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More than 50 endangered sea turtles set for release back into the wild

NOAA Fisheries, The Houston Zoo and Moody Gardens partner to rehabilitate and release cold stun turtles

On Wednesday May 27, NOAA Fisheries, the [Houston Zoo](#) and [Moody Gardens](#) will release 51 sea turtles at Stewart Beach in Galveston, Texas. Forty-nine of the turtles are Kemp's ridleys and were part of a group brought in last December after suffering from the cold in Cape Cod, New England. The Boston Aquarium sent the sick turtles to [NOAA's Galveston Sea Turtle Facility](#) as well as 17 other sea turtle rehabilitation centers, zoos, and aquariums throughout the country. The other two turtles, one Kemp's ridley and one loggerhead were already at the NOAA facility for treatment and rehabilitation.

The turtles were part of a record setting cold stunning event which included a total of 1,200 turtles. They were dehydrated and emaciated due to the cold. Symptoms of cold stunning include a decreased heart rate, decreased circulation, lethargy, followed by shock, pneumonia and eventually death if not rescued.

Now, after months of rehabilitation and warmer temperatures, the turtles are ready to be returned to the wild. The release will take place **promptly at 8am**, Stewart Beach Park, 201 Seawall Blvd. in Galveston. The public is invited to come out and witness this exciting release. The normal parking fee for [Stewart Beach](#) will be waived for those who arrive before 9 am to attend the release.

Ben Higgins, who runs the NOAA Galveston Laboratory's sea turtle program and Dr. Joe Flanagan, head veterinarian at The Houston Zoo, will be on hand to answer questions after the release. Dr. Flanagan is the attending veterinarian for all sea turtles rescued and rehabilitated by the NOAA Galveston Laboratory. A special thanks also to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for their help in getting the turtles to Galveston from Boston.

The Kemp's ridley is the smallest and most endangered sea turtle in the world. For more on the Kemp's ridley, please visit NOAA Fisheries [fact page](#) about the species.

The Houston Zoo is going to host the release live on their blog. Please visit <http://blogs.houstonzoo.org/>.



Kemp's ridley/NOAA Fisheries