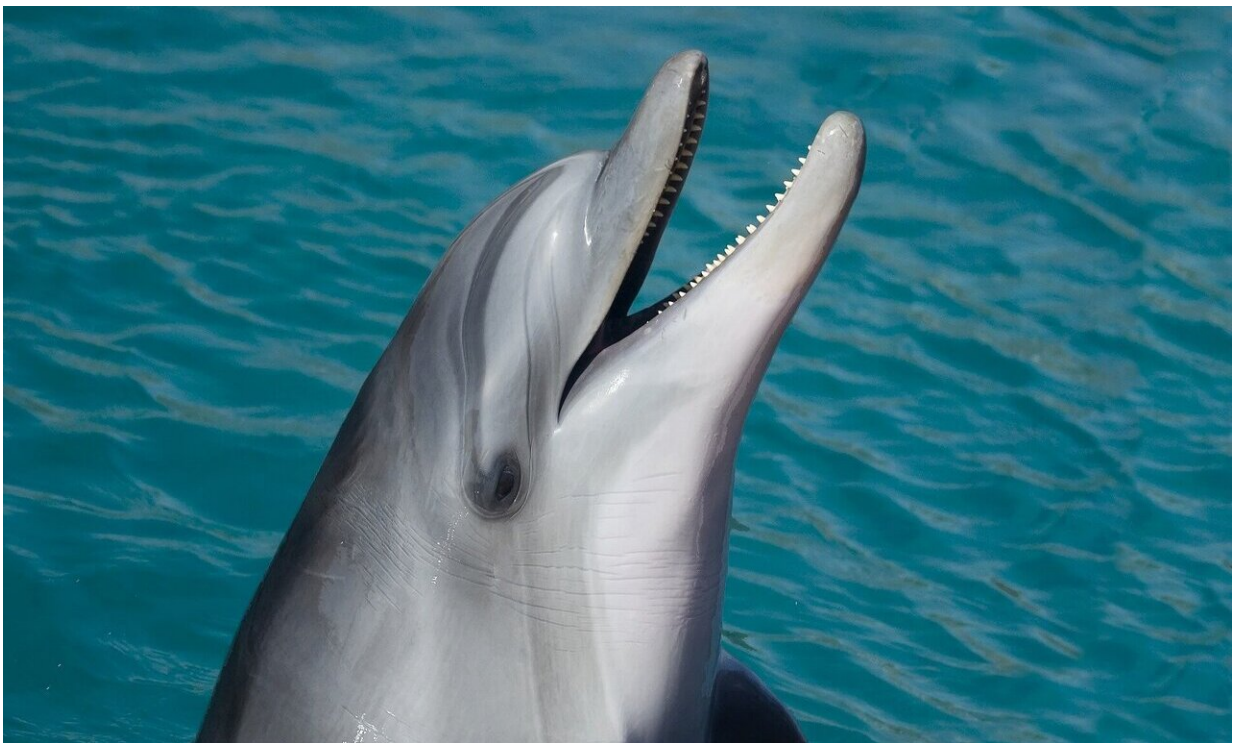


Li'i, Lolita's longtime Miami Seaquarium companion, relocated to San Antonio SeaWorld

September 25 2023, by Linda Robertson, Miami Herald



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Li'i, the Pacific white-sided dolphin who was Lolita's companion at Miami Seaquarium, was moved Sunday night to SeaWorld of San Antonio, where he will be reunited with two offspring, former

companion Piquet and three other members of his species.

The 200-pound Li'i, who is considered an elderly dolphin at age 40, was transported in a container filled with cold water on a chartered Boeing 767 and accompanied by two veterinarians and a trainer.

"Li's trip was a success," said Dr. Christopher Dold, SeaWorld's chief zoological officer. "He's an older dolphin who has never moved before but he was very calm throughout the flight. We placed him in the water early this morning and he is alert and interactive. He can see the other animals he will soon be living with."

Once Li'i is oriented to his new home after spending his entire life at Seaquarium, he will be moved into one of SeaWorld's largest habitats which he will share with the other Pacific white-sided dolphins and Beluga whales.

Li'i, captured off the coast of California, had been living in the Whale Bowl tank with Lolita since 1983.

Lolita, also known by her Native American name of Tokitae and nickname of Toki, died Aug. 18 at age 57 after spending 53 years at Seaquarium, which cited [kidney failure](#) as the cause of death.

"Our main aim was to provide the best welfare for Li'i at a place where he could live with other dolphins of his species," said Dr. Guillermo Sanchez, chief veterinary officer for The Dolphin Company, which owns Seaquarium and 29 other facilities throughout the world. "As soon as Toki died we started immediately to plan Li'i's future. San Antonio has a lot of experience with geriatric animals."

After undergoing several mock moves at Seaquarium in the [cold-water](#) container, Li'i's flight departed Miami at 10 p.m. Sunday.

Seaquarium moved its other Pacific white-sided dolphins, Elelo and Loki—a mother-and-son pair—to Chicago's Shedd Aquarium on Aug. 3.

Seaquarium is awaiting the results of Lolita's necropsy, which was performed at the University of Georgia.

"Samples were sent from the university to labs and we expect to receive the results soon," Sanchez said.

©2023 Miami Herald.

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: Li'i, Lolita's longtime Miami Seaquarium companion, relocated to San Antonio SeaWorld (2023, September 25) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-09-lii-lolita-longtime-miami-seaquarium.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.