

Ecosystems and Habitats

GRADES 6 – 8



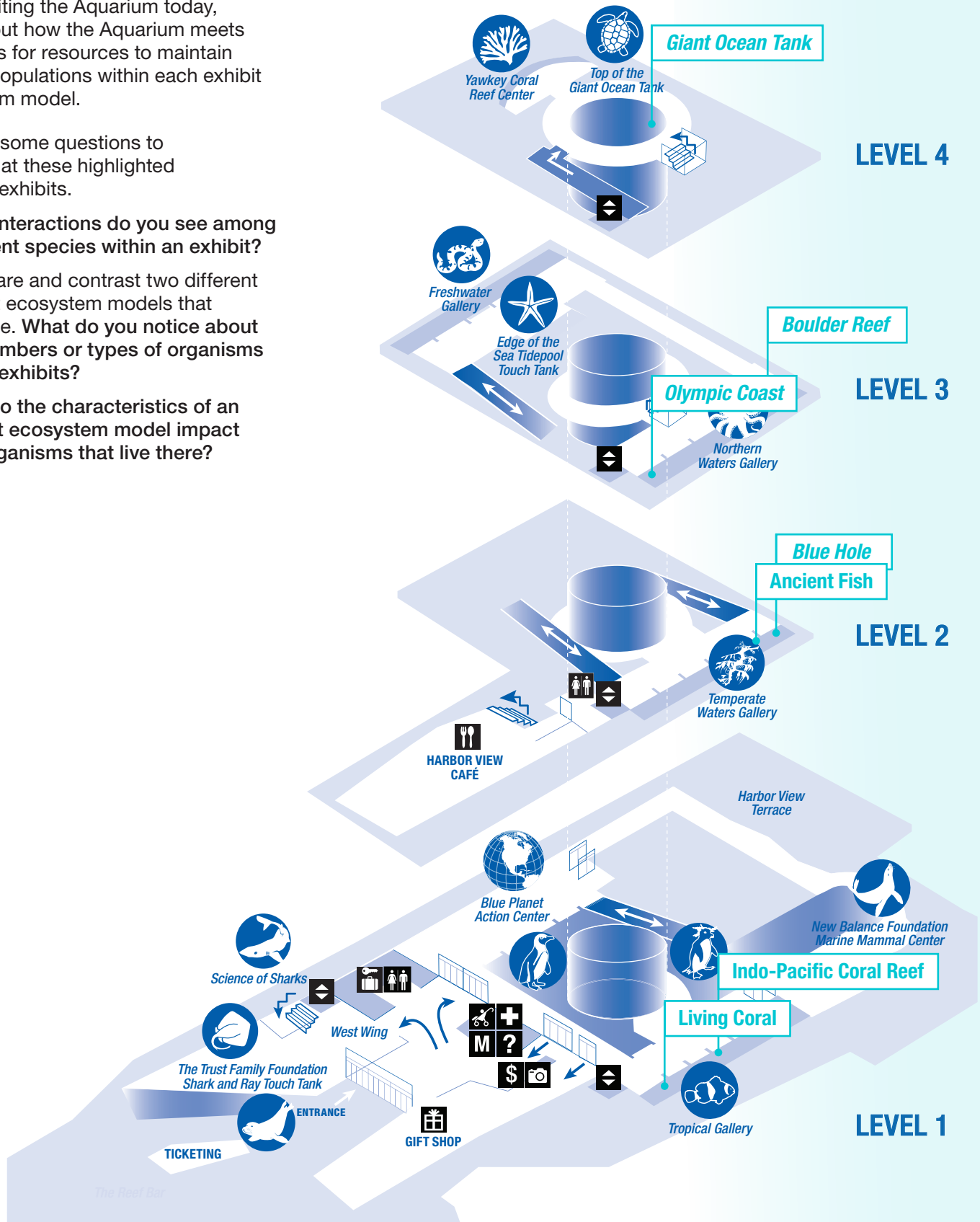
New England Aquarium

Protecting the blue planet

While visiting the Aquarium today, think about how the Aquarium meets the needs for resources to maintain healthy populations within each exhibit ecosystem model.

Here are some questions to consider at these highlighted galleries/exhibits.

1. What interactions do you see among different species within an exhibit?
2. Compare and contrast two different exhibit ecosystem models that you see. What do you notice about the numbers or types of organisms in the exhibits?
3. How do the characteristics of an exhibit ecosystem model impact the organisms that live there?



