

Singapore Oceanarium and National Parks Board (NParks) partner to provide a head start for eight Hawksbill turtle hatchlings for conservation, research and public learning

Turtle hatchlings undergo specialist care before eventual release into the wild



PHOTO CREDIT: Singapore Oceanarium, Resorts World Sentosa.

Singapore, 11 May 2026 - Singapore Oceanarium at Resorts World Sentosa, in partnership with the National Parks Board (NParks), received eight Hawksbill turtle hatchlings in October last year as part of an ongoing headstarting¹ programme designed to improve their chances of survival during their critical first phase of life.

The hatchlings, identified as H12 to H19, were hatched at NParks' turtle hatchery at Small Sister's Island in October 2025, and have been under specialist care at Singapore Oceanarium where they underwent quarantine, veterinary assessment and early-life husbandry. Six months on, the eight turtles have been moved to a front-of-house habitat at the *Horizontal Migration Zone* where they will continue to receive care. They will remain in the care of Singapore Oceanarium until they are assessed to have a strong chance of survival in the wild and released.

¹ Turtle headstarting is a conservation strategy where turtle hatchlings are raised till they are larger in size, before they are released into the wild, to bypass the most vulnerable stage of their life. This in turn increases their chances of survival.



The programme brings together the complementary strength of Singapore Oceanarium's marine animal care expertise, public education and research capabilities, and NParks' conservation expertise in safeguarding Singapore's native biodiversity. Together, both organisations aim to advance public understanding of marine turtle conservation in Singapore.

The Hawksbill turtle is listed as Critically Endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. Their earliest phase of life is the most perilous for these turtles, with survival estimates for hatchlings reaching adulthood often cited in the range of 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 10,000 due to predation and other natural and human-caused threats. The headstarting programme for these hatchlings helps them during this highly vulnerable life stage, allowing them to grow bigger, which increases their chances of survival before release.

In 2019, the then S.E.A. Aquarium launched the first phase of the headstarting effort with NParks, with the support from the Marine Turtle Working Group and Friends of Marine Park.

During this period, 10 hatchlings were received and reared under expert care before being progressively released in 2023 and 2024. Three individuals from that cohort were fitted with satellite tags to support post-release monitoring and deepen the understanding of turtle movements and survival. Two of the individuals headed south towards Indonesia, a few days after being released at the Sisters' Islands Marine Park. The third individual headed north along Malacca Straits, towards southern Thailand.

The latest cohort of eight hatchlings builds on this foundation and represents the next phase of the collaborative effort.

From 11 May 2026, the eight Hawksbill turtles will become part of Singapore Oceanarium's efforts to connect visitors with the science and significance of marine conservation. Through the turtles' journey, visitors will be able to learn more about Singapore's marine biodiversity, the threats facing sea turtles, and the long-term work required to support wildlife recovery.

Since their arrival at SGO, the hatchlings have been cared for with a strong emphasis on maintaining natural conditions to ensure they are able to integrate back into the wild after release. This includes the use of natural feeding practices and the installation of heavily tinted privacy films in the entire habitat tank to prevent the hatchlings from becoming too familiar with human beings.

Nick Derbyshire, Senior Director of Animal Care at Singapore Oceanarium, said: "Giving these hatchlings a stronger start can make a real difference to their survival in the wild. Through this partnership with NParks, we are combining field conservation, specialist care and public outreach to improve outcomes for a critically endangered species, while deepening public understanding of Singapore's marine biodiversity."

Dr Karenne Tun, Group Director, National Biodiversity Centre, NParks, said: "This partnership reflects the value of bringing together field conservation, specialist animal care and public outreach in support



of a threatened native species. NParks is pleased to work with Singapore Oceanarium on this effort, which contributes to both conservation outcomes and greater public awareness of Singapore's marine biodiversity."

Based on past growth trends the turtles may be considered for release after approximately 15-20 months, subject to their condition, development and health status. While no conservation programme can guarantee survival after release, the headstarting effort is designed to give them a better chance at survival in the wild. To support post-release monitoring, selected individuals may be later fitted with satellite and flipper tags, in accordance with established animal welfare guidelines on transmitter weight.

Data collected during their development and post-release will help inform future conservation efforts.

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ABOUT RESORTS WORLD SENTOSA

Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), Asia's premium lifestyle destination resort, is located on Singapore's resort island of Sentosa. Spanning 49 hectares, RWS is home to world-class attractions including Universal Studios Singapore, Singapore Oceanarium and Adventure Cove Waterpark. Complementing the adventure and adrenaline of its theme parks and attractions are six unique luxury hotels, the premier Resorts World Convention Centre, and a casino. RWS offers award-winning dining experiences and exciting cuisines from around the world helmed by celebrity chefs, establishing itself as a key player in Singapore's vibrant and diverse dining scene and a leading gourmet destination in Asia for epicureans. The integrated resort also offers world-class entertainment, from star-studded concerts to immersive exhibitions. RWS is the first integrated resort to be inducted into the TTG Travel Hall of Fame in 2023 after being named "Best Integrated Resort" for 10 consecutive years at the TTG Travel Awards, which recognises the best of Asia-Pacific's travel industry.

RWS is wholly owned by Genting Singapore, a company of the Genting Group. For more information, please visit <http://www.rwsentosa.com/>.



ABOUT SINGAPORE OCEANARIUM

Singapore Oceanarium is a leading ocean institute dedicated to inspiring deeper knowledge, love, and action for the ocean and aquatic life. A bold transformation of the S.E.A. Aquarium, Singapore Oceanarium will integrate marine science, immersive engagement, and conservation to spark deeper connections with the ocean and drive meaningful change. Our long-term partnerships with institutes, accreditation by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), and membership in the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) and the Southeast Asian Zoo and Aquarium Association (SEAZA) is a testament to our commitment to inspire generations of ocean stewards for greater action.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARKS BOARD

The National Parks Board (NParks) is responsible for enhancing and managing the urban ecosystems of our City in Nature. We are the lead agency for greenery, biodiversity conservation, and wildlife and animal



health, welfare and management. We also work closely with the community to enhance the quality of our living environment.

NParks manages parks, nature reserves, the Singapore Botanic Gardens, Pulau Ubin and the Sisters' Islands Marine Park. Adding to this is the extensive network of Nature Ways, and Park Connector Network that links major parks, nature areas and residential estates island-wide. NParks also manages millions of trees, including those along roads and in our parks, gardens and state land.

NParks has developed an urban biodiversity conservation model, which aims to conserve representative ecosystems in land-scarce Singapore. NParks also monitors and coordinates measures to enhance the presence of biodiversity in our urban landscape.

The Animal & Veterinary Service, a cluster within NParks, is the main touch-point for animal-related issues, as well as the first responder for animal-related feedback. By improving the standards of the animal and veterinary sectors, we aim to safeguard animal health and welfare in Singapore.

NParks is working closely with partners in the landscape, horticulture, veterinary and animal sectors to increase productivity, and provide training for all levels of the workforce. Enhancing competencies of the industry will support Singapore's vision of being a City in Nature.

For more information, visit www.nparks.gov.sg and www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz

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EDITORS' NOTES

1. High resolution photographs can be downloaded [here](#).
2. All photographs are to be attributed to: *Resorts World Sentosa (圣淘沙名胜世界)*