

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Brevard Zoo Releasing Three Green Sea Turtles**

MELBOURNE, Fla., Jan. 15, 2025 — Brevard Zoo will be releasing three green sea turtles following rehabilitation at the Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center.

The Healing Center team will be saying goodbye to juvenile green sea turtles Julienne Fry, Spooky and Watermelon at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 16, from James H. Nance Park, 201 N. Miramar Ave. in Indialantic. This release will be held rain or shine – but it may be rescheduled if there's lightning in the area for the public's safety.

All media personnel are asked to RSVP to Senior Communications Manager Lauren Delgado 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.

Meet the sea turtles:

**Julienne Fry**

Julienne Fry was found struggling in the water of Sebastian Inlet. They were wrapped in fishing line and rope, which was attached to another turtle who was unfortunately deceased. Both of these turtles were stuck to a discarded pile of PVC, netting and fishing line.

To avoid tragic cases like Julienne Fry's, please pick up any fishing materials – whether it's yours or someone else's – that you find on the beach or in the water. Fishing lines, hooks, nets and pots pose a serious threat to marine life.

Coastal Connections brought "J. Fry" to the Zoo's Healing Center for care on Aug. 12, 2024 – Julienne Fries Day. J. Fry didn't have any major injuries, but their bloodwork showed signs of severe stress. The Healing Center team immediately dispensed fluids to help with lactate buildup and antibiotics for subsequent wounds.

An e-tube helped give Julienne Fry sustenance until they were ready to eat on their own. This sea turtle had fibropapillomatosis, or FP, a debilitating disease that causes external

and internal tumors to grow all over a turtle's body and can cause a host of issues. While there is no cure for FP, the Healing Center is one of a few that can treat sea turtles with this disease. Julienne Fry had FP removal surgery followed by supportive postoperative care.

While at the Healing Center, J. Fry lived in a half tank shared with another sea turtle – and loved to swim around and try to get past the divider.

## **Watermelon**

Found floating along a marina in Cape Canaveral on National Watermelon Day, Watermelon arrived at the Healing Center with evidence they had interacted with some fishing materials. Thank you to the Sea Turtle Preservation Society for Watermelon's transport to the Healing Center. Fishing line was wrapped tightly around their left front flipper and a fibropapilloma tumor was found on the right front flipper. More was wrapped loosely around their neck, as well.

A CT scan and x-rays found that this sea turtle had ingested some hooks as well. Those hooks were removed by surgery through the esophagus and guided by GI scope. The Healing Center team used famotidine to protect Watermelon's gastrointestinal tract as the fishing line was passed. Watermelon also underwent FP removal surgery.

Watermelon will stand out in the Healing Center team's memory for their arrival covered in mud.

"Once they had a freshwater bath, it revealed strikingly beautiful radiating stripes on each scute of the carapace," said Shanon Gann, Sea Turtle Program Manager.

## **Spooky**

Spooky the sea turtle came to the Healing Center on Oct. 19, 2024, after being found washed ashore off of Highway A1A near Patrick Space Force Base. Spooky's name was inspired by their "spooky" Halloween-time arrival to the Healing Center. Thank you to the Sea Turtle Preservation Society for Spooky's transport to the Healing Center. The juvenile was lethargic and slightly dehydrated. Spooky had buoyancy issues due to gastrointestinal gas as well as fibropapilloma tumors on their body.

The Healing Center team helped get Spooky's gastrointestinal tract moving with antibiotics, simethicone, mineral oil and transfaunation – the transfer of microfauna from a healthy patient to support GI healing in another. Spooky also underwent FP removal surgery and received postoperative care. A curious turtle, Spooky made sure to explore all the enrichment items in their tank daily once the gastrointestinal issues were resolved.

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*Brevard Zoo is home to more than 800 animals representing 170 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).*