

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Brevard Zoo to Release Two Sea Turtles Thursday

MELBOURNE, Fla., December 28, 2022 — Brevard Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center plans to release two sea turtles on Thursday, December 29 at 2 p.m. Juvenile green sea turtles LJ and Grindyflow will return to the ocean at Lori Wilson Park in Cocoa Beach.

Although these turtles have differing rehabilitation stories, both were found sick or injured and brought to the Zoo's Healing Center for care.

LJ is a juvenile green sea turtle who was found struggling near the surface of the water on June 5. Upon arrival, this sea turtle had a deep boat strike injury along their shell, anemia and low kidney function, among other issues. Despite the severity of this patient's injuries, Healing Center staff worked diligently to heal this sea turtle.

LJ's road to recovery included a feeding tube for nutritional support, medication, general care as well as a wound vac. This therapy helps heal wounds, such as the one down LJ's shell, by applying negative pressure to the site, removing bacteria and reducing swelling. This therapy became even more efficient at the Healing Center thanks to 3M, a science and innovation company. After several months of care, LJ has been cleared for release and is ready to accompany Grindyflow into the ocean.

Juvenile green sea turtle Grindyflow was brought to the Healing Center on May 16 after being found floating at the surface of the water, emaciated, covered in algae and with a possible older trauma to their shell. Upon intake, abnormal lesions were found on this patient. Biopsies returned negative for the fibropapillomatosis, or FP, virus, although later in their stay with us Grindyflow developed FP tumors.

While attempting to discover the reason behind their buoyancy, a CT scan revealed no abnormalities in Grindyflow's spine. Once this sea turtle gained some weight and strength during their rehabilitation stay, Healing Center staff applied weights to this patient's shell to help alleviate some of their buoyancy. In addition, Grindyflow spent some time at the Florida Aquarium's Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Center for a deep-water trial, which allowed staff to better gauge how this sea turtle can swim and dive. Grindyflow's trial was successful,

and after months of weight gain, nutritional support, medication and general care, this sea turtle was approved for release.

This event is open to the public. Please note that this release will happen rain or shine.

All media personnel are asked to RSVP to Communications Specialist Bri Wright prior to the event and check in with the Zoo's communications team upon arrival. **Flippers will be in the water at 2 p.m.; media personnel are advised to arrive early.**

More information about LJ and Grindylow is available at www.brevardzoo.org/blog.

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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.

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.