

Kids Avenue

OCTOBER 4, 2003

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA



☐ SATURDAY, Baton Rouge, La. ☐ Saturday, October 4, 2003

Coral, clown fish make Saturday special at museum

By RELMA HARGUS
Advocate staff writer

Mary Katherine Bernard and Brian Tullier learned how coral polyps catch food and how sea horses eat at the LSU Museum of Natural Science during a "Special Saturday" session.

Mary Katherine and Brian were among the 34 children — along with parents and grandparents — who explored coral reefs and their inhabitants Sept. 27.

Coral reefs were a perfect topic for Mary Katherine, who is studying animal habitats in her third-grade science class at St. Aloysius. For example, she knew the answer to the scavenger hunt question: Clown fish like to live inside of these. The answer: "sea anemones."

Reefs were also a perfect topic for Brian, who is studying coral reefs as a fourth-grader at Our Lady of Mercy School.

Brian said he enjoyed learning more, especially about parrot fish that feed on the algae that live inside the coral polyps, tiny animals that look like upside-down jellyfish.

In one of the stations, participants created a coral polyp using construction paper and an egg carton.

By reaching into the carton and moving the strips of paper up and



Advocate staff photo by Kerry Maloney
Andrea Armenata, 10, and her brother Miguel Armenata, 7, color a clown fish during LSU Museum of Natural Science's Special Saturday.

down, they simulated the polyp emerging and waving tentacles to catch plankton.

Andrea Armenata, a fourth-grader at University Terrace, said she enjoyed the coral polyp the most, especially learning about the special algae that

live in a symbiotic relationship with the coral polyp.

At another station, kids colored a clown fish on a computer screen. John Kennedy, a first-grader at LSU Lab School, chose to color his fish the traditional orange and white.

A scavenger-hunt photograph of a clown fish was just around the corner, and John hopped back and forth between computer and photo to get his colors just right.

Marianne Konikoff, a second-grader at Our Lady of Mercy School, said she loves coming to the museum and Special Saturdays.

"I like animals ... and I love snakes. I try to come to most of the programs," Marianne said.

Her favorite activity Saturday was using the "scope on a rope" to look at various types of coral.

"Each had a different texture and pattern," Marianne said.

Heather Adler, a second-grader at the LSU Lab School, said she enjoyed imitating the feeding habits of various animals that live among coral reefs.

Heather's favorite: The sea horse, which can eat up to 3,000 brine shrimp a day using its tube-like mouth.

Sticking up small, candy stars with a straw simulated the sea horse eating. Special Saturdays continue through May at the museum. The next session is Oct. 18. "Meet some Louisiana Raptors."

On the Internet
<http://www.museum.lsu.edu/education>

Learn more about coral reefs

■ <http://www.coralreef.org> provides information about threats to coral reefs.

■ <http://www.oceanfutures.org/Nemo/index.html> gives a colorful, informative tour of Nemo's home at Jean-Michel Cousteau's "Cities Under the Sea: Coral Reefs."

■ <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/ocean/Coralreef.shtml> has great printouts of the animals that live among the corals.

Be sure to check out the Gastropods.