



Belle Isle Conservancy Tour Program
Frequently Asked Questions

- **What are the facility hours of operation? If I'm waiting for my tour at the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, can I visit the Aquarium?**

The Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory is open year-round on Wednesday – Sunday from 10 AM – 5 PM. The Belle Isle Aquarium is open year-round on Friday – Sunday from 10 AM – 4 PM. If you are waiting for a tour at one facility, you may visit the other while you wait IF THE FACILITY IS CURRENTLY OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. However, if the facility is busy, staff reserves the right to ask your group to wait to enter.
- **Are the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory handicap accessible?**

The Belle Isle Aquarium has a ramp entrance on the left side of the building. The Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory does not have any steps in the interior of the facility, however the pathways through the show houses are narrow. There are steps in the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory Gardens.
- **What is your chaperone per student ratio?**

The Belle Isle Conservancy requires at least one (1) adult for every ten (10) students
- **Do I need a Recreation passport, even in a tour or school bus?**

Yes, every vehicle entering Belle Isle must have a Michigan Recreation Passport. For more information visit www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport. For questions, please contact the DNR by email at DNR-recreationpassport@michigan.gov. Or by phone at 517-284-7275.
- **Can I do an unscheduled self-guided visit on days the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory are free and open to the public?**

Yes, but please be advised, groups may be asked to wait or denied access due to building capacities and reservations. This right is reserved by the staff at their discretion on a daily basis.
- **Why are tours only scheduled September through May in the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory?**

Temperatures in the conservatory begin to rise in the spring and it continues to be very warm throughout the summer making tours impossible.

- **Can I request a specific topic for a docent-led tour?**

Yes, we cannot guarantee a specialized tour outside of the topics we currently offer, but our education staff will attempt to accommodate requests.

- **Where can my group eat lunch?**

There are no indoor lunch areas in the Belle Isle Aquarium or Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory. Picnic areas are available throughout the island. To reserve a picnic shelter, please contact the Michigan Department of Natural Resources online at www.midnrreservations.com or call the reservation desk at 1.800.44.PARKS

- **Is there food available on the island?**

No, there are no restaurants or cafes located on Belle Isle

- **Can food or drink be brought into the aquarium and conservatory?**

No, food and drink are not allowed in the buildings.

- **I know this is a park, do you have restrooms?**

Yes, comfort stations are located directly across the parking lot from the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory. Restrooms are also located inside the Belle Isle Aquarium.

- **Can I schedule a field trip to more than one venue/attraction for the same day?**

Yes, but it is not advised. In order to get the most out of your student's visit, we recommend focusing on one venue. Please note, should you decide to visit another venue in addition to the Belle Isle Aquarium or Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory you must schedule them separately through their managing organization.

- **Are there places on the island for kids to run/play?**

Yes, the park has multiple playscape areas. For more information please visit www.michigandnr.com.

- **Can I also take my students to the Giant Slide?**

The giant slide is open in early June until Labor Day, Wednesday through Sunday 12 PM - 8pm. For current operation and pricing, please visit www.belleislepark.org. Fees and payments for the Giant Slide are managed through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and cannot be paid to the Belle Isle Conservancy through our invoicing process.

- **Where can we park?**
Free parking is available directly across from the Aquarium/Conservatory facility and can accommodate both cars and buses
- **Who do we contact if our bus is running late?**
Should you experience delays, please contact the Belle Isle Conservancy Education Staff Member designated on your Tour Confirmation Form as soon as possible. Please note, if group arrives late, the length of your tour may be impacted
- **What if I need to change or cancel my reserved tour?**
Should you need to change or cancel, please contact the Belle Isle Conservancy Office. Please note: Deposits are non-refundable within 30 days of your scheduled tour. We will accommodate rescheduling as best we can but dates are subject to availability.
- **Where do we check in when we arrive?**
Please print this confirmation form and bring it with you on the day of your visit. Please print the attached "Group Tour Bus Sign" for your transportation. Our education team will use this as a tool to recognize your group.