7, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit an employee, breaking the skin.

October 4, 2018/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: The USDA documented a "Teachable Moment," instructing SeaQuest to address the multiple incidents in which the capybara had bitten or scratched members of the public.

October 2, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Bella, a cockatoo, bit an employee.

September 29, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A lorikeet bit a patron.

September 28, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A wallaby named Ben scratched and bit an employee.

September 27, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Colorado Parks and Wildlife cited and fined SeaQuest for two counts of failing to report injuries to humans. It also issued SeaQuest a separate warning for three additional counts of failure to report human injuries.

September 27, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A wallaby "grabbed" an employee's arm "and scratched & kicked causing the employee's right arm to bleed." The report also noted that "occasionally [the wallaby] does jump or nip."

September 15, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A bamboo shark bit a patron while being fed in the shark lagoon. On the same day, a water monitor named Spartacus scratched an employee when he was being transferred to a holding container.

September 14, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A Burmese python named Barbosa struck and latched onto an employee's hand as the person tried to fill the animal's water.

September 13, 2018/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: The USDA cited Austin Aquarium for failing to have an effective barrier around the coatimundi enclosure that would ensure the safety of the animals and the public, failing to have a public barrier in front of the red ruffed lemur enclosure, failing to provide coatimundis with a safe enclosure—an open hook at the top could cause an animal to be caught or entangled—and failing to maintain the room holding the kinkajou enclosure. There was black debris along the walls and doorframe and a space at the bottom of the wall in a corner of the room that could hide "pests."

September 10, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit a 5-year-old child who was feeding the animal.

September 8, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana scratched an employee.

September 4, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana scratched two employees when they tried to remove the animal from a tree next to the enclosure.

September 3, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana scratched an employee who was removing the animal from a visitor's leg.

August 31, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Colorado Parks and Wildlife cited and fined SeaQuest for failing to report the death of a regulated kookaburra. (See the August 2, 2018, entry.)

Colorado Parks and Wildlife also issued SeaQuest warnings for the following: unlawful importation and possession of six wood ducks, unlawful importation of a caiman and wallaby, five counts of failing to report injuries to humans, and failing to report the deaths of 250 trout.

August 27, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A patron was bitten on the hand by an iguana.
On the same day, porcupine pufferfish bit a patron when she put her finger in the animal's enclosure. According to the incident report, the patron flung the fish out of the tank when she was bitten but caught the animal before he or she touched the ground. The woman's husband later reported that she had called 911 to report numbness and difficulty breathing as a result of the incident.

August 26, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: While talking to patrons, an employee was bitten by a sulcata tortoise named Stormin' Norman.

August 22, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: An iguana bit a toddler on the finger as she fed the animal.

August 18, 2018/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: A female otter died after she opened the filtration system in the pool and one of her arms became caught in the system.

August 17, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Bossk, a red tegu, "was getting a little rowdy" when he was being carried back from a birthday party, and he scratched an employee's arm.

August 15, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Colorado Parks and Wildlife cited and fined SeaQuest for failing to comply with the conditions of its zoological park license by not reporting the cease and desist order and importation violations issued by the Colorado Department of Agriculture.

August 14, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Twelve trout died while being transported to SeaQuest.

August 4–5, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: SeaQuest stored approximately 80 parakeets in an underage teenager's garage after the company was ordered to shut down the interactive aviary. (See the July 23, 2018, entry.) The teenager's family then advertised them on Facebook as being available for free, and most of the birds were given away in a hardware store parking lot. According to Colorado Department of Agriculture records, SeaQuest's transfer of the birds to the teenager and the public violated the July 23, 2018, cease and desist order.

August 2, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A kookaburra was found dead by an employee. Long pieces of material were found in the back of the bird's throat, but it was uncertain whether they were the cause of death.

August 1, 2018/SeaQuest, Fort Lauderdale, Florida: U.S. Rep. Ted Deutch asked the USDA to open an investigation into allegations of animal mistreatment by SeaQuest, which planned to open a new location in Fort Lauderdale in November 2018.