Food Webs and Energy

GRADES 6 – 8



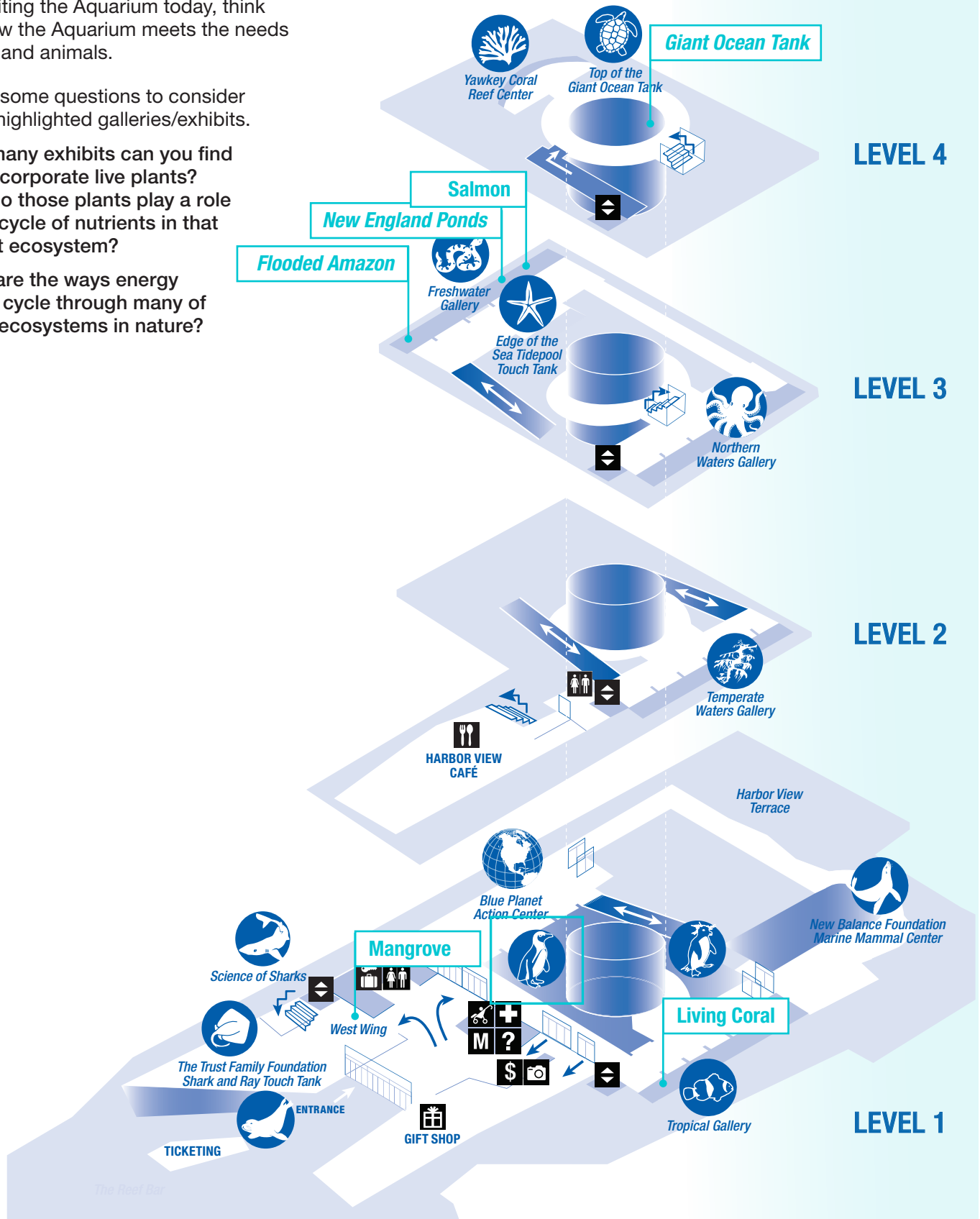
New England Aquarium

Protecting the blue planet

While visiting the Aquarium today, think about how the Aquarium meets the needs of plants and animals.

Here are some questions to consider at these highlighted galleries/exhibits.

1. How many exhibits can you find that incorporate live plants? How do those plants play a role in the cycle of nutrients in that exhibit ecosystem?
2. What are the ways energy would cycle through many of these ecosystems in nature?



