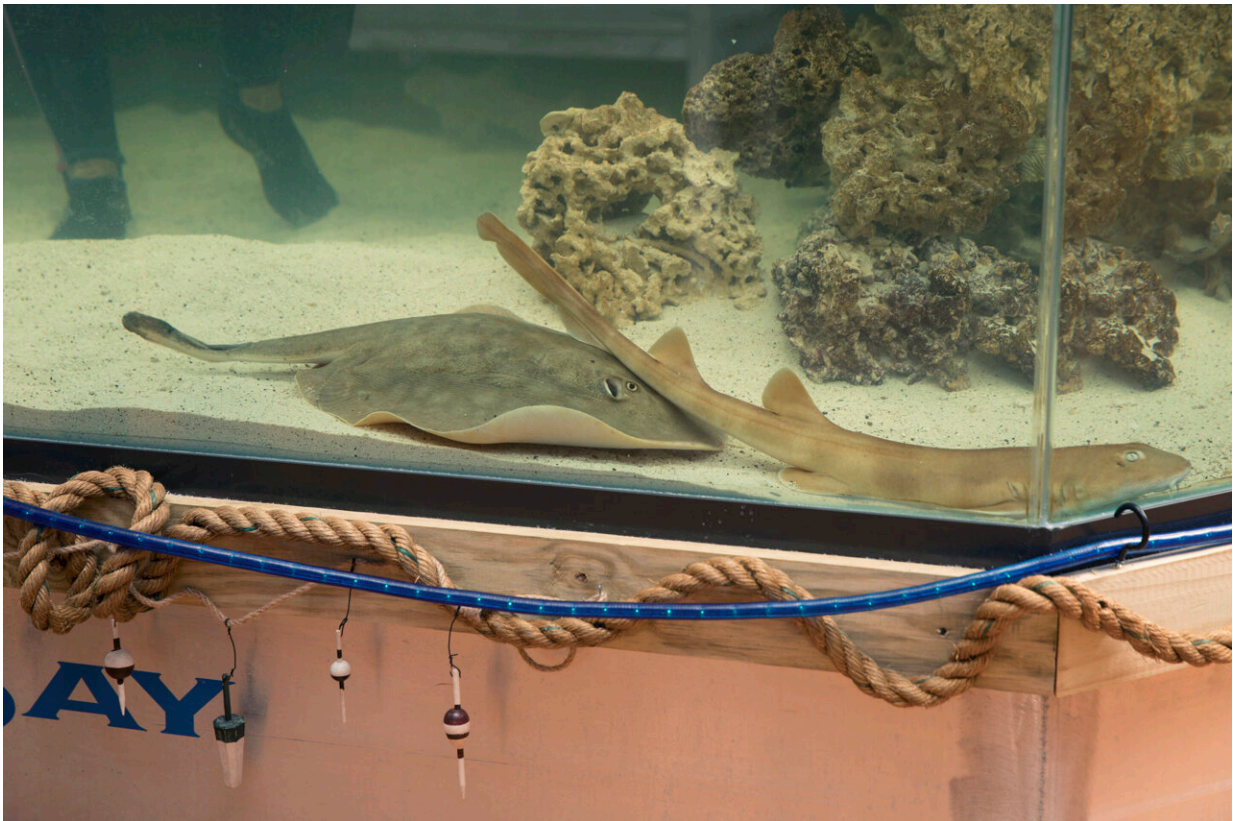


Stingray that got pregnant despite no male companion has died, aquarium says

July 2 2024



Charlotte, a round stingray, in an undated photo at the Aquarium and Shark Lab by Team ECCO in Hendersonville, N.C. The North Carolina aquarium that said it had a pregnant stingray with no male companion this winter now says the fish has died after suffering from a rare reproductive disease. The Aquarium and Shark Lab posted a statement on Facebook late Sunday, June 30, 2024 that said Charlotte had passed away. Credit: Aquarium and Shark Lab by Team ECCO via AP

A [stingray that got pregnant](#) at a North Carolina aquarium this winter despite not having shared a tank with a male of her species for many years has died.

The Aquarium and Shark Lab in Hendersonville said on Facebook late Sunday that the stingray, Charlotte, died after getting a rare reproductive disease. It didn't go into further detail.

"We are sad to announce, after continuing treatment with her medical care team and specialist, our ray Charlotte passed away today," the aquarium wrote, while also thanking fans for their "love and support."

The aquarium, which is in the Blue Ridge Mountains, announced in February that Charlotte had gotten pregnant despite not having shared a tank with a male [stingray](#) in at least eight years. The pregnancy made headlines around the world and provided fodder for late-night television host Jimmy Kimmel and "Saturday Night Live."

The aquarium said in late May that Charlotte was suffering from a rare reproductive disease, and that it was trying to find out more about the malady.

"There have been studies done on southern rays, but we have not found any yet done on round rays," it wrote.

The aquarium announced in early June that Charlotte was no longer pregnant. The [development](#) led the facility to temporarily close to the public on June 1. In its post on Sunday, the [aquarium](#) said it would remain closed for the time being and that staff would continue to feed and care for the other animals.

The pregnancy was thought to be the result of a type of asexual reproduction called parthenogenesis, in which offspring develop from

unfertilized eggs, meaning there is no genetic contribution by a male. The mostly rare phenomenon can occur in some insects, fish, amphibians, birds and reptiles, but not in mammals. Documented examples have included California condors, Komodo dragons and yellow-bellied water snakes.

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