



WAYWARD MANATEE REHABILITATING AT MIAMI SEAQUARIUM

Cooperative efforts bring rescued manatee from Bimini Island

MIAMI – Crewmembers from the Miami Seaquarium and the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter ‘Kodiac Island’ transported a Florida manatee from the Sea Crest Marina in Bimini, Bahamas, to the Miami Seaquarium on Saturday afternoon.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials contacted the Miami Seaquarium and the Coast Guard to report a Florida manatee may be in need of assistance after being spotted far from its normal winter habitat.

“What made this truly a unique rescue experience is that U.S. and Bahamian entities worked closely together to ensure the safety of ‘Kodi’ the manatee. We carefully strategized how to bring the manatee to safety and we accomplished it,” said Miami Seaquarium curator Robert Rose. Entities involved included, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Service, US Coast Guard, Government of the Bahamas, Seacrest Marina in Bimini.

The adult male manatee is about 9-feet, weighs about 1,200 pounds and appears to be healthy. ‘Kodi’ was able to feed on sea grass near where he had been spotted, and was able to drink fresh water coming from the marina.

Miami Seaquarium animal care and veterinary staff will monitor the manatee and eventually release it back into the wild.

Manatees are endangered species protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. They are primarily found in freshwater, brackish, and saltwater habitats in Florida and southeastern Georgia. Manatees cannot survive very long in water below 68 degrees and depend on sea grass and other aquatic vegetation for food. In the winter, they congregate around warm water springs and man-made sources of warm water such as power plant discharges.

Miami Seaquarium, South Florida's most popular tourist attraction, is a family-oriented marine-life park open to the public 365 days a year. The park provides visitors with a greater understanding and appreciation for marine life through shows, presentations and exhibits. More information on Miami Seaquarium is available at www.miamiseaquarium.com. For more information please call (305) 361-5705.

Miami Seaquarium is an accredited member of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, an international organization committed to the care and conservation of marine mammals. Accreditation by the Alliance means this facility meets or exceeds all the standards of excellence for marine mammal care, husbandry, conservation and education.

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