

PRESS RELEASE

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YOU'VE SEEN THE FILM, NOW SEE REAL LIFE TURTLES AT THE DEEP!

The Deep has just introduced four new turtles to its Amazon Flooded Forest display. Representing two different species; yellow spotted Amazon river turtles and Geoffroy's side necked turtles, these spectacular animals are already proving to be a hit with visitors.

These turtles join a whole host of life already at home in the display including silver arowana, ripsaw catfish, motoro stingray, tiger shovelnose catfish and pacu.

This exhibit looks at the flooded forests of the Amazon which annually receive over 9m of rain in just three months. As a result the Amazon quickly bursts its banks and floods the surrounding area. These areas are incredibly diverse yet vulnerable environments which become home to a huge range of species, including turtles.

Katy Duke, curator at The Deep said: "We are delighted that the animals have all settled in well and the tank is quickly becoming a real family favourite; especially since the arrival of the freshwater turtles from Bristol Zoo.

"We have seen a real increase in visitors wanting to see turtles and we think this is because of the new film that has recently been released. People are really keen to see the animals in real life.

"This exhibit is one of our new projects for 2011 which have are launching to tie in with our 10th anniversary. There are lots of new and exciting activities happening throughout the year, starting first with our new Explorers' Den giving people the chance to get up close with creepy crawlies and 'Living Rivers' which will open at Easter, and looks at the threats facing five of the world's largest river systems."

Background Information

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.

Further information

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