

# Beloved 3-flipped sea turtle dies after nearly 20 years at National Aquarium

February 4 2020, by Colin Campbell, The Baltimore Sun

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Calypso, a 500-pound green sea turtle who had delighted millions of visitors over nearly 20 years as the unofficial "queen" of the National Aquarium in Baltimore, died unexpectedly Sunday, the aquarium announced Monday. The cause of death is unknown.

The roughly 22-year-old female turtle was particularly recognizable for her missing front left flipper, which was amputated in a life-saving operation after becoming infected when she was stranded in the Long Island Sound in 2002. Weighing just 6 pounds at the time, she was rescued by the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation, according to the aquarium.

Because of the operation, Calypso was deemed "nonreleasable" by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and was relocated two years later to the aquarium, where she spent the rest of her life.

Calypso, who had been in [good health](#) throughout her life, "displayed no clear signs of illness or distress in the days leading up to her death," the aquarium said.

A necropsy will be performed to determine the cause of death.

"Calypso will be profoundly missed by Aquarium staff, volunteers, and visitors alike," the aquarium said on Twitter. "For years, Calypso has been an Aquarium icon who encapsulated the wonder of the ocean for the millions who had the opportunity to see her—and did the same for

the staff who saw her daily. She has always inspired love, affection and deep respect. We thank you for your compassion and well wishes as we mourn her passing."

Condolences poured in, with [visitors](#) sharing their memories of seeing Calypso swimming with rays and various other [marine animals](#) in the [aquarium](#)'s Wings in the Water and Blacktip Reef exhibits. She was the first to enter Blacktip Reef when the new exhibit replaced Wings in the Water in 2013.

"I will miss seeing her," one wrote.

Another said Calypso's death was "incredibly sad" and called her "one of Baltimore's Crown Jewels."

A third called her "a magnificent ambassador" and shared condolences with the staff and the Baltimore community.

"Calypso was a highlight of my visit in 2013," she said.

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