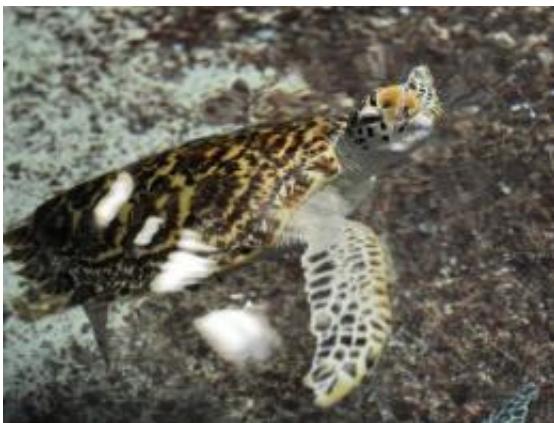


Japan sends endangered sea turtles to Singapore for release

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A hawksbill turtle submerged in a tank at Sentosa's second-generation Underwater World after its arrival from Port of Nagoya Public Aquarium (PNPA) of Japan in Singapore. Thirteen endangered sea turtles bred in captivity in Japan have been given to the Singapore aquarium to prepare them for release into a natural habitat later this year, scientists said Friday.

Thirteen endangered sea turtles bred in captivity in Japan have been given to a Singapore aquarium to prepare them for release into a natural habitat later this year, scientists said Friday.

The hawksbill turtles, listed as a highly endangered species, were brought to Singapore by their Japanese caretakers Tomomi Saito and Yoshihiko Kanou from the Port of Nagoya Public [Aquarium](#).

The five one-year-old turtles and eight three-year-olds were turned over on Thursday to the Underwater World Singapore, which is collaborating with the Nagoya aquarium to release the animals.

They are the offspring of hawksbill turtles donated by the Underwater World Singapore to the Nagoya aquarium in 1997 and 2002.

As part of the preparations, staff from the Singapore aquarium will monitor and conduct checks on the turtles to determine their fitness for the release scheduled in September.

"With the success of their breeding... we would want to have some of these captive-bred turtles return to the wild," said Anthony Chang, curator of the Underwater World [Singapore](#).

He said that releasing older turtles that are bred in captivity will improve their chances of survival.

"We know that on the beaches, when turtle eggs hatch, people will poach them," Chang told AFP.

"The turtles may be collected by people and they may be eaten up. The survivability of the small babies is very, very low."

Turtle soup is a delicacy in parts of Asia. Turtle shell is turned into powder and used as an ingredient for a jelly dessert.

Prior to their release, the turtles will be fitted with satellite devices attached to the back of their shells, allowing the scientists to learn about their [migratory behaviour](#) and survivability.

Their findings will be reported at an international convention on biological diversity in Nagoya in October.

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