

PRESS RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 2024



INJURED SEA TURTLE GIVEN THIRD CHANCE AT LIFE FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL REHAB

- **After a rigorous rehabilitation at SEA LIFE Blackpool and SEA LIFE Scarborough, rescued turtle Nazaré has been returned to the ocean**
- **The Sea Turtle was found stranded on a beach in Barrow-in-Furness in February this year**
- **This follows the turtle previously being rescued and rehabilitated just 12 months earlier**
- **The turtle has been released in the Azores following a successful rehabilitation programme by SEA LIFE's specialist welfare team**

A loggerhead sea turtle has been returned to the wild following a successful and extensive rehabilitation programme by teams at SEA LIFE.

Nazaré was discovered washed up on a beach in Barrow-in-Furness on 4 February, covered in algae and showing no signs of movement.

Initially feared to be deceased, the turtle was found to be extremely weak, but alive, thanks to the quick response of a member of the public who alerted the British Divers Marine Life Rescue and SEA LIFE Blackpool team.

Upon her arrival at SEA LIFE Blackpool, Nazaré was severely cold stunned, with a body temperature of 13°C, suffering from pneumonia, and burdened with a 2cm thick build-up of algae and seaweed which covered her shell.

As cold-blooded creatures, turtles can become severely hypothermic, malnourished and dehydrated in cold water. Whilst many do not survive such conditions, if they are found in time and receive the proper care and rehabilitation, they have a chance of being returned to the wild.

When Nazaré was found, she had a satellite fitted to her shell and, on closer inspection, she was found to be microchipped. Within 24 hours SEA LIFE used its network to reach out to other aquariums around Europe and managed to find out that the turtle had been released in June the previous year having been found stranded before at Saint-Hilaire-de-Riez, France.

Nazaré's care at SEA LIFE Blackpool involved gradually raising her body temperature, administering hydration injections, and closely monitoring her condition round-the-clock, including a 24-hour surveillance camera enabling aquarists to keep watch throughout the night.

The team also created floats to support her in order to make sure she didn't drown, as well as using a toothbrush to clean her shell.

Miraculously, within days, she began showing signs of improvement, eating and moving independently. Once stabilised, she was transferred to SEA LIFE Scarborough for further rehabilitation.

At SEA LIFE Scarborough, Nazaré continued her recovery in the quarantine area before moving to the ocean tank to build the necessary strength and muscle for her return to the wild. Throughout this period, she was closely monitored, ensuring she was eating well, gaining weight and showing normal behaviours.

Once the team at SEA LIFE were happy Nazaré was fit, healthy and ready to be returned to the wild, they set about preparing the necessary paperwork for her release.

Working with Flying Sharks, a company dedicated to promoting sustainable use of the ocean, and the Portuguese authorities, the team secured Nazaré her very own turtle passport, enabling her to be flown to the Azores.

This September, after all the paperwork was confirmed, Nazaré travelled to London Heathrow to Lisbon, then to Horta in the Azores, where she was temporarily housed at Porto Pim aquarium before her release in September. This journey mirrors the successful rehabilitation and release of Iona, a loggerhead turtle released by SEA LIFE last year.

Todd German, Curator at SEA LIFE Scarborough, said: "We are incredibly proud to release Nazaré back to the ocean. She is an incredibly lucky turtle, having been rescued and rehabilitated not once, but twice!

“Her journey from being cold-stunned and severely weak to a healthy, vibrant turtle ready for release is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the entire SEA LIFE team in both Scarborough and Blackpool.

“SEA LIFE has over 30 years of experience rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing turtles into the wild. It is incredibly rewarding to see the transformation of such animals and to know we are making a positive impact on marine life conservation.”

Graham McGrath, who heads up the SEA LIFE Trust charity, said: “It’s fantastic to see Nazaré’s health and fitness improve so much during her rehabilitation with SEA LIFE, and I’m delighted she has returned back to the waters.

“SEA LIFE and the SEA LIFE Trust are committed to the vision of healthy oceans that are protected and full of diverse, wonderful animals. Her rehabilitation is another important step in our journey to protect our waters and the marine life within them.”

For further information on SEA LIFE and the SEA LIFE Trust’s conservation work, please visit www.visitsealife.com and www.sealifetrust.org.

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If you have any questions or would like to visit a SEA LIFE site for yourself, please email merlin@wearebrazenpr.com

NOTE TO EDITORS

About Merlin Entertainments

Merlin Entertainments is a global leader in location-based, family entertainment. As Europe's Number 1 and the world's second-largest visitor attraction operator, Merlin operates over 140 attractions, 23 hotels and six holiday villages in 24 countries and across four continents. Merlin’s purpose is to deliver memorable experiences to its millions of guests around the world, through its iconic brands and multiple attraction formats, and the commitment and passion of its employees.

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About SEA LIFE and the SEA LIFE Trust

SEA LIFE is the world’s largest family of aquariums, proudly delivering amazing discoveries around the world. From breath-taking underwater tunnels to incredible up-close encounters, guests can dive into the ocean world without getting wet. Welcoming more than 20 million guests each year to 50 aquariums and six sanctuaries, SEA LIFE cares for over 180,000 creatures living in incredible themed habitats.

SEA LIFE has a vision of oceans that are healthy, protected, and full of diverse, wonderful animals and works together with its partner charity, the SEA LIFE TRUST. Their joint focus is to protect these oceans and the amazing marine life within them.

The SEA LIFE Trust owns and operates marine wildlife sanctuaries, including the world’s first Beluga Whale Sanctuary in Iceland and the Cornish Seal Sanctuary in the UK; and runs inspiring conservation campaigns and funds projects and education programmes that champion the need to protect our oceans.

Through its global BREED, RESCUE, PROTECT programme and dedicated Conservation, Welfare and Engagement team, SEA LIFE’s team of expert marine biologists pioneer global breeding projects which may one day provide a lifeline to the ocean’s endangered species, as well as nursing sick

creatures back to health and returning them to the wild. If they can't survive in the wild, they are given a safe home for life.
For more information on the work SEA LIFE and the SEA LIFE Trust does in protecting our oceans, visit www.visitsealife.com and www.sealifetrust.org.