

FOR RELEASE: Immediately
DATE: July 2, 2026
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Shark in the Park: A Celebration 300 Million Years in the Making

DES MOINES, Wash. — When a prehistoric shark chooses to be your neighbor for part of the year, what do you do? Throw a party. Following the huge success of last year's inaugural event, the second annual [Shark in the Park](#) takes place Sunday, July 12, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Redondo Beach in Des Moines, Washington.

The fun, shark-themed festival celebrates the seasonal return of the sixgill shark that visits the relatively shallow waters off Redondo Beach during the warmer months. Here, they turn the Puget Sound into a vital nursery ground where the next generation can safely grow and thrive.

This ancient species of shark first appeared in the world's oceans before the time of the dinosaurs and has remained almost unchanged for 300 million years. Known to be a gentle giant, it can grow as long as 18 feet and is typically found in the deep ocean.

Organizers describe Shark in the Park as part field trip, part street fair, and part farmers market featuring live music, food trucks, art displays, and marine vendors—with many festival-goers wearing colorful shark costumes.

The all-ages, free event is a partnership between Highline College and its [MaST Center Aquarium](#), the [City of Des Moines](#) and the [Redondo Community Association](#). A free shuttle will depart every 20 minutes from Highline College's South Parking lot (free public parking for the event) to the waterfront. As always, admission to the popular MaST Center Aquarium is also free.

According to Rus Higley, event organizer and director of Highline College’s MaST Center Aquarium, the Puget Sound—especially around Des Moines—is the best place for SCUBA divers to see the sixgill shark, a deep-sea animal.

Because of this phenomenon, Des Moines has been named the “Sixgill Shark Capital of the World,” and the sixgill even has its own city street. A commemorative “Sixgill Way” street sign will be officially unveiled on July 12, 2026, literally putting the sixgill on the map. On a state level, there’s also a push to have the sixgill recognized as [Washington’s state shark](#).

Higley, who has been diving for over 30 years, recalled his first encounter with a sixgill shark as being a vivid experience. “Out of the darkness, a massive shape gradually materialized, gliding toward me with prehistoric grace,” Higley said. “It swam slowly past, looking at me with its bright green eyes and nearly touching me, before vanishing back into the shadows.”

Event details:

What: Shark in the Park, a shark-themed street fair celebrating the seasonal return of the sixgill shark.

When: Sunday, July 12, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Where: Redondo Beach Drive S, Des Moines, Washington, (between S 283rd and S 287th streets). Limited street parking.

Why: Free, fun, all-ages festival; free parking at Highline College’s South Parking lot, free shuttle leaves every 20 minutes and is ADA-compliant for wheelchairs.

Quick tip: Sixgill Way street sign will be officially unveiled at 1 p.m. at the corner of Redondo Beach Drive and Redondo Way.

Event inquiries: mast@highline.edu

Links within this release:

- <https://mast.highline.edu/shark-in-the-park/>
- <https://mast.highline.edu/>
- <https://www.desmoineswa.gov/>
- <https://redondocommunity.org/>
- <https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2025-26/Htm/Bill%20Reports/House/2447%20HBR%20SGOV%2026.htm>

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Attachments:

- Graphic #1: Shark in the Park flyer

- Graphic #2: Shark in the Park logo
- Video #1: Sixgill shark swimming off Des Moines, WA

About Highline College

Founded in 1961 as the first community college in King County, Highline College annually serves approximately 14,000 students. With more than 80 percent students of color, Highline is the most diverse higher education institution in the state. The college offers a wide range of academic transfer, professional-technical education, basic skills and applied bachelor's degree programs. Alumni include former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, internationally acclaimed author Ann Rule, entrepreneur Junki Yoshida, Dr. Tom Jackson, former president of Cal-Poly Humboldt and retired Army Lieutenant Colonel and nurse Sandra Cravens Robinson.