

Back to the Blue

Beloved Sea turtle ambassadors return to the ocean

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

Under the bright summer sun, Olive and Mac, two juvenile loggerhead sea turtles, made their way back to the ocean. This marked the culmination of months of dedicated care and education at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park. The release was a joint effort by the Florida Park Service, Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, and the ANGARI Foundation.

One-year-old Olive and 11-month-old Mac arrived when they were just three months old, becoming the heart of the MacArthur State Park Sea turtle ambassador program. They captivated over 150,000 annual visitors, including over 4,000 students, teaching sea turtles' vital role in our oceans.

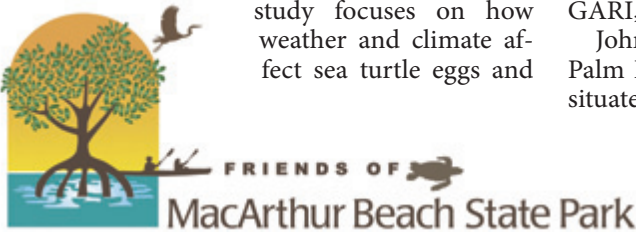
"During their time at MacArthur Beach State Park, our sea turtle ambassadors educated thousands of visitors about sea turtles and conservation," says Veronica Frehm, CEO of Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park. "It is these personal encounters that can spark people's interests and can help them on their way to becoming lifelong sea turtle advocates. Our conservation and research efforts are helping ensure these species remain part of our ocean for years to come. We look forward to getting a new sea turtle ambassador in the coming months."

John D. MacArthur Beach State Park is the only state park permitted to house sea turtles in

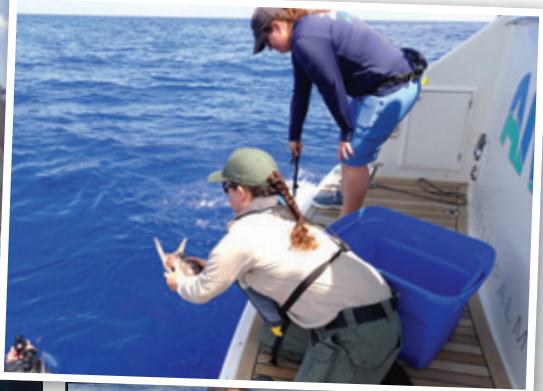


ANGARI FOUNDATION / COURTESY PHOTO
Park Ranger and Animal Care Supervisor Kelly Snyder Releases Loggerhead Sea Turtle Olive.

Florida. The Park received Olive and Mac from Dr. Jeanette Wyneken's research lab at the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Research Gallery, located within the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton. Her long-term study focuses on how weather and climate affect sea turtle eggs and



their implications. Regularly monitored by veterinarians and scientists from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Olive and Mac received advanced care until their recent release from ANGARI Foundation's 65-foot research vessel, R/V ANGARI, off the coast of West Palm Beach. John D. MacArthur Beach State Park, Palm Beach County's only state park, is situated on a barrier island between the Atlantic Ocean and the Lake Worth Lagoon. The Park is made up of 436 acres of pristine coastal land. For more,



FRIENDS OF MACARTHUR BEACH STATE PARK / COURTESY PHOTOS
Park Ranger Sarah Waddell Releases Loggerhead Sea Turtle Mac.

visit macarthurbeach.org. ANGARI Foundation is a non-profit organization established in 2016 and headquartered in West Palm Beach. It is dedicated to creating a global community interested in and invested in marine and environmental sciences. For more, visit angari.org. ■



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