

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Program to Release Rehabilitated Sea Turtles

*Public release scheduled for Wednesday, June 20*

(Virginia Beach, Va.) The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center's Stranding Response Program will release four rehabilitated sea turtles on Wednesday, June 20 at 9 a.m. along the shore behind Neptune's Park at 31<sup>st</sup> Street. The four turtles to be released include two of the most common species to Virginia's coastal waters: Kemp's ridley and loggerhead sea turtles. This release will also feature Green Apple, who is both the season's first return patient and the first hooked loggerhead patient of 2018.

The sea turtles to be released are:

- **Green Apple**, a loggerhead sea turtle, who was originally hooked at Ocean View Fishing Pier on August 9, 2017 and was released on October 12, 2017, at Croatan Beach. Green Apple made a return appearance at Ocean View Fishing Pier on June 13, 2018 after being hooked by another recreational angler. Green Apple will have a satellite tag affixed to study habitual feeding at piers with tracks uploaded to [seaturtle.org](http://seaturtle.org)
- **Dahlia**, a loggerhead sea turtle, was hooked on June 16, 2018 at Buckroe Fishing Pier and admitted to the Virginia Aquarium Marine Animal Care Center. Dahlia was hooked in the shoulder and the hook was removed quickly, facilitating a speedy return to the ocean.
- **Snapdragon**, a juvenile Kemp's ridley sea turtle, was hooked by a recreational angler at Ocean View Fishing Pier on June 13, 2018. Snapdragon will be outfitted with an acoustic tag.
- **Rose**, a Kemp's ridley sea turtle, was hooked by a recreational angler on May 25, 2018 at Buckroe Fishing Pier. Rose will also be outfitted with an acoustic tag.

**The Stranding Response Team urges anyone who sees a stranded, entangled or hooked turtle to call the 24-hour hotline (757) 385-7575.** If you do hook a turtle and cannot immediately contact the Stranding Center for advice, bring it up onto the pier or boat using a net; do not attempt to remove the hook yourself. If you must cut the line, leave 2 feet attached. Keep the turtle contained in a quiet, shaded area until Stranding Response Team members arrive.

The Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Program is primarily funded by grants and donations, and is in critical need of financial support. To help, please visit <https://membership.virginiaaquarium.com/donatestrandingteam>.

*The Virginia Aquarium Foundation is a 501 (c) 3, nonprofit. The purpose of the Foundation is to support the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center in its mission to inspire conservation of the marine environment through education, research and sustainable practices. Founded in 1981, the Foundation is dedicated to the success of the Aquarium which opened its doors to the public in 1986. Over the years, the Foundation's role in support of the Aquarium has not only*

*included garnering financial support to pay for the Aquarium's exhibits, animals and habitats, but it has expanded to include funding of education programs, and research and conservation efforts such as the Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response and Sensible Seafood™ programs.*

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