



CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM

PRESS RELEASE

Clearwater Marine Aquarium to Release Two Rehabilitated Green Sea Turtles

- Prince underwent over one year of rehabilitation at CMA
- Top Gun released after being admitted twice into CMA

Clearwater, FL (December 15, 2014) – Clearwater Marine Aquarium will release two rehabilitated sea turtles Tuesday, December 16 at 10.00 am at Honeymoon Island.

Prince, a juvenile green sea turtle, was discovered near Piney Island in the Panhandle of Florida over one year ago on November 12, 2013. Shortly after his rescue, Prince was transferred to CMA from Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratories based on fibropapilloma tumors growing around his eyes (limiting his vision and ability to forage for food), front flippers, and base of front and rear flippers. Prince underwent a series of four pap removal surgeries over the past year and is now cleared for release.

The fibropapilloma virus is a benign tumor disease that affects sea turtles. Continual research is being done to understand this disease and find prevention and treatment procedures.

Top Gun experienced two stints of rehabilitation at Clearwater Marine Aquarium. A juvenile green sea turtle, Top Gun was first found by Inwater Research Group in Crystal River in June 2014. He was deemed to be in healthy condition and was released. However, four months later, Top Gun was found again by the same group in Citrus County and had fibropapilloma tumors on both eyes, neck, flippers, and even inside his mouth, along with an open wound on his eye. Successful removal of the pap tumors along with eye drops to heal the eye wound now clear Top Gun for release.

Clearwater Marine Aquarium has successfully rehabilitated and subsequently released 18 sea turtles in 2014. In the past ten years, CMA has provided medical care that enabled 267 sea turtles to be released back into their natural habitat. Duke Energy helps support Clearwater Marine Aquarium's sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation program.

Release details:

-Please arrive by 10.00 am. Contact Amy Binder if you are interested in attending.

- Release location is right before the entrance to Honeymoon Island State Park. Turn right at the dirt road located just before the main entrance.

###

Media Contact: Amy Binder, Clearwater Marine Aquarium, abinder@cmaquarium.org, O: 727.441.1790 x242

About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to 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.

WE BELIEVE in preserving our marine life and environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation, and release.

249 Windward Passage | Clearwater, FL 33767 | 727.441.1790 | 727.445.1139 f | SeeWinter.com

A Florida non-profit 501(c)(3) organization