

Terrapin Close Encounter FAQs

What will I do and see?

As part of this close encounter, you will go behind the scenes with members of the National Aquarium of New Zealand staff and learn all about our squad of tiny turtles. You'll step in to our keeper's shoes, go into their habitat and help feed them, and learn some amazing Terrapin facts.

Why do participants need to be aged 6 or over and accompanied by an adult participating in the activity if aged 14 and under?



The safety and security of our Terrapins and our visitors are of the utmost importance. This enclosure has a large water feature, objects such as logs in place etc. and children over the age of six years old are more physically able to move in the habitat safely and confidently in addition to being able to follow staff instructions. A close encounter with an animal is a very exciting experience, and we feel that children aged 14 years and under benefit most when they are supported by an adult as part of this experience.

Why are you asking about the participants' physical access requirements?

We want to make sure all our participants have a safe and comfortable experience. The entrance into the terrapin habitat has a set of stairs and awareness of any physical access requirements of our visitors enables us to support them as required. Please note, due to the presence of stairs this encounter is not suitable to anyone unable to walk unaided.

What is the issue with any participants being in contact with birds in the last 72 hours?

Some bird illnesses and diseases could be unknowingly transferred to our Terrapins. Just as humans can give each other a cold or flu, we could unwittingly bring in bird illnesses if we have had particular contact with birds in the 3 days leading up to a Terrapin encounter.

 This type of contact is okay	 This type of contact IS NOT okay and you will not be able to participate in the close encounter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with your caged, healthy pet bird at home • Walking around town past sparrows, pigeons etc. • Having been on a walk or hike and seeing birds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with any poultry or water fowl (even ones at home) • Feeding ducks at the park (contact with their poo is possible) • Working in the wild with any bird species • Having contact with <u>any</u> sick bird • Handling <u>any</u> wild birds (including ducks at the park)

Has the participant suffered from any symptoms of illness (nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea) in the last 48 hours?

'Zoonoses' are diseases which can be transmitted to humans from animals. There are some that can be transmitted to our Terrapins from our participants and nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea can be the main symptoms of some of these. If you have experienced any of these symptoms in the last 2 days, it's safer for you not to have contact with our Terrapins.

Does the participant agree to follow all instructions and directions given by Aquarium staff, including volunteers and agents?

In order for everyone involved, Terrapins included, to have a safe and enjoyable time, we need our participants to follow the instructions we give them. There are particular ways we need to do things, staff too, and by signing our waiver, you agree to this. If you want to know why we do things a particular way, please ask the staff member accompanying you as they will be more than happy to share information about the way we work!

Please note, we require all participants to wear closed toe shoes to ensure your personal safety in the habitat.

You will be visible to the general public, sitting on a low seat; we suggest wearing comfortable, long pants or shorts over skirts and/or dresses.