July 31, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The USDA documented a "Teachable Moment" regarding excess feces in a wallaby holding unit.

July 28, 2018/San Antonio Aquarium, San Antonio, Texas: Three visitors smuggled a horn shark out using a stroller. The incident was captured on security footage, and the public disclosure of it led to the retrieval of the shark two days later.

July 23, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The Colorado Department of Agriculture issued a cease and desist order to SeaQuest, ordering it to stop "operating as a pet animal sanctuary and retail aquarium facility without possessing a valid license." SeaQuest had applied for the license in May and requested a temporary exemption from the licensing requirement so that it could operate until a license was issued. That request was denied, yet SeaQuest continued to operate.

July 20, 2018/ SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The Colorado Department of Agriculture failed SeaQuest during a third Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) pre-license inspection because several open violations meant that the facility didn't meet the requirements for licensure. The facility

had a direct violation for failing to have environmental conditions necessary to protect the health and safety of birds. A direct violation was also noted for allowing budgies and lorikeets to land on the floor among people walking in the enclosure, leaving them vulnerable to injury. A direct violation was also noted for failing to clean the birds' drinking water containers properly. Water containers were being wiped out but not cleaned or sanitized. Direct repeat violations were noted for failing to have an isolation room set up that was clean and organized well to keep birds safe and failing to have all birds banded or photographed with bands attached. Only 52 of the 85 budgies had been photographed with bands attached.

July 5, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The Colorado Department of Agriculture identified a direct violation at SeaQuest during a PACFA pre-license inspection for failing to have an adequate isolation room in its bird facility. At the time of the inspection, the facility had changed the isolation room to a room with an exhaust fan leading directly outside, but the room didn't have a sink.

June 26, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: The Colorado Department of Agriculture failed SeaQuest during a PACFA pre-license inspection because several open violations meant that the facility had failed to meet licensure requirements. The following direct violations were identified during the inspection: failing to have a set isolation room with adequate ventilation, failing to have a bird band license to properly band and photograph all new birds, and failing to have a retail aquarium license for the transfer of koi to other facilities once they grew too large. The facility also had an indirect violation for failing to seal the wood and concrete walls in the main bird enclosure properly.

June 26, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A lizard bit a person during feeding. On the same day, a total of 250 rainbow trout fingerlings died in transit to SeaQuest.

June 23, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: Colorado Parks and Wildlife cited and fined SeaQuest for unlawful importation and possession of a two-toed sloth and failure to obtain a zoological park license for the animal. SeaQuest was also issued warnings for the unlawful importation and possession of two capybaras. Officials had found the sloth and capybaras in the basement of a SeaQuest manager's home. Ten days after SeaQuest was told that they weren't to be moved to its facility until a license had been issued, officials found all three animals on display.

June 14, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: SeaQuest failed a Colorado Department of Agriculture pre-license inspection by failing to meet all the necessary requirements. Issues documented during the inspection included unlawfully transferring koi without a license and allowing the public to walk through the main bird enclosure while birds were on the ground, creating "a safety concern for the birds as they are small enough to be stepped on." There were also several issues related to the physical condition and sanitation of the bird enclosures.

June 5, 2018/SeaQuest, Littleton, Colorado: A patron kicked and stomped on birds in the aviary, resulting in the deaths of five birds and injuries to others. In addition, a sloth bit an employee on her arm while she was attempting to move the animal to a crate.

May 4, 2018/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: A female Asian small-clawed otter died. The necropsy stated that the death may have been caused by the "stress of

shipping to Vegas, introduction to a new environment and caging during construction."

April 6, 2018/SeaQuest, Las Vegas, Nevada: Clark County Animal Control issued a warning letter to SeaQuest for illegally housing otters and a coatimundi without the required permits.

