

## One-Eyed Wonder: Juvenile Sea Turtle Shows Resilience and Hope

*After months of rehabilitation at Clearwater Marine Aquarium and the removal of his left eye, “Small Fry” returns to the wild*

**Tarpon Springs, FL (March 19, 2020)** – While Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA), may be closed to the public, our work to rescue, rehabilitate, and release marine life continues unabated with the release of a one-eyed juvenile green sea turtle. This incredible story of hope hit its peak as “Small Fry” was released at Fred Howard Park in Tarpon Springs, Florida, today, Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 a.m.

- [View footage of Small Fry’s rehab and release.](#)

“Small Fry was found floating by a fisherman in New Port Richie on December 11, 2019,” said Dr. Shelly Marquardt. “Upon intake at CMA’s surgical suite, a physical exam was performed and found that Small Fry had a mild case of fibropapilloma tumors, however, there was a very large tumor on his left eye.”

CMA’s veterinarian determined that Small Fry required surgery to remove the tumor and determine if the eye was still functional. After examining his eye, the severity of the tumor was extensive and complete removal of “Small Fry’s” left eye was necessary. At 10 lbs., “Small Fry’s” treatment plan consisted of fluids, vitamins, and a good diet.

“Small Fry recovered well from surgery and began eating shortly after,” said Dr. Marquardt. “We continued to monitor Small Fry’s post-operative progress, but he never showed any complications from the loss of his eye.”

“Small Fry” was cleared for release by Clearwater Marine Aquarium’s veterinarian and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Donate to Clearwater Marine Aquarium to support its mission of rescue, rehabilitation, and release of marine life like small Fry. Visit [TeamCMA.org](http://TeamCMA.org), text “CMA” to 24-365, or donate through Venmo to @CMAquarium. Our work never ends, even when we are closed to the public.

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### About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to preserving our marine life and environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescue dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter, the dolphin’s story of survival after injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. A major motion picture, *Dolphin Tale*, highlighted her life story in 2011. The sequel, *Dolphin Tale 2*, was released in September 2014 and features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. The mission and potential to change people’s lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from any other aquarium in the world.