



AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY ANNOUNCES GRANT FOR SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION FROM ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD.'S OCEAN FUND

GRANT FUNDS INITIATIVE TO TRACK HIDDEN CONNECTIONS AMONG TURTLE POPULATIONS

The American Museum of Natural History is pleased to announce they have received a grant from Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd's Ocean Fund for a research initiative to understand the biology of sea turtle populations in key areas where these species are protected. The findings will inform efforts to conserve these imperiled "ambassadors of the sea" and the ecosystems on which they depend.

The initiative, "**Protected Areas and Migratory Species Conservation: A Focus on Globally Endangered Sea Turtles,**" will use the combined expertise of the Museum's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation and the Center for Conservation Genetics research staffs. All sea turtles are included on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, some of them as critically endangered, and an accurate understanding of this highly migratory group is important.

"The protection of our oceans and their inhabitants is vital for future generations. We are pleased to support the Museum's efforts to preserve globally endangered sea turtles," said Jamie Sweeting, vice president of Environmental Stewardship at Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

The initiative, funded by a \$39,000 Ocean Fund grant, has several goals, including investigating the conservation status of sea turtles and their habitats at the Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge, as well as studying the genetic relationships of globally endangered sea turtle populations in protected areas of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The Museum plans to keep the public informed on the threats to turtles through various educational initiatives including updates on the **Sea Turtle Research and Conservation Program website**: <http://cbc.amnh.org/center/programs/reptiles-seaturtles.html>.

"The extensive previous work of Museum scientists and researchers, especially in the areas of sea turtle biology and genetics and our experience working with conservation groups and regulatory agencies, are significant assets in tackling this ambitious initiative," says Eleanor J. Sterling, director of the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation.

About Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.'s Ocean Fund

Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. established the Ocean Fund in 1996 to support marine conservation organizations in conserving the world's oceans. The mission of the Ocean Fund is to support efforts to restore and maintain a healthy marine environment, minimize the impact of human activity on this environment, and promote awareness of ocean and coastal issues and respect for marine life. In the twelve years since its launch, the Ocean Fund has donated over \$10 million on behalf of Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Cruises, to several dozen organizations around the world that are working to protect the marine environment.



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Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. is a global cruise vacation company that operates Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Pullmantur, Azamara Cruises and CDF Croisières de France. The company has a combined total of 38 ships in service and six under construction. It also offers unique land-tour vacations in Alaska, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, Latin America and New Zealand.

The American Museum of Natural History

The American Museum of Natural History is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. Since its founding in 1869, the Museum has advanced its global mission to explore and interpret human cultures and the natural world through a wide-reaching program of scientific research, education, and exhibitions. The Museum accomplishes this ambitious goal through its extensive facilities and resources. The institution houses 45 permanent exhibition halls, state-of-the-art research laboratories, one of the largest natural history libraries in the Western Hemisphere, and a permanent collection of more than 30 million specimens and cultural artifacts. With a scientific staff of more than 200, the Museum supports research divisions in Anthropology, Paleontology, Invertebrate and Vertebrate Zoology, and the Physical Sciences. In addition, the Museum's Web site, www.amnh.org, extends its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more beyond the Museum's walls.

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