

Visitors reel in fish



Sea to see: Ali Mohammed (left) and Hassan Aoun handle a sea urchin, which despite its spiky appearance wasn't hard to the touch.

STAFF PHOTOS BY JOEY BYRNEZAND

Something fishy is going on at Oakland Mall, 14 Mile at 1-75 in Troy.

It's Undersea Adventure, a mix of interactive technology and hands-on activities that lets visitors of all ages view and even handle live sea creatures. The fun and educational display continues until June 7.

Undersea Adventure features a predator tank, containing eels, a shark and sting rays; and a coral reef tank, with delicate sea corals that sway gracefully in the water. Visitors to the Touch Tank Theater are handed such creatures as crabs, sea urchins, sea cucumbers and starfish.

Besides reading about Amazing Anemones, Magnificent Mollusks, Cool Crustaceans, Crazy Corals and other sea creatures, viewers can learn about them through interacting with computers. Youngsters can learn by working with puzzles and arranging tiny models of the sea organisms into categories.

More than 3,000 school groups will visit Undersea Adventure, said Shelley Durnetko, Oakland Mall marketing director. She said lesson plans were sent to the students before they came.

Second graders from Oakman Elementary School in Dearborn were among the students who visited last week.

Their stop included the Touch Tank Theater, where naturalist Colin Chaisty distributed a starfish and sea urchin to them.

"It's soft and smooth," Zena Sobh said about the starfish she gently cradled in her hand.

Hours for Undersea Adventure Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday are 3-8 p.m. Friday, noon to 8 p.m.



Sea for yourself: Naturalist Colin Chaisty distributes a living sea creature to elementary school youngsters.



Gone fishing: Renee Elareb (left), Zena Sobh and Nour Zahr examine a starfish at the Touch Tank Theater, part of the Undersea Adventure display at Oakland Mall in Troy.



Playful learning: Andrew Zamborski (left), Mehde Moubrah and Hahi Baseti were among the young visitors to an interactive display about sea creatures.

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