

## TURTLE TIME AT THE DEEP

On World Turtle Day, Monday May 23<sup>rd</sup>, The Deep is launching a fortnight of turtle-filled fun for its young visitors. The event aims to highlight the plight of turtles worldwide and the need to help conserve them.

Curator Katy Duke explains, "Both freshwater and marine turtles are facing a multitude of threats around the globe and as we have two freshwater species here at The Deep, we wanted to help raise awareness of the need conserve these magnificent animals".

"Turtles are an ancient species that have been around for 250 million years yet in the last 30 years human exploitation has resulted in the extinction of many species with many more in immediate danger. They are threatened with overfishing for food and their supposed medical value as well as the destruction of their habitats. Our guides will be running turtle badge-making sessions whilst talking turtle to help visitors understand more about the lives of these amazing creatures."

To celebrate turtles, the following events will be running daily from Monday May 23<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup>:

- Arts activities, including turtle badge-making 11.00am – 4.00pm
- Turtle trail – competition to win a Marine Conservation Society Adopt a Turtle pack

Notes to Editors: 12.30pm Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May Photo opportunity: Meet The Deep's own Turtle Mascot, interview with aquarist and view our own freshwater turtles.

### Background Information; The Deep's turtles:

The yellow spotted Amazon river turtle (*Podocnemis unifillis*) is found in the South American river systems and grows up to 45cm. At certain times of the year the rivers flood and they can move away from the river channels and into the forest. After the floods they return to the main river channels. They primarily feed on fruits and vegetables

The Geoffroy's side necked turtle (*Phrynops geoffroanus*) is also found in the South American river systems and grows up to 40cm. This turtle is so named for their ability to draw their head and neck into their shell (carapace) sideways for protection against predators. They spend their days basking on logs and rocks. They feed on fish, snails, small mammals and aquatic plants.

This event is being promoted nationally as part of Love Your Zoo Week, an initiative led by the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

### Further information

Public: Please call 01482 381000 (option 3) or visit [www.thedeep.co.uk](http://www.thedeep.co.uk)

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