

Aggression among orcas in captivity

Several accounts of aggression between captive killer whale or against their tank confinement have appeared in books and news clips, with little information on the dates or details of those incidents. Other descriptions have made headlines, and some were captured on video tape. There are also anecdotal reports of incidents that were never officially documented.

NO.	DATE	AQUARIUM	WHALES	INCIDENT	SOURCE
#1	1970s	Miami Seaquarium, USA	Hugo	Male orca Hugo broke an observation window, causing significant water loss and nearly slicing off the end of his rostrum which was surgically stitched back on.	-
#2	1985	Marineland of the Pacific	Corky II	19-year-old female Corky II broke an observation window resulting in the loss of more than one-third water volume in the tank.	-
#3	January 1985	Saedyrasafnid Aquarium, Iceland	unknown	Four orcas (one female, three males) were captured in 1984. At least two males and one female were present at Saedyrasafnid when one of the males died in January 1985 of "neck damages". No further details known.	Sigurjonsson, J. and S. Leatherwood (1988), <i>The Icelandic live-fishery for killer whales, 1976-1988</i> , Rit Fiskideildar, Vol. 11, pp. 307-316.
#4	between 1987 and 1989	Sealand of the Pacific, Canada	Nootka	Former orca trainer Eric Walters describes an incident when adult female Nootka was engaged with another in an aggressive manner. "During this time she swam at high speed into the module and collided with the side, striking her head. Her head was bleeding, and blood was coming out of her blowhole."	Eric Walters, <i>Considerations for Keeping Marine Mammals in Captivity</i> , Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, April 1990.
#5	1988	Sea World Florida, USA	Kotar , Kanduke	Aggression escalated between two males, Kotar of Icelandic origin and Kanduke, an older Pacific NW transient. Both animals reportedly beached themselves and made crying sounds repeatedly. Kotar reportedly bit Kanduke's penis, inflicting injuries sufficient to close shows for two days. Kotar was transferred to Texas later in 1988.	Personal communication to Jerje Mooney. Kanduke's necropsy report dated 09/20/1990 indicated a 10 cm /4 inch penile scar.
#6	1987/6/22	Sea World	Kandu V.	Witnesses John Fitzrandolph and	Letter from John Randolph to NMFS

		California, USA	Corky II	Deborah York reported observing aggressive behaviour by Kandu V towards Corky II in a complaint written to NMFS. Fitzrandolph described the event, "...the two killer whales collided violently. In but a couple of seconds, we witnessed blood boiling from a 2 1/2 to 3 foot slash along the lower abdomen...of the whale."	dated August 24, 1989.
#7	1989	Sea World California, USA	Kandu V , Corky II	Sea World officials said Kandu V had repeatedly exerted her dominance since Corky II was brought to the park from Marineland California three years ago.	H.G. Reza & Greg Johnson, <i>Killer whale bled to death</i> , Los Angeles Times, August 23, 1989.
#8	1989	Sea World California, USA	Kandu V , Corky II	Sea World veterinarian Jim McBain said the whales usually emerge from their social skirmishes with minor rake marks from rival's teeth as was the case in previous combat between Corky II and Kandu V.	Dennis Georgatos, <i>Killer whale's death sparks new debate over captivity</i> , Times Advocate, August 27, 1989.
#9	1987/6/22	Sea World California, USA	Kandu V	Joanne Webber, a former killer whale trainer injured in 1988, described Kandu V in court documents as, "exhibiting the extreme characteristics of aggression when frustrated. She does occasionally bite and aggressively rake other whales."	John Lamb, <i>Questions persist at Sea World after death of Kandu</i> , San Diego Tribune, August 23, 1989, p. B-1.
#10	1989/8/21	Sea World California, USA	Kandu V , Corky II	During an afternoon show performance, Kandu V initiated aggressive behavior towards the larger orca Corky II, opening her mouth very wide and striking Corky II broadside. As Kandu V returned to the north back pool, she took her first observed breath exhaling large amounts of blood. The impact had fractured her upper jaw and lacerating arteries. The hemorrhage persisted for 45 minutes until death.	Sea World's necropsy report filed with NMFS dated September 11, 1989.