

All in a Day's Work

Kealan Doyle – Seahorse Aquariums

PROFILE

Kealan Doyle is a marine biologist who runs Seahorse Aquariums, Ireland's largest aquatic specialists. Seahorse Aquariums not only makes tanks and sells fish but has a hatchery where they breed many of the fish they sell in the shop. www.seahorseaquariums.com



Images courtesy of Seahorse Aquariums

Where do you work?

I work in Seahorse Aquariums which is on the Red Cow roundabout in Dublin – the craziest roundabout in Ireland!

Have you always been interested in what you do?

Always – all I ever wanted to do was breed fish. One of my old teachers told a story at a class reunion recently. I arrived late for class when I was 7 and explained that it was "because my fish had babies and I could not leave them". She said she had not the heart to punish me and so let me away with it!

What training did you do to get where you are today?

I studied Marine biology in Galway, Scotland & Poland before heading to Africa to research fish for several years. I then moved to the Galapagos Islands for 3 years to study seahorses, after which I took charge of seahorse research projects in Australia, Indonesia, Philippines & India. On returning to Ireland I set up the world's first seahorse conservation and cultivation operation in Connemara, Co Galway. Now I am in the big smoke in Dublin!

What is a day in your life like?

My average day is crazy, which is just the way I like it. I start work at 7.30am and finish at 10.30pm, with many late nights. Some of the things I do include managing a big team of staff and try and have everything running smoothly; working in the breeding room feeding baby seahorses and clown fish (AKA Nemo); dealing



Working in the shop.



Two of our Nemo breeding pairs.



Temple street tank built for sick children.



Kealan Doyle & his team.

with customers from all over Ireland who come to buy fish and get advice; testing all the water in the tanks to make sure it is healthy for the fish; doing big tank installations in big companies.

What is your main aim?

My main aim is to enjoy work and to hopefully make a small difference. Our aim for this year is to launch a campaign called *SOS* which stands for *Save Our Seahorses* which aims to help save seahorses from extinction. We have Westlife and many other celebrities coming on board to help with *SOS* so you will be hearing lots about it so... Watch this space....

What is the best thing about your job?

I love and will always love breeding fish, especially when it means they will not have to be taken from the wild anymore. I also love when kids come into the shop, especially the ones who really like fish and love learning from me and the team. I am a workaholic and work day and night. My biggest problem is that I hate going to bed and cannot wait to get up so I can get back to work.

What is the worst thing about your job?

Siphoning seahorse poo from the tanks every morning (including Christmas day) but hey! Someone's got to do it...

Do you work alone or as part of a team?

Very much part of a team, which is so important. We have an amazing team who all have particular skills and we learn from each other. All the staff were once customers of the shop and so are friends and are also fish nuts like me.

What advice would you give someone who wants to do your job?

Get experience and try out everything you can, as they may not always be what you imagine. If you like animals then try and volunteer somewhere that works with them and

find out if you like it. I encouraged my daughter to try as many different jobs as she could (like I did) until she found what she REALLY liked. You spend more time working than anything else so check it out as much as possible.

What is best piece of advice you have ever had?

Work – find something you love and you will never work a day in your life. Work is a hobby for me and I love it!