Adaptations and Evolution

GRADES 6 – 8



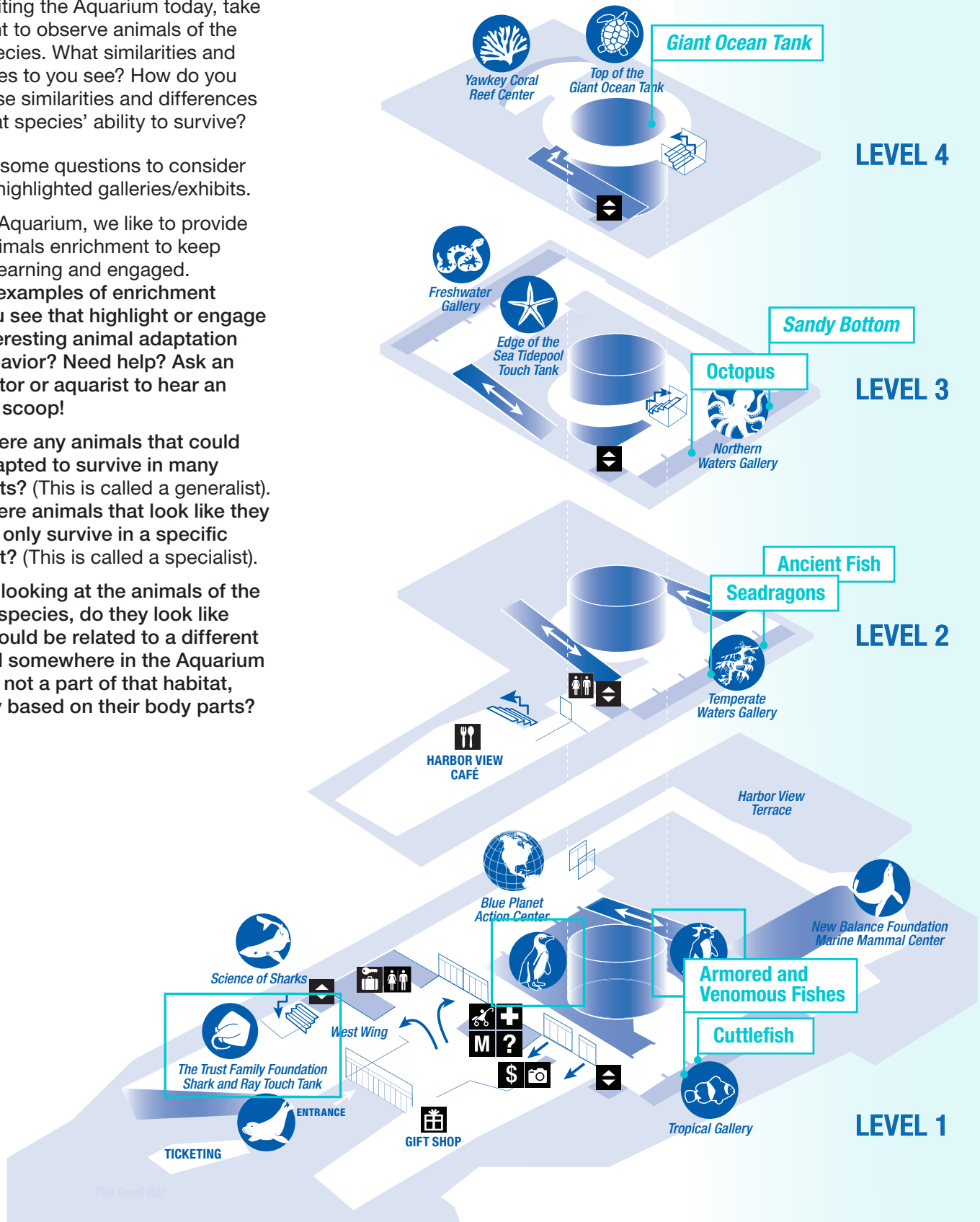
New England Aquarium

Protecting the blue planet

While visiting the Aquarium today, take a moment to observe animals of the same species. What similarities and differences do you see? How do you think these similarities and differences affect that species' ability to survive?

Here are some questions to consider at these highlighted galleries/exhibits.

1. At the Aquarium, we like to provide our animals enrichment to keep them learning and engaged. What examples of enrichment do you see that highlight or engage an interesting animal adaptation or behavior? Need help? Ask an educator or aquarist to hear an inside scoop!
2. Are there any animals that could be adapted to survive in many habitats? (This is called a generalist). Are there animals that look like they would only survive in a specific habitat? (This is called a specialist).
3. When looking at the animals of the same species, do they look like they could be related to a different animal somewhere in the Aquarium that is not a part of that habitat, simply based on their body parts?



Climate Change and Conservation



New England
Aquarium

GRADES 6 – 8

Protecting the blue planet

While visiting the Aquarium today have your students think about the following questions: How do human activities impact ecosystems? How can humans, including yourself, protect ecosystems?

Here are some questions to consider at these highlighted galleries/exhibits.

1. Climate scientists use the changing behaviors of animals to figure out where to study the impacts of climate change.
What animals do we use to help us focus where to study?
(These animals are called Indicator Species).
2. Are there specific regions of the world being impacted by climate change faster than others?
What areas are impacted and how do the impacts differ?