November 28, 2017/SeaQuest, Fort Worth, Texas: A patron reported on Facebook that a capybara had bitten her daughter on the ankle twice, breaking the skin. After staff pried the latched-on capybara off the guest, the facility continued to allow public interactions with the animal.

March 14, 2017/Boise, Idaho: The Idaho Department of Finance fined Vince Covino and SeaQuest $5,000 for failing to disclose his previous securities disciplinary action while selling membership interests in SeaQuest to investors.

November 30, 2016: After Ammon Covino was involved in opening two SeaQuest aquariums—in Layton, Utah, and Las Vegas, Nevada—a federal judge ordered him back to prison again because he had violated his parole.

February 24, 2016: A federal judge ordered Ammon Covino back to prison after he remained engaged in activities at Austin, Portland, and San Antonio aquariums—a violation of the terms of his parole. The warrant indicated that, when discovered, Ammon had lied to his probation officer about the violation.

April 2, 2015/Boise, Idaho: The Idaho attorney general released the findings of an investigation into the Idaho Aquarium, which had been opened by Ammon Covino and run by him for several years. The report noted that the aquarium had engaged in questionable use of charitable funds and poor recordkeeping, including the following:

- Recordkeeping practices were so poor that it was impossible to determine to what extent the company's charitable assets had been misappropriated.
- Ammon had been paid excessive compensation and benefits in 2012, when he dedicated substantial time to opening the Portland Aquarium. He received payments totaling $140,500, in addition to thousands of dollars' worth of employment benefits, including payments for cell phones, gas, insurance, food, and other personal expenses.
- The company engaged in deceptive solicitations for charitable contributions to support its mission and to fund specific projects, including a river otter exhibit.
- The Idaho Aquarium allegedly purchased animals for the Portland Aquarium, of which Ammon had a 40 percent stake.
- Ammon used money from the Idaho Aquarium to purchase a car and subsequently took that vehicle with him when he moved to Austin, Texas.
- More than $11,000 was paid to Chris Conk—who was involved in Ammon's wildlife trafficking—to reimburse him for the loss of his pickup truck to federal authorities.

December 17, 2013/Idaho Aquarium, Boise, Idaho: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service confiscated a green sea turtle from the Idaho Aquarium. The facility had a permit for the animal, but it was revoked following Ammon Covino's conviction on December 4, 2013.

December 4, 2013/Boise, Idaho: Ammon Covino pleaded guilty to a federal Lacey Act violation for conspiracy to traffic wildlife illegally. He was sentenced to a year and a

day in prison and two years of supervised release. As part of his probation, the judge ordered him "not [to] engage in any activity that involves exhibiting, importing, exporting, transporting, selling, receiving, acquiring or purchasing in interstate or foreign commerce any fish or wildlife."

August 19, 2013/Portland Aquarium, Portland, Oregon: *The Oregonian* published the death log from the Portland Aquarium. According to the documents, over 200 marine animals died in a three-month period. Causes of death were reported as starvation, getting caught in a drain screen, being "[r]ipped apart," being attacked by other animals, and more. The Portland Aquarium closed down in early 2016.

April 2013/Idaho Aquarium, Boise, Idaho: The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service confiscated three puffins from the Idaho Aquarium, which didn't have a federal migratory bird permit. The aquarium had obtained four birds, but one died before the others were taken away. The facility had applied for a permit in June in an attempt to recover the birds, but the application was denied because the staff had no experience in caring for puffins, there was no adequate puffin enclosure, and a permit couldn't be issued to anyone with a federal wildlife violation.

July 18, 2013/Austin Aquarium, Austin, Texas: Vince Covino was issued a warning for code violations related to the building of Austin Aquarium, including housing animals in the building without a certificate of occupancy and installing water tanks without obtaining prior site-plan approval.

February 9, 2012: Vince Covino consented to a $5,000 fine and 30-day suspension from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority for borrowing money from a client to purchase a home, in violation of its rules. Vince didn't register or associate as a broker-dealer agent after his suspension ended.