

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Giant Tortoises Get a Grand New Home at SeaWorld;**

**New Behind the Scenes Encounter Allows Guests to Meet the Vulnerable Species that is the Longest Living Animal on the Planet**

* *Aldabra Island will be an all-new animal habitat where guests can view and learn about one of the largest species of tortoises in the world, the Aldabra tortoise*
* *Guests can experience up-close encounters with the giants during the new Aldabra Tortoise Tour*
* *With an Annual Pass for as low as $7.99 a month, animal lovers can enjoy tortoises, other fascinating animals, thrilling rides, and special events all year long*

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**San Antonio, TX (November 16, 2023)** – A new animal attraction is quickly taking shape at SeaWorld San Antonio, but its residents might be a bit slow while roaming around their new home once it is completed. One of the largest tortoises in the world, the Aldabra tortoise – a species currently listed as vulnerable - will soon have a new habitat at SeaWorld San Antonio. Aldabra Island, a new state-of-the-art 5,000 square-foot tortoise habitat will be the perfect size to accommodate the giant reptiles that can weigh upwards of 500 pounds and stand four feet tall. The attraction will feature a climate-controlled shelter, a wading pond, a stunning waterfall, and spacious yards for the tortoises to enjoy.

The exciting new animal attraction will be located adjacent to Alligator Alley and is specifically designed with multiple living spaces that allow for variability in the animals’ day. Like all SeaWorld animal habitats, Aldabra Island will cater to the physical, social, and mental well-being of the animals with its ability to change into numerous configurations with indoor and outdoor spaces, multiple yards, and a pond that can be separated into two areas. The variability of the habitat makes the shelter unique as it allows for the creation of multiple enrichment opportunities and can allow the tortoises to choose the area of the environment in which they want to be. The changing habitat will also allow the zoological team caring for the animals to provide variability in the tortoises’ day and social structure.

“Our Zoo team is excited to bring the SeaWorld guests up close to this fascinating species of animal, one that most people don’t imagine they’ll encounter when they visit SeaWorld,” said Steve Aibel, Vice President of Zoological Operations. “The new residents of Aldabra Island will be great additions to the park and provide even more opportunities daily to spread our messages of education, conservation, and sharing our world with amazing animals.”

**The Perfect Up-Close Encounter**

The new habitat at SeaWorld will provide opportunity for guests to get up close and personal with even more of these gentle giants. Once completed, Aldabra Island will be home to the Aldabra Tortoise Tour. This 20-minute guided tour will take participants into the new habitat and behind the scenes. While there, they can interact and feed them, help prepare enrichment items, and learn about the tortoise’s natural history. This encounter with Aldabra tortoises will be an unforgettable experience that will leave a lasting impression on guests of all ages.

Aldabra tortoises, also known as giant tortoises, are found naturally on Aldabra Island, one of the Seychelles islands in the Indian Ocean, and are one of the longest living animals on the planet – some living well over a century. These tortoises are found both on their own and gathered in herds and are primarily herbivores feeding on leaves, grasses, plant stems, and a variety of fruits. As one of the largest species of tortoises (second only in size to the Galapagos tortoise) the Aldabra tortoise was one of the first species to be protected to ensure its survival for the future. Charles Darwin and other notable conservationists of the day, along with the governor of the Republic of Mauritius set aside a captive breeding population on Mauritius as well as protected the Aldabra Island. Currently, Aldabra tortoises are considered vulnerable due to habitat encroachment and poaching. Over the last century, the number of tortoises has drastically declined permitting the International Union for Conservation of Nature to deem them vulnerable.

Aldabra Island at SeaWorld San Antonio is slated to have a soft open later this year, with a large grand opening planned for early 2024.

**Best Way to Play**

Animal lovers looking to visit their marine friends can come all year long with an annual pass for as low as $7.99 a month. Pass members enjoy year-round unlimited access to thrilling rides, festive events, and amazing animal experiences. Annual passes are packed with the best benefits ever and are designed to make the park even more enjoyable during the whole year including free parking, discounts on food, merchandise, and zoo experiences along with pass member exclusive events, and bring-a-friend free tickets.

**About SeaWorld**

SeaWorld is a leading marine life theme park and accredited zoo and aquarium that provides experiences that matter while educating and inspiring guests of all ages to care about marine life. Welcoming millions of guests every year, the parks offer fun and enriching experiences from up-close animal encounters and year-round educational programs to award-winning marine-life themed rides and attractions, special events and exciting entertainment. For more than 60 years SeaWorld has advanced the conservation of marine life in and outside its parks through science, education, and exceptional animal care that is Humane Certified by American Humane and accredited by the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. SeaWorld is one of the largest marine animal rescue organizations in the world, helping more than 40,000 animals to date. The SeaWorld Conservation Fund, a non-profit foundation established in 2003, has provided more than $20 million to nearly 1,400 organizations to advance critical research on every continent. A portion of park proceeds goes toward supporting these longstanding conservation commitments. SeaWorld parks are in Orlando, San Antonio, San Diego and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE). SeaWorld is part of the SeaWorld Entertainment (NYSE:SEAS) portfolio of theme park brands. For more information, visit us at SeaWorld.com.

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