

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Brevard Zoo Releasing Sea Turtle Following Intensive Five-Month Rehabilitation

MELBOURNE, Fla., September 30, 2025 — Bugs, a juvenile green sea turtle, will be heading home to the ocean following an intensive five-month stay at the Sea Turtle Healing Center at Brevard Zoo.

Bugs will be released at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, October 1 from Pelican Beach Park, 1525 Highway A1A in Satellite Beach. Flippers will be in the water at 10 a.m., so media are advised to arrive early. While sea turtle releases take place rain or shine, releases can be delayed or cancelled if there is lightning in the area.

An emaciated Bugs the sea turtle was found washed ashore in April and was brought by the Sea Turtle Preservation Society to the Zoo for a full examination.

The tiny turtle's body was laden with barnacles, with some burrowing so deep into their carapace that multiple fractures were created all along their shell. These fractures exposed their scapula, causing its underlying tissue to die and leaving deep pockets to build up with material inside the wound, said Jess Patterson, Sea Turtle Healing Center coordinator.

Though Bugs was lucky to have been found before their injuries progressed, the depth of the fracture meant that this turtle had a lengthy rehabilitation ahead.

First, the Healing Center team placed the turtle in a custom-made shallow pool to take the load off their frail body. The team worked diligently to help Bugs eat, slowly improving their hydration and appetite. Bugs was also set up with [negative-pressure wound therapy](#), an innovative type of treatment provided to turtle patients.

Through this process, a suction-like device is placed over a wound to reduce swelling and extract fluids from the wounded area, encouraging blood flow and new skin cell growth.

Every three days, the Zoo's veterinary staff thoroughly cleaned and re-examined Bugs' wound to keep the site clean and clear of infection as it healed. It was a meticulous, precise process, but Bugs' wound was free of dead tissue and bone after a month of wound-vac therapy.

The Healing Center team also equipped the turtle with plenty of antibiotics and regularly performed CT scans and radiographs to monitor the healing of the scapula and carapace injuries.

For an extra healing boost, the Healing Center staff also packed [raw, unfiltered honey](#) into some of the open wounds, promoting further healing while keeping infection out. Now, five months later, Bugs is ready to return home.

All media are asked to RSVP to Senior Communications Manager Lauren Delgado before the release and check in with the Zoo's communications team upon arrival.

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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 [BrevardZoo.org](https://www.brevardzoo.org).