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**Premature sea turtle hatchlings find refuge at Brevard Zoo**

MELBOURNE, Fla., September 6, 2019 — Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center has taken in 20 premature green sea turtle hatchlings following Hurricane Dorian. Beach erosion caused by the storm left their Melbourne Beach nest exposed and more vulnerable to predators such as raccoons and foxes. Some of the hatchlings arrived with their yolk sacs still attached.

Upon admission, each sea turtle was visually examined, comprehensively cleaned to ward off infection and placed atop damp paper towels to rest.

"Each one of these hatchlings has a chance at becoming an adult, who then can produce offspring of their own," said Shanon Gann, the Zoo's sea turtle program coordinator. "Because they were not able to incubate to full-term, they are weak; but we are able to give these tiny, endangered sea turtles a second chance at getting out into the ocean."

Once they are approved for release, the hatchlings will be placed on the sand to make their way to the ocean.

Sea turtles and their eggs are protected at the state and federal levels, and it is illegal to touch them. Those who find sea turtles in need should contact Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 1-888-404-FWCC or Sea Turtle Preservation Society (in Brevard County only) at 321-206-0646 for instructions.

Photos and video: [www.dropbox.com/sh/ev3kftlxwigkfe3/AADcgHnRsubXklqUKOhQXrTZa](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ev3kftlxwigkfe3/AADcgHnRsubXklqUKOhQXrTZa)

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*Brevard Zoo is home to more than 900 animals representing 195 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education and conservation. More information is available at [www.brevardzoo.org](http://www.brevardzoo.org).*

*Treetop Trek features five aerial obstacle courses that whisk guests above parts of the Zoo and through lush Florida landscapes. More information is available at [www.treetoptrek.com](http://www.treetoptrek.com).*

*The Aquarium Project is a plan to construct a world-class aquarium and conservation center at Port Canaveral. More information is available at [www.theaquariumproject.org](http://www.theaquariumproject.org).*