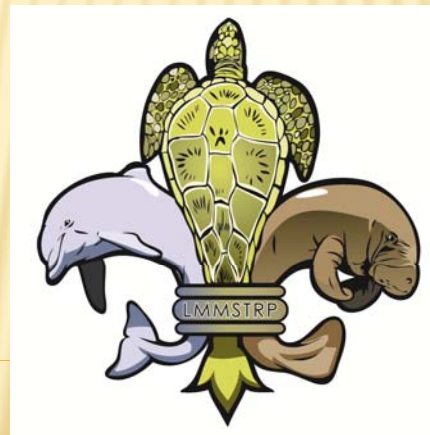


# JOURNEY HOME: THE RECOVERY AND RELEASE OF 200 SEA TURTLES FROM THE BP OIL SPILL

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On April 20, 2010, an explosion on the Deepwater Horizon offshore oil rig killed 11 people, injured 17 more, and proceeded to leak continuously for the next few months resulting in the largest accidental oil spill in U.S. history.



Marine life was affected greatly as a direct result of this oil spill, including threatened and endangered sea turtles.





Upon intake, each sea turtle was de-oiled, given a physical exam, treated for any additional ailments, and received a PIT tag for identification purposes. Each one was placed in its' own tub during the recovery phase.





We housed a total of 193 sea turtles: 123 Kemp's ridleys (*Lepidochelys kempii*), 58 green (*Chelonia mydas*), 5 hawksbills (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), and 7 loggerheads (*Caretta caretta*).





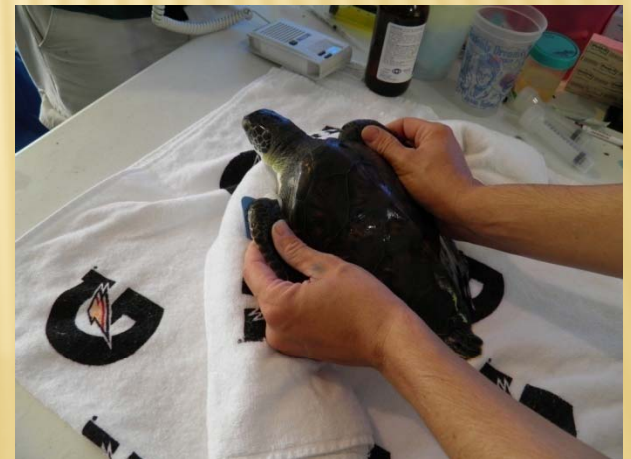
By October 22, 2010, 161 sea turtles had been released into uncontaminated areas in the Gulf of Mexico.







**Due to various medical reasons, 30 turtles had to remain at the Audubon Aquatic Center. Some health issues included fractured flippers, shell rot, and shark bite wounds. These turtles all required additional medical care and treatment.**





In April 2011, our veterinarians determined all of the remaining sea turtles had a clean bill of health.



For months these turtles had been housed in tubs and needed exercise to build muscle before their release. We placed one green sea turtle into our teleost system, and every 2-3 days we would add another one...



...then we had to wait for the optimal weather conditions to release them back into the Gulf of Mexico. The weather would not cooperate.





We received reports of some sargassum and we finally had a tentative date for good weather.

This is what happened...





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# QUESTIONS?



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