



















Metro

	SECTIONS	 MY SAVED	
NEWS 	METRO		
ARTS 	BUSINESS		
SPORTS 	OPINION		
LIFESTYLE 	MAGAZINE		
TODAY'S PAPER 			
LOTTERY 	OBITUARIES		
NAMES 	GLOBE NORTH		
GLOBE SOUTH 	GLOBE WEST		
INVESTIGATIONS 			

Metro

Once-ailing turtles back in the wild

Taken to Va.'s warmer waters

By **Amanda Cedrone** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JUNE 11, 2012

-  ARTICLE
-  COMMENTS



NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM

The New England Aquarium had cared for 17 sea turtles rescued off Cape Cod in the fall suffering from hypothermia.

PRINT REPRINTS E-MAIL SHARE

After several months of rehabilitation at the New England Aquarium, 17 endangered sea turtles were released Sunday evening off the coast of Virginia, officials said.

The turtles were rescued off Cape Cod, where they were discovered in the fall suffering from hypothermia, according to a statement from the New England Aquarium.

Aquarium staff members left Quincy — where the aquarium's animal care center is located — early Sunday morning to transport the turtles to Virginia.

They were released on the lower eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, near the tip of Delmarva Peninsula, about 8:30 p.m. Staff from the Virginia Aquarium and marine Science Center assisted, the statement said.



The turtles were released into relatively safe waters — prime for helping them acclimate. They will eventually migrate to more open seas, aquarium spokesman Tony LaCasse said.

Along the Massachusetts coast, the warmest waters are currently about 60 degrees, which is too cold for the creatures, officials said. The water off of Virginia ranges in temperature from the low to mid-70s.

The statement said the turtles were “placed in the sand just above the surf where the smell of the open ocean will fill their nostrils, and their flippers will hastily propel them into the water and a return to their home.”

The group of juvenile turtles includes 15 Kemp’s ridley sea turtles and two loggerhead sea turtles, the statement said. Kemp’s ridley turtles are the world’s most endangered sea turtle and the smallest, officials said.

The largest of the 17 turtles is an 80-pound loggerhead that was rescued by staff and volunteers of the Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. The turtle, named Juggernaut, weighed only about 55 pounds when it was rescued, LaCasse said.

Juggernaut was suffering from hypothermia, dehydration, malnutrition, as well as a fracture on the lower shell surrounding its rear flippers, the statement said.

To make sure the turtle has the strength and mobility necessary in its rear flipper to catch food and escape predators, caretakers rearranged the in-flow water pipes in its tank, requiring Juggernaut to use the flipper more regularly.

Juggernaut’s rehabilitation took six months to complete.

“Nothing happens quickly with a turtle,” said Connie Merigo, head of the aquarium’s rescue team, in the statement.

Adult loggerhead turtles weigh about 250 pounds, and can grow to about 3 feet, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website. They are reddish-brown, with a slightly heart-shaped top shell.

Kemp’s ridley turtles weigh about 100 pounds at adulthood and can grow to be about 24 to 28 inches in length, the website said. They are grayish-green, with a somewhat circular top shell.

Globe correspondent Matt Rocheleau contributed to this report. Amanda Cedrone can be reached at acedrone@globe.com. Follow her on Twitter @ancedrone.

 PRINT  REPRINTS  E-MAIL  SHARE

 ARTICLE

 COMMENTS

Learn more

[SITE FEATURES](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#) [BOSTON GLOBE INSIDERS](#) [REFER A FRIEND](#) [EPAPER EDITION](#)

MY ACCOUNT

[LOGOUT](#)

 MY SAVED LIST

[MANAGE HOME DELIVERY](#)

SOCIAL

[FACEBOOK](#)

[TWITTER](#)

[GOOGLE+](#)

CONTACT

[HELP](#)

[FAQS](#)

[GLOBE NEWSROOM](#)

[ADVERTISE](#)

MORE

[ARCHIVES](#)

[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

[TERMS OF SERVICE](#)

[TERMS OF PURCHASE](#)

[WORK HERE](#)

© 2012 THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY
