



DETERMINED

> McCLELLAN ADMITTED
JUNE 21, 2011



Walking through the Sea Turtle Hospital, it is difficult to miss the activity in the tank holding a 230-pound adult female loggerhead named “McClellan.”

Splashing wildly around her tank,

she chases her breakfast

of live blue crabs,

using only three flippers.





➤ McCLELLAN SIX WEEKS LATER

McClellan came to us just a few weeks ago after being found with her front right flipper all but amputated from a crab trap rope entanglement. The back third of her carapace was also injured, cut deeply by a boat propeller. But this big girl had a feistiness rarely seen in patients with injuries this severe. It was only a couple of days later that McClellan deposited eggs in her tank and then we knew – this *determined* mother wouldn't rest until her job was done. The eggs were carefully collected, hoping to give them a fair chance at life, the way McClellan intended. With the eggs safely incubating on a nearby beach, McClellan began responding well to treatment and learning to live with only three flippers.

Thanks to amazing friends like you, McClellan's prognosis is good and she will ultimately be released back into her natural habitat. With your additional support, we can continue to improve the odds of survival for sick and injured sea turtles found along our coast.

I've been privileged to be involved with the Aquarium's Sea Turtle Rescue Program since its inception in 2000. Thus far we have successfully treated and released 77 sea turtles and currently have 12 patients receiving treatment in our hospital. Considering that every species of sea turtle is at risk of extinction, treating these animals is an important step in the right direction. It would be devastating to lose these majestic animals after more than 100 million years of existence.

In my time here, I've seen sea turtles much like McClellan, with major injuries from boat strikes and fishing gear entanglement; turtles afflicted by ailments common to humans like pneumonia, lockjaw and hypothermia; and turtles exhibiting symptoms linked to pollution and man-made environmental disasters. A time for concern is at hand.



Each year we become better at treating these animals. Our veterinarian, Dr. Shane Boylan, who joined us in 2007, brings a wealth of sea turtle expertise to our program. Under his vigilance, turtles routinely receive everything from surgeries to ultrasounds, endoscopies to x-rays. We are also fortunate to have the help of three full-time hospital employees and a team of dedicated volunteers who work every day (and in some cases around the clock) to ensure the health of these charismatic creatures.

As much as we grow attached to our patients during their course of treatment, nothing gives us more satisfaction than returning them to the wild. The release of recovered sea turtles on one of our county beaches is cause for celebration. Sea turtle "adoptive parents," tourists, school children, and the local media all turn out to cheer on the turtles and wish them well. If you haven't been to a release, we invite you to join us!

The good news: we know our efforts are working.

Just last year, biologists from the SC Department of Natural Resources discovered a robust, healthy loggerhead off the coast of Georgia during a regional survey. Its tag revealed it to be none other than “Stinky,” the very first patient to be rehabilitated in our facility back in 2000! We have also tracked several released patients through satellite transmitters placed on their carapaces. Tracking these turtles has helped us to better understand how these animals acclimate back into the wild, after healing from debilitating illnesses and injuries.

But we need to do more. Twelve patients rely on our care today.

2011 has been our busiest stranding season yet! This increase has taken a toll on our staff, and our budget, but much like McClellan, we are *determined... determined* to do everything in our power to give every sea turtle the best possible chance for survival. Your help is critical. Your tax-deductible gift will help provide the basic care these recovering sea turtles require during their stay with us. Your gift will help keep the South Carolina Aquarium on the leading edge of sea turtle medical care, enabling us to conduct critical research for them and provide educational opportunities to further alert the public about the threats to sea turtles.

Together, we can make a positive change for sea turtles, our beach community, and the likelihood that these precious creatures will exist for future generations.

Thank you for your support of the South Carolina Aquarium's Sea Turtle Rescue Program!



Kelly Thorvalson
Sea Turtle Rescue Program Manager



Please consider
what your gift can do...

\$50

antibiotics for one week

\$100

bloodwork on one sea turtle

\$250

triage cost to admit one sea turtle

\$500

hook removal surgery

It costs **\$10,000** per year
to feed the sea turtle patients

And this is just the start of what
it takes for a full recovery.



Let's go sea.

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