



CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM

PRESS RELEASE

Cold weather results in nearly 30 sea turtle responses by Clearwater Marine Aquarium in one weekend

Clearwater, FL (January 25, 2016) – Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) turtle department and stranding team responded to 19 live and 8 deceased sea turtles this weekend that had been severely affected by the cold water temperatures.

As cold-blooded reptiles, sea turtles assume the temperature of their surroundings. When the turtles are exposed to frigid water temperatures (around 50 degrees Fahrenheit) over several days, their circulatory systems can slow to the point where they become cold-stunned. A cold-stun turtle is unable to swim or function properly, which puts the turtle at risk of being hit by a boat.

Many of the turtles the CMA team responded to were already facing compromising factors to their immune systems. Several turtles had already been hit by boats or had contracted pink tumors as a result of the fibropapilloma virus, which will result in a longer road to recovery.

Green sea turtles are considered endangered, therefore it is critical to call the CMA stranding line (727-441-1790 ext. 1) when distressed turtles are encountered. Once the call has been made, keep an eye on the turtle until the CMA team arrives, but please refrain from touching or moving the animal to prevent further injury.

Guests can view the turtles as they are treated in the surgical suite at CMA. During their hospital stay, each turtle is given a name to help the team keep treatments and meals organized. The current theme is junk food, resulting in names such as Pizza, Queso, and Hoagie. Basic treatments for the new intakes include vitamin and dietary supplements, wound care, heart rate monitoring, and blood draws.

Photographs and footage of the new turtle intakes can be viewed and downloaded below. Footage features Adrienne Cardwell, Manager of Sea Turtles and Aquatic Biology Programs at CMA.

<https://www.hightail.com/download/ZWJVT2pNR3NIM1JvZE1UQw>

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About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin's story of survival, after an injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people's lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from every other aquarium in the world.

WE BELIEVE in preserving our marine life and environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation, and release.

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