

# Rehabilitated dolphin arrives at Florida Keys facility

March 26 2022

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In this photo provided by the Florida Keys News Bureau, Ranger, a two-year-old bottlenose dolphin, eats food in a medical pool at Dolphin Research Center Friday, March 25, 2022, in Marathon, Fla. The juvenile male was flown to the Florida Keys from the Texas State Aquarium Wildlife Rescue Center after it was discovered in June 2021 at Goose Island State Park in Texas suffering from a

respiratory infection and dehydration after his mother had died. Because the dolphin can't be released, National Marine Fisheries Service chose DRC to be his forever home. Credit: Andy Newman/Florida Keys News Bureau via AP

A juvenile bottlenose dolphin has been flown to the Florida Keys for permanent sanctuary after spending nine months healing at a Texas-based marine rehabilitation center.

The orphaned male calf, named "Ranger," arrived Friday at the Florida Keys-based Dolphin Research Center. He was rescued in June 2021 after being discovered stranded in waters around Goose Island State Park in Texas suffering from an underlying respiratory infection and dehydration. He was found near his dead mother and was transported to the Texas State Aquarium Wildlife Rescue Center.

The National Marine Fisheries Service determined the dolphin could not survive in the wild and chose the [Dolphin Research Center](#) to care for the [marine mammal](#) for the rest of his life.

"We provide sanctuary for any dolphins in need of a forever home," said Linda Erb, DRC's vice president of animal care and training. "Often times when a dolphin like this is found at such a young age, he has not learned the skills to catch his own fish."

Sarah Zigmond, operations coordinator for Texas State Aquarium, was at DRC for Ranger's arrival.



In this photo provided by the Florida Keys News Bureau Sarah Zigmond of the Texas State Aquarium Wildlife Rescue Center feeds Ranger, a two-year-old bottlenose dolphin, in a medical pool at Dolphin Research Center, Friday, March 25, 2022, in Marathon, Fla. The juvenile male was flown to the Florida Keys from the Texas wildlife center after it was rescued in June 2021 at Goose Island State Park in Texas suffering from a respiratory infection and dehydration after his mother had died. Because the dolphin can't be released, National Marine Fisheries Service chose DRC to be his forever home. Credit: Andy Newman/Florida Keys News Bureau via AP





In this photo provided by the Florida Keys News Bureau, Adam Keaton, left, of Dolphin Research Center and Sarah Zigmond, right, of the Texas State Aquarium Wildlife Rescue Center watch Ranger, a two-year-old bottlenose dolphin swim in a medical pool at the DRC, Friday, March 25, 2022, in Marathon, Fla. The juvenile male was flown to the Florida Keys from the Texas wildlife center after he was rescued in June 2021 at Goose Island State Park in Texas suffering from a respiratory infection and dehydration after his mother had died. Because the dolphin can't be released, National Marine Fisheries Service chose DRC to be his forever home. Credit: Andy Newman/Florida Keys News Bureau via AP



In this photo provided by the Florida Keys News Bureau, Adam Keaton, left, of Dolphin Research Center releases Ranger, a two-year-old bottlenose dolphin into a medical pool at DRC, Friday, March 25, 2022, in Marathon, Fla. The juvenile male was flown to the Florida Keys from the Texas State Aquarium Wildlife Rescue Center after he was rescued in June 2021, from Goose Island State Park in Texas, suffering from a respiratory infection and dehydration after his mother had died. Because the dolphin can't be released, National Marine Fisheries Service chose DRC to be his forever home. Credit: Andy Newman/Florida Keys News Bureau via AP





In this photo provided by the Florida Keys News Bureau, marine mammal experts carry Ranger, a two-year-old bottlenose dolphin to a medical pool at Dolphin Research Center, Friday, March 25, 2022, in Marathon, Fla. The juvenile male was flown to the Florida Keys from the Texas State Aquarium Wildlife Rescue Center after it was rescued in June 2021 at Goose Island State Park in Texas suffering from a respiratory infection and dehydration after his mother had died. Because the dolphin can't be released, National Marine Fisheries Service determined that DRC be his forever home. Credit: Andy Newman/Florida Keys News Bureau via AP

"I've been with Ranger since his [rescue](#) and so to see the culmination of his entire rescue and rehabilitation come to fruition in his new forever home made me quite emotional, but it was all happy emotions,"

Zigmond said.

After an initial monitoring period in a medical quarantine pool to build up his [immune system](#), Ranger will be slowly introduced to other resident dolphins and acclimate to the dolphin lagoons in Florida Bay.

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