

# Desert tortoise released on Marine Corps base

October 2 2015

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Researchers have released a desert tortoise raised on a Marine Corps base as part of efforts aimed at reinvigorating the threatened population in the western Mojave Desert.

The female tortoise released Wednesday is the 35th one set free this year on the Marine Corps base at Twentynine Palms.

Biologists have been raising tortoises over the past nine years at a six-acre facility to help boost the population that was nearly decimated by a [respiratory virus](#) in the late 1980s.

They cannot be released until their shells are mature enough so they better survive predator attacks.

The release ceremony was attended by Marine Corps officials along with authorities from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and researchers from the University of California Los Angeles.